

THE DOMINION
OF
THE NEW COVENANT

By MAY RIMES HUTSON

Published by the Author

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THE AUTHOR

May Rimes Hutson (known to her family and friends as Peggy) has been a student of the Bible from her youth. The Bible characters were her friends. Her parents were deeply religious. Her mother taught her to look to the sacred Word of Scripture for guidance, instruction, and healing. At an early age she began memorizing verses from Scripture, and in times of trouble these passages would come to her, like angels, to strengthen and comfort her.

From early childhood she was plagued with physical problems, one after another. As she continued her search for the inspired Word of God, the physical problems dropped by the wayside, one by one, until she became mentally and physically strong and healthy, resulting in an abundant, fruitful life.

She began writing the unfoldment of her study while still a child. As she grew older, she began eagerly to research Bible characters. About thirty years ago this research began to take definite form, and the framework of a book began to emerge. Spiritual inspiration flowed from hours spent in prayer for guidance.

The idea of God's Covenant with man took hold in her consciousness and would not let her go. Her continued study of Scripture to confirm the ideas which unfolded was a divine adventure. As she continued to listen for the Word of God to guide her, the unfoldment became clearer. When the unfoldment was recorded, it named itself:

THE DOMINION OF THE NEW COVENANT.

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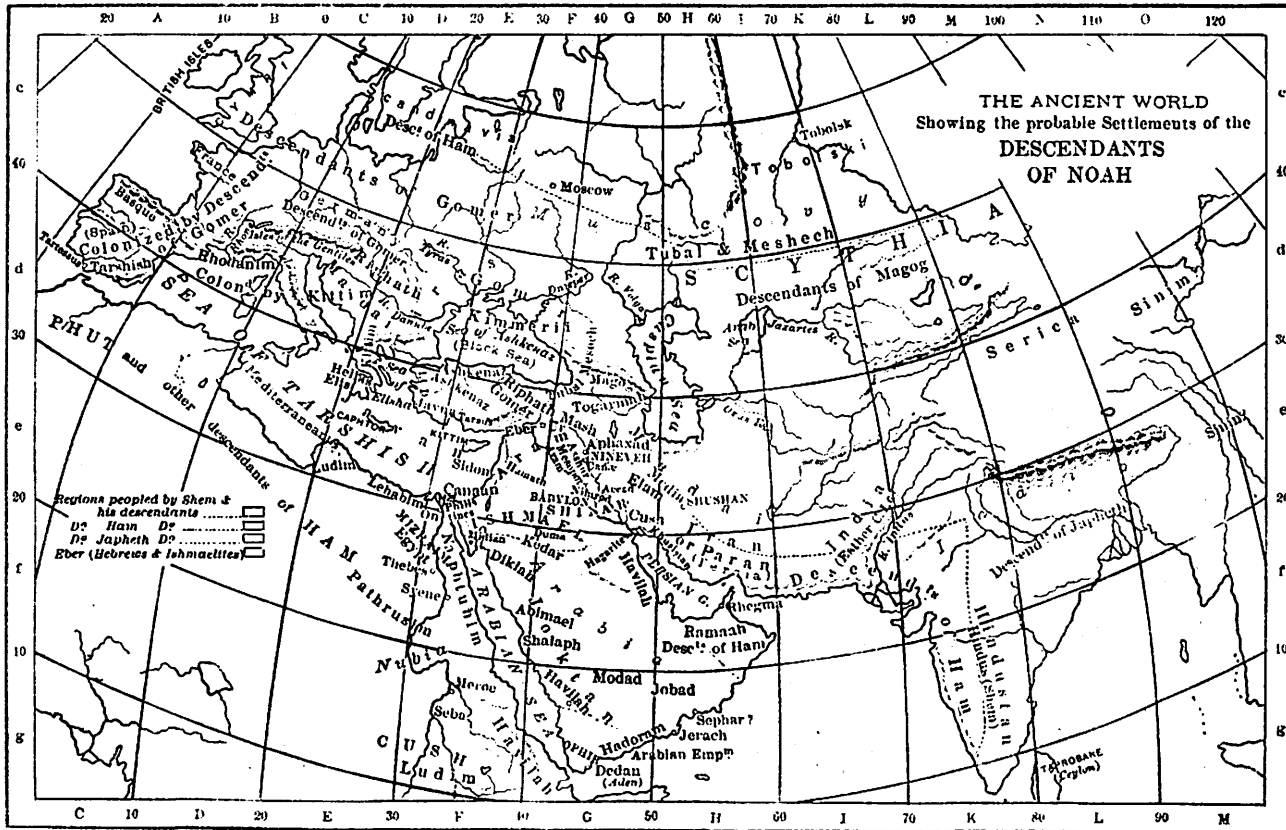
FOREWORD

This book is a commentary on the Bible, amplified and reamplified by a search for the heavenly sense of the Word. It is also a re-telling of the Bible stories.

Scripture is full of mysteries, a storehouse of heavenly things. Every word has its secrets. Every sentence sounds a chord in the grand symphony of the music of God.

To discover these heavenly mysteries has been the object of the author.

May this volume encourage the reader to embark on a divine adventure, to see and to discover for himself the spiritual import, or heavenly sense, of the Scriptures.



MAP 1

THE DOMINION OF THE NEW COVENANT

VOLUME I

THE BOOK OF GENESIS

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion.— Gen.1:26.

Christ Jesus, who is the faithful witness . . .
Hath made us unto our God kings and
priests: and we shall reign on the
earth.— Rev.1:3; 5:10.

Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man
take thy crown.— Rev.3:11.

Thou shalt also be a crown of glory
in the hand of the Lord, and a
royal diadem in the hand of thy God.
(Isa.62:3.)

INTRODUCTION

THY KINGDOM COME

(Matt.6:10)

A golden thread runs through the Bible which we may find woven into the fabric of our lives, if we look for it. It is the ascendancy of good over evil, of love over hate, of Spirit over matter, of life over death, of spiritual power supreme over the aggressiveness of evil and over the inertia of matter.

The Bible is the most ancient and the most modern of books, for it contains the knowledge of the ages. It is logical, consistent, and prescient. It is indeed an exact and scientific classification of spiritual truth. Spiritually discerned, the Bible includes the science of being, the science of life. Within its pages may be found the answer to every problem, the cure for every ill.

The first chapter of Genesis and the first three verses of the second chapter reveal the majesty of God and His creation. The record of creation begins with the words:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.— Gen.1:1.

As the record unfolds we discover God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. In this holy record we also discover the origin of man and his dominion in God's kingdom:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion . . .

And God blessed them, . . .

And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.— Gen.1:26,28,31.

In this brief history of creation we discover a scientific relationship between God and man — creation like the Creator — a relationship which establishes man as the very image of God, who is Spirit. The likeness of Spirit must be like God, Spirit, mental or spiritual, characterized by and constituted entirely of the qualities, substance, and elements of Spirit. This spiritual man is given

dominion over all the earth. In proportion to our understanding of the relationship of God and man and in the degree that we express the qualities of Spirit in our lives we are Godlike — like God, or Spirit—and we have dominion on earth and are able to demonstrate spiritual authority over a finite, material concept of all things.

In the Bible we find the record of many righteous men and women who lived so close to God they were able to prove their God-given dominion in their earthly experience. The power of the spiritual, scientific relationship of God and man was demonstrated in marked degree in the lives of prophets and apostles. This holy relationship came to fulfillment in the life of Christ Jesus. The Master Christian demonstrated his oneness with his Father-God so completely that a new era was inaugurated which has been rightly called *The Christian Era*.

For nearly two thousand years Christ's Christianity has been gaining acceptance throughout the world. Christ Jesus' teachings and his triumph over matter are based on the spiritual fact that God, Spirit, is the only Creator of the universe and the only Father of man, and that everything God made is in His likeness, is Godlike — like God — and therefore is spiritual and perfect and eternal.

The idea of one divine Cause or Principle of all being is dawning in the minds of men and is gaining the acceptance of thinkers all over the world. Mankind is beginning to acknowledge that a divine order exists throughout the universe. Scientific vision is beginning to penetrate the veil of materialism and to discern the divine order right where disorder and lawlessness appear to the unscientific thought. Ears attuned to the grand symphony of the universe are beginning to hear and to interpret aright the signs of the times — signs that bear witness to a spiritual revolution in our midst. A great overturning of thought is taking place which has opened the portals of a new era in which spiritual law — the law of the universe — is being recognized and acknowledged as the basic law governing every detail of our lives. Individuals are beginning to demand a reason for the hope that is within them. And the answer is unfolding on the horizon of enlightened scientific thought.

It has been truly said that the twentieth century is the era of scientific unfoldment. Mankind is pressing toward scientific truth

in all things. No longer do we accept theories until they are satisfactorily demonstrated as scientific truths. No longer is mankind satisfied with haphazard methods. Know-how is vitally important, whether one is bringing up a family, cooking a meal, cultivating a garden, working a mathematical problem, managing an office, studying the stars, experimenting with atomic energy, making discoveries of nuclear force, or flying to the moon. Scientific systems are displacing old trial-and-error methods. We are all becoming scientists in some degree, whether we realize it or not.

That individual is a scientist who adheres to scientific aims and methods and agrees in precept and example with definite rules and principles. Mathematicians, astronomers, chemists, engineers, and the like have made great strides in establishing their claims to being scientists because they have been faithful in accepting only those theories that have been thoroughly proven and that have stood the test of scientific demonstration. Many theories, in their day called scientific, have become obsolete because they could not stand the test of proof. Soothsayers, prognosticators, necromancers, spiritualists, astrologers, theosophists, witches and wizards, and others who depend on occult thinking and reasoning are not true scientists because their theories are not scientific. Their systems are predicated on conflicting theories of combined good and evil, spirit and matter, right and wrong, and are therefore kingdoms divided against themselves, which cannot stand the test of science.

The Bible has stood every test made upon it. It has outlived the dark ages. It has outwitted intellectual and ecclesiastical bigotry. It has outshone the darkness of ignorance, materialism, and unbelief. It has overcome the barrier of languages, so that everyone who so desires may hear the Word of God in his own tongue. The Bible has survived because it is the truth. Its truth is scientifically demonstrable. And because it is the truth, it will live forever.

Christ Jesus was the greatest scientist the world has ever known. He based all his words and works on the understanding that God is the only Creator, the only origin, and that man is the Son of God. He condemned words without works, precepts without practice. He gave exact and scientific proof that God made man in His own image and likeness. He proved that anything that is unlike God is no part of God's likeness, and

therefore could and should be removed from man's experience. And he proved this practically by restoring health to the sick, harmony to the discordant, sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, feet to the lame. To the insane man, he gave spiritual poise and mental balance. He stilled the tempest, walked on the water, and raised the dead. He cast out evil, regardless of its name or nature, and he did so with scientific certainty. That which did not conform with the divine image and likeness was powerless to Christ Jesus. It was nothing more than a mistake, which could be instantly corrected by the application of the law of God — that divine law, or spiritual force, which holds man forever in the likeness of his Maker.

The science that Christ Jesus gave to the world was not a pseudoscience or theory without proof. Nor was it a form of mysticism which could not be understood. His science was Christian. It was and is the Spirit of Truth, which he said would lead mankind into all truth. (See John 16:13.) The principle of this science is Love — warm, tender, compassionate, divine Love. Jesus scientifically demonstrated the truth of his teachings by his works — works that have been called miracles, because the science involved in his work has not been understood.

Christ Jesus was not only the Master Christian, he was also the Master Scientist. His work was based on a definite demonstrable principle, and he prophesied that those who followed him — those who followed the same rules he followed — would do, not only the works that he did, but even greater works. (See John 14:12.) He proved by his demonstrations over matter and its conditions that the world in which he lived was spiritual or mental — God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. And he sought to lift mankind out of a material concept of themselves and of their world into the scientific understanding of the spiritual nature of man and the universe. This kind of thinking was revolutionary in his day. It is still revolutionary, for it challenges the thinking of mankind, causing them to change their concepts of themselves and of their world. Many pioneers in the field of science have changed their concepts of the world in which they lived as they gained new and fresher ideas. In the place where the unenlightened, unscientific senses see confusion and limitation, the scientific thinker beholds law and order.

It is difficult for us to believe that there was a time when people

thought that the earth was flat. And yet as late as the fifteenth century A.D. few navigators were brave enough to venture far from the shores of the old world, because they believed that somewhere out in the ocean the earth ceased to be, and if they ventured too far beyond the horizon they would fall off into nothingness. Columbus believed that the earth was round, and he proved it. He looked beyond the evidence of the finite physical senses. His thinking was scientific and intelligent. With courage and persistence, he pursued his course. Not only did he prove his theory to be true. He discovered a new world! He pushed back the barriers of ignorance and paved the way for all mankind to find freedom from the restrictions of an old world bound by tradition, ignorance, and superstition.

Where did the flatness of the earth go when Columbus demonstrated that it was round? It didn't have to go anywhere, because it never existed as a reality. But mankind's erroneous concepts had to be changed to conform with what had always been true, even though it had just been discovered.

For centuries people believed that the earth was a stationary body and that the whole stellar universe revolved about it. Astronomy was not an exact science. The superstitions of astrologists and the theories of scholastics overlaid the laws which govern the movements of the celestial bodies. Copernicus, an astronomer, was a young man when Columbus made his voyage to the new world. He must have been greatly impressed and encouraged by the findings of this brave old navigator. Copernicus, like Columbus, disregarded the beliefs of the centuries and based all his conclusions on mathematically demonstrable evidence which contradicted the evidence of the physical senses. He first advanced the theory that the sun is the center of our universe, and that the earth and other planets revolve around the sun. He mapped out the universe, bringing to astronomy a sense of order which it had not known before.

Where did the disorder go when Copernicus recognized a universal order, controlled by law? It didn't have to go anywhere, for it never was true. But the minds of men had to change in order to accept this new concept of the universe.

Almost a hundred years later another great pioneer in the field of astronomy built upon the theories of Copernicus and amplified them. Galileo was one of the founders of experimental science. By

experiment he demonstrated the truth of his theories, including the undeniable fact that the earth and the planets revolve around the sun.

Where did the immovability of the earth go when Galileo discovered that it moved? Did the earth have to start revolving after men learned that it was not a stationary body? No, it had always moved. But thought had to change before this discovery could be accepted. In order to arrive at scientific conclusions human reason was compelled to disregard the evidence of the material senses that the sun revolves around the earth and to accept the scientific fact that the earth revolves around the sun.

Discoveries in the field of science have given us a new concept of the universe. But science hasn't changed anything. It has revealed what has always been, and it has given us this knowledge in a form we can understand. Astronomy was firmly established as a science by Copernicus and Galileo, because they disregarded the evidence of the senses, peered through the mist of antiquated theories, and discovered the truth. Through these scientific discoveries a new sense of the universe has come to us which has opened the door for further explorations and discoveries.

From the beginning of what men call time, explorations to determine the nature of the universe have been made, predicated mainly on the belief that matter is the only substance. Mankind has firmly believed that the world was material and that if there was a spiritual universe, it could only be found after death, on another plane of existence. This belief has been entertained throughout the ages, notwithstanding the fact that the Bible tells us plainly that God, Spirit, created all like Himself. The law of cause and effect is explicit: effect must be like its cause.

In the twentieth century, modern physicists have projected the theory that the substance of the universe is not material but mental, and that matter, previously thought to be solid and substantial, is but a phenomenon of thought. Two British astronomers, Sir James Jeans and Sir Arthur Stanley Eddington, have done much in the field of scientific exploration to determine the true nature of the universe. Sir Eddington, particularly known for his studies of stellar motion and composition, is quoted as saying: "The nature of all reality is spiritual, not material, not a dualism of matter and spirit." In his book *Guide to Modern Thought* (p.94), C.E.M. Joad wrote of Sir Jeans and Sir Eddington:

Their considered view is that physics suggests that the reality of things is mental or spiritual, and that so-called material phenomena are the effects of the way in which this spiritual reality appears to us.

This summation of their findings serves as an introduction to Joad's own statement (p. 95):

The present state of physical knowledge seems to prominent scientists to point to conclusions directly contrary to those of the old materialism, and to favour a spiritual interpretation of the universe as strongly as the science of fifty years ago was thought to favour a materialistic interpretation.

Charles F. Steinmetz, known to the scientific world as an electrical wizard, predicted:

Some day people will learn that material things do not bring happiness and are of little use in making men creative and powerful. Then the scientists of the world will turn their laboratories over to the study of God and prayer and the spiritual forces which have as yet hardly been scratched. When this day comes the world will see more advancement in one generation than it has in the last four.

Sir Isaac Newton once said: "To the mathematician the universe is a great thought." Not thought based on material evidence which observes the universe as a chaos, composed of matter and blind force; but scientific thought which perceives the universe as a cosmos, a perfect whole, formed by intelligence and governed by divine law.

The ideas of modern physicists concerning the mental nature of the universe is explored by Lincoln Barnett in his book, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein* (p.19):

Philosophers and scientists are arriving at the startling conclusion that since every object is simply the sum of its qualities, and since qualities exist only in the mind, the whole objective universe of matter and energy, atoms and stars, does not exist except as a construction of the consciousness, an edifice of conventional symbols, shaped by the senses of men.

Science is becoming metaphysically conscious. The scientists of the twentieth century are beginning to realize that the ultimate goal of science is to discover God. Dr. William North Rice, pro-

fessor of geology, is quoted as saying: "Science is discovering the infinite truth of the opening stanza of the hymn of creation, 'In the beginning God. . .'"

Twentieth century physicists are fast approaching the spiritual dimensions of metaphysics, the realm of thought unobstructed by the unreliable reasoning and evidence of the circumscribed dimensions of physics. They are exploring the spiritual realm of thought and are arriving at new premises. How long will it be before they realize that because God is Spirit, He could not create anything unlike Himself? How long will it be before they realize that the universe is spiritual now?

Science has proved that the flatness of the earth, the disorder of the universe, and the immovability of our earthly sphere are nothing more than optical illusions, the effects of ignorance. And now science is dissolving the mist of materialism in the minds of men, proving that the materiality of the universe is also an optical illusion, nothing more than unsubstantial testimony of the material senses — those senses which identify all things materially.

Columbus, Copernicus, and Galileo, utilizing their understanding of science, looked beyond the evidence of the material senses to discover facts about the universe that were invisible to the material senses. Those who seek to understand the spirituality of the universe must also look beyond the evidence of the material senses to discover the spiritual nature of all things.

Like Columbus, Copernicus, and Galileo, the modern physicists are discovering new facts about the world that are changing the concepts people formerly held concerning the substance, order, and movements of the universe. But these facts are not really new; they have always existed. As yet, the twentieth century scientists do not seem to realize that the *new world* which is appearing to them is the universe of Spirit. But they freely admit that the so-called material phenomena that the eye beholds is not the solid substance they once thought it to be. Some are favoring a spiritual interpretation of the universe. While others are content to acknowledge that the phenomena which appear to be material are mental.

One of America's most respected authorities in the field of chemistry and atomic energy, Dr. Donald Hatch Andrews, declared that there is a tremendous revolution going on in the field

of science. In a lecture entitled *Faith For The Space Age*, delivered at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, Dr. Andrews said:

A hundred years ago science was opposed to religion. Today science is affirming religion. . . . In the beginning God said, "Let there be light, and there was light." Today, as yet, we see only the intimations of this great cosmic story, but there are intimations which point beyond a material universe. . . . In this new age in which we now begin to live, it is clear that it is in these deepest terms of spiritual truth which we must do our thinking. We have left the stone age behind us; we have left the steel age behind us. As men of wisdom in the forefront of our time, we must leave our materialism behind us and think in terms of the supreme spiritual truth which has been revealed to us by our Lord.

These new concepts of the universe have not changed the universe. It is the same universe many still consider to be wholly material. The *new world* which is appearing on the horizon of advancing thought is the same universe which spiritually minded men and women in every age have glimpsed in their own individual experiences. It is the same universe described in the first chapter of Genesis, which God, Spirit, saw to be *very good* and wholly like Himself.

In an article entitled *The New World At Hand*, Dr. Gerald Kennedy wrote:

Some centuries ago a young man (Jesus) saw a new world and described it. Men were afraid of it and distrustful of what it would do to their society. . . . But in the years that followed, they approached this world fearfully and timidly here and there, until its truth began to shine in the darkness of their minds. And today as we face our new world, we begin to see that his revolutionary view is the only one that can work. Thus we have come to see that the new world demands three things: *a new map, a new climate, and a new dimension*, which only Christ can provide. . . . When will the new world come with its new map, its new climate, and its new dimension? I do not know. But it will come because its nature is written into the very heart of the universe, and every great catastrophe tears aside the camouflage and we see it waiting for us to possess it. But whether it comes tomorrow or not for centuries, it can come for you and me at any moment. When a man says that he will enter it and live by the new map,

work in the new climate, and take the perspective of the new dimension, behold, the new world has arrived! And each man's entrance into it hastens its universal coming for his brethren. (*The Chaplain, Magazine, Nov. 1944.*)

Whether we see our world "through a glass darkly" (I Cor.13:12) or through the lens of spiritual vision, our views of the universe cannot change the universe. It remains as spiritual as "when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy" (Job 38:7).

Columbus' discovery changed material concepts concerning the *form* of the earth. Copernicus' discovery changed thought concerning the *order* of the universe. Galileo's discoveries lifted human reasoning to a scientific basis concerning the *movements* of the planets. And now science is changing the world's concepts concerning the *substance* of the universe. Twentieth century religion has reached the conclusion that the universe is mental or spiritual now, and that the phenomena called matter are mental concepts of spiritual reality. At last modern thinking is catching up with the truth concerning the spiritual nature of the universe and man as revealed in the first chapter of Genesis.

One might ask, however, does not this material world have to be destroyed before the spiritual universe can appear to us? Did a flat earth have to be destroyed before a round one could appear? Did a disordered, chaotic universe have to disappear before the order and harmony of the celestial bodies could be established? Did someone have to start the earth revolving when it was discovered that it rotated? Does a material world have to be destroyed in order that its spiritual nature becomes apparent? The answer to all these questions is the same: an unqualified *NO!* All that has to be changed or destroyed is within human consciousness. The only place that matter exists is in the mortal, material concepts of creation in the minds of men. The spiritual nature of the universe will be discovered in the minds of men as they give up their material theories and utilize their scientific senses, as they dare to look beyond the veil of matter into the spiritual reality of being.

The Apostle Paul saw that the reason men did not behold the spiritual nature of the universe was because they were materially minded. He sought diligently to show the people of his day, and of ours, the way to learn the spiritual facts of the universe. He wrote:

As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God.

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.— I Cor.2:9-14.

The Apostle's message is amplified in a new translation of his words:

The unspiritual man simply cannot accept the matters which the Spirit deals with — for they just don't make sense to him, for, after all, you must be spiritual to see spiritual things. The spiritual man, on the other hand, has an insight into the meaning of everything, though his insight may baffle the man of the world. This is because the former is sharing in God's wisdom. . . . nonetheless we who are spiritual have the very thoughts of Christ.— I Cor.2:14-16 (JBP).

Throughout the ages spiritually minded men and women have caught glimpses of the spiritual nature of the universe, and in the degree that they have done so, their lives have been in harmony with the spiritual facts of being. So powerful is this truth that even a little understanding of it is sufficient to overcome many of the limitations of believing that one is living in a gross material world.

As men give up their false notions of a material basis of all things, they will see this new spiritual concept of the universe. They will see that the sphere of the earth which Columbus discovered is the symbol of eternity. They will see the movements of the universe which Galileo saw as indicative of the movement of

every thought and every action in complete conformity with divine law, moving within the harmony of God's spiritual infinitude. They will see in the spirituality of the universe, which a few great spiritual leaders have seen and which modern physicists are now beginning to see, the substance which is not material, but is "the evidence of things not seen" (Heb.11:1).

The history of the universe and all that it contains has been written largely by materially minded men who saw the images of their own concepts and recorded them. The early Babylonian records of creation and of the days before the flood are filled with grotesque and mythological features typical of Babylonish thinking. But history as recorded in the Bible is a revelation of the spiritual nature of the universe, of man, and of all things. This fact is underlined by a learned and devout Episcopalian minister, the Rev. C. D. Scofield. Early in the twentieth century he wrote in the introduction to *The Scofield Reference Bible* (p.2):

Of necessity, therefore, the first task of inspiration would be to supplant the often absurd and childish tradition [the Babylonian records] with a revelation of the true history, and such a history we find in words of matchless grandeur, and in an order which, rightly understood, is absolutely scientific. In the Pentateuch [the first five books of the Bible,] we have a true and logical introduction to the entire Bible, and, in type, an epitome of the divine revelation. . . . This order is undeniably the order of the experience of the people of God in all ages.

The Bible is always abreast of the times and is completely applicable to modern conditions because the thinking of the ages is reflected in its pages.

In the Bible are records of many scientifically minded men and women who demonstrated the power of the knowledge of the spiritual facts of existence to regenerate and transform their human lives. Through their experiences we may discover how the understanding of the spiritual nature of the universe can free us, as it freed them, from bondage to a limited material concept of our world.

In the Scriptural record we may also read of those who cultivated the occultism of the carnal mind, and with its alleged power sought to dominate, subdue, or undermine the free thought and action of the people of God. Here we may see the results of the pseudoscientific influence on those who did not resist it — an in-

fluence which caused individuals to drift with the tide of popular thought and to yield to the common consent. The experiences of these people are given to us in such a way that they act as a mirror in which we may see the pattern of divine unfoldment emerging, a pattern revealing the triumph of the spiritually minded scientific thinkers over the unspiritual, unscientific beliefs of the ages.

Scientific thinking is Godlike thinking. Science is true knowing, and true knowing is knowledge of truth. In the degree that material beliefs are given up and the knowledge of God fills the minds of men, the spiritual nature of the universe and man will become apparent.

The prophet Isaiah foresaw the day when "the earth shall be full of the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea" (Isa. 11:9). The twentieth century is the time for the fulfillment of this prophecy. And scientific thinking in every direction will finally arrive at the truth that all reality is in God and His creation, and that all is Spirit and spiritual, now!

The enlightened scientific concepts of twentieth century scientists concerning the Creator and creation were vividly impressed upon the minds of the peoples of all nations of the world on Christmas Eve in 1968 when, from outer space, was heard the Bible record of creation, beamed to earth by the astronauts in Apollo X as they circled the moon. Who will ever forget the feeling of ineffable awe which swept over the earth that holy night as those young scientists paused in their historic flight to glorify God as the Creator of the universe! As their spacecraft sped on in its flight approximately 240,000 miles from the earth, the world literally stood still in reverence as these celestial navigators read from the first chapter of their Chart of Life:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

And the earth was without form, and void: and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: And God saw that it was good.

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning were the third day.— Gen.1:1-13.

On Sunday, July 20, 1969, seven months after the flight of Apollo X, the astronauts in Apollo XI landed their spacecraft on the moon. The first words spoken as the commander set foot on the surface of the moon —

One Small Step For Man!
One Giant Step For Mankind!

acknowledged an accomplishment which transcended the physical aspects of their stupendous achievement. As the first space explorers from our earth to set foot on any part of the vast universe other than our sphere, they might well have felt a sense of personal exhilaration and pride in their accomplishment. Instead, when they returned to their spacecraft after their historic walk on the surface of the moon, they reverently glorified God as the Creator of the world. And earth was blessed to hear from them this simple acknowledgment:

When I consider the heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.

What is man, that thou art mindful of him?—

Ps.8:3,4.

These heroic but humble men subordinated themselves and their work to the majestic work of the Creator. In so doing, they fulfilled the blessing in the same Psalm which answers the question, "What is man?" — an answer which they did not quote in words, but in deeds — an answer which many on earth echoed for them:

Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet.— Ps.8:6.

Twentieth century scientists and twentieth century religionists have clasped hands in acknowledging God as the Creator of the universe including man.

PART I

THE TWO COVENANTS

Chapter I

TWO CONCEPTS OF CREATION

Tradition divides the Bible into the Old and New Testaments. But within this division the student of the Bible can detect another division — that is a more spiritual one — the division between the Old and New Covenants. For the line of demarcation between the Old and New Covenants is spiritual understanding, distinguishing between the spiritual and material records of creation and separating man made in God's likeness from Adam and his dream.

At times the distinction between the two Covenants is clear cut, as in the two records of creation in the first and second chapters of Genesis. At other times the two Covenants appear so closely conjoined that it is difficult to discern the fine line that separates the spiritual from the material record.

The word *covenant* means testament, compact, contract, or agreement. But the two covenants revealed in the Bible bear little resemblance to covenants, contracts, and agreements between individuals. The New Covenant is the holy bond of union between God and all that He has made. In this Covenant we discover perfect agreement between God and man made in His likeness — an agreement which gives man the dominion of heaven on earth. Man's responsibility in this holy contract, or agreement, is to be Godlike, to give God his whole allegiance, to express the divine nature, and to be covenanted to the things of Spirit. The Old Covenant is a mortal bond of union between a finite deity who loves and hates, a God who creates man, not in His own image and likeness, but of the dust of the ground. This man, a mortal, is in agreement, not with infinite Spirit, but with all that is finite, mortal, and material — an agreement which makes him subservient to mortality, to the things of the flesh, bound to matter and its limitations, and having no dominion at all.

In the New Covenant, man and all creation are at one, coincident with God and His infinite goodness. In the Old Covenant, man and all creation seem bound to a material, sensuous concept

of existence — totally in tune with the finite. We are free to choose between these two Covenants.

Throughout the Old Testament, the Old Covenant seems to be predominant, although the New Covenant shines brightly through the lives of many holy men and women. But in the New Testament, the New Covenant is clearly set forth and is understood to be the power of God with men. It clothes man with dignity and divinity, with might and majesty. And in it the Old Covenant of a material sense of existence is completely swallowed up in the spiritual understanding of the Covenant relationship of God with man, as exemplified by Christ Jesus. However, the New Covenant may be traced throughout the Old and the New Testaments, and the spiritual seer will find the New Covenant to be the true Covenant, the original agreement of God with man, and the only one which is binding on man.

The first chapter of Genesis and the first three verses of the second chapter give a full statement of the New Covenant. Here God reveals His nature as the Creator, *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe, whose creation is very good. This Covenant, which reveals the universe and man to be in perfect agreement with the Creator, begins with the declaration:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.— Gen.1:1.

It rises to a dramatic climax in the words:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion. . . .
And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.— Gen.1:26, 31.

This is the Covenant of Godlikeness, the spiritual agreement of God with man and the universe, in which God declares that man is His image and likeness and is therefore Godlike, spiritual. The natural and inevitable outcome of this agreement, or Covenant, is dominion — that dominion which gives man complete spiritual authority over the whole earth and over a material concept of existence through the understanding that God, Spirit, the divine Mind, is the only power and that good is therefore the only reality. This contract nullifies any code that would bind man to anything

unlike God, good, and protects him so long as he keeps its conditions intact by walking in the way of righteousness.

This holy record is not an account of material evolution, nor is it a statement of an act of creating something out of nothing. Rather it is an attestation of that which is and always has been, a testament of the divine nature of God revealed in His creation. This is God's record of His own majesty, infinitude, and perfection, without beginning or end. It is a declaration of His own wisdom and might. It is the revelation of the beauty of holiness. It is a legal instrument of divine power, the Will of God, in which the nature, essence, and wholeness of Deity are set forth and shown to be the heritage of man, God's beloved image and likeness. It is the appearing of spiritual reality — the new concept of heaven and earth, coming down from God, or reduced to human apprehension.

The second and third chapters of Genesis give a full statement of the Old Covenant. At first reading, this second account of creation may seem to be a repetition, continuation, or elaboration of the first record. However, it is none of these things. It is, rather, a testament of mortality, the story of the Adam dream. The record of this dream-like creation though involved, is graphic. It begins with the words:

But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.— Gen.2:6.

Here a veil of mystery seems to overshadow God's creation, and a mortal misconception of what God says is recorded. Instead of a covenant of a good God with man, His beloved image and likeness, whom He blessed and to whom He gave dominion over all the earth, this is a covenant of a mortal man with a finite material concept of God and His creation. It is a covenant which attributes mortal, material characteristics to God and binds man with his own limited human misconceptions.

As in the New Covenant, there is also a dramatic climax in the Old Covenant. But this climax is an unhappy one: evil, typified by a talking serpent, talks man and woman out of their birthright of spiritual dominion by suggesting that they adulterate the pure knowledge of God's goodness with the knowledge of evil. With animal subtlety the serpent persuades them to acknowledge the

possibility that God is changeable, that He knows both good *and* evil, and that He is withholding something desirable from them. They are pictured as accepting the bait, typified by fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and as falling to the level of the serpent's suggestions. Their spiritual views of God, of themselves, and of creation were thereby dimmed by double mindedness, by belief in two opposing powers, or forces, and their dominion was proportionately weakened.

This second account of creation is not a picture of the heaven and earth and man which God created. It is a contrasting account in which there is no heaven, no Spirit of God, no light, no spiritual understanding, no dominion — an account which depicts the universally accepted material beliefs about creation in which evil triumphs over good, and man is deprived of his divine heritage and dominion.

In the first record of creation, we see the glory and magnitude of the kingdom of heaven in man. In the second account, man has no spiritual authority and no kingdom. In the first record God blesses man and gives him dominion over all the earth. In the second account the Lord God curses man and casts him out.

Throughout the Bible these two Covenants, or Testaments, are illustrated in the lives of men and nations. Herein we see how individuals have sought the dominion of the New Covenant and found the kingdom of heaven within themselves; or how they have been confused by the mist, and, wandering in the byways of the Old Covenant, have found themselves confounded by the false knowledge that both good and evil are real and powerful and mystified by the illusion that matter, instead of Spirit, is the substance of the universe.

These two Testaments, or Covenants, appear side by side in the Bible and in our lives. Through the subtlety of the serpent they appear so closely interwoven into the fabric of individual experience that it is often difficult to distinguish between them. At times we seem to be covenanted, or bound, to a fleshly, mortal sense of life, and our lot appears to be bondage, disappointment, limitation, fear, and failure. At other times the mist of materialism lifts, and we see more clearly our relationship with God, with Spirit, which gives us dominion on earth and enables us to demonstrate our spiritual authority over a finite material sense of existence.

Today the Bible, with its two Covenants, challenges us thus: *Here* is the revelation of the beauty and order of the universe of Spirit in which man has dominion (Gen.1:1-31; 2:1-3); and *Here* is a projection of materiality wherein man is subject to evil and bound with mortal, material limitations, frustrations, fears, and failures (Gen.2:4-25; 3:1-24). These are the two Covenants. We may ratify and witness to only one of them. We cannot be a party to both. Therefore,

Choose you this day
whom ye will serve.
(Josh.24:15.)

Chapter II

THE NEW COVENANT

In the beginning God created
the heaven and the earth.
(Gen. 1:1)

The New Covenant is the Testament in which God reveals His divine nature in every created thing. And He reveals it in such a way that we behold the beauty, vitality, grandeur, law, order, harmony, holiness, immortality, and infinitude of the divine nature in everything in the universe.

The New Covenant is the Covenant of Godlikeness: Creation like the Creator! The divine likeness inherent in all that God has made! This Covenant is a holy record of spiritual evolution in which we discover, through spiritual revelation, creation emerging from the Infinite, the visible coming forth from the invisible. We discover new dimensions which transcend time and space. A new chart and compass come to light to guide us into a new world, the world of existing reality — a world in which there is no evil, a world in which all is good. In this history of creation we learn that our universe has evolved and continues to evolve through principles unseen by the physical senses.

As the wonders of the New Covenant continue to unfold in us, our thought is lifted into a new dimension, a spiritual dimension, in which we see the veil of materialism dissolving and spiritual reality breaking through. And we perceive things as they really are, as God made them. In this Covenant we discover our spiritual nobility as the sons and daughters of God and learn that the kingdom of heaven, the dominion of Spirit, is indeed within us, as Christ Jesus declared — within our present comprehension. (See Luke 17:20,21.)

In the first chapter of Genesis we discover that our Covenant with God is divided into seven periods of unfoldment called *seven days*. These days are really periods of discovery. This fact is underscored by Prof. Theodore H. Robinson in his commentary on Genesis in *The Abingdon Bible Commentary* (pp.219-220):

It is impossible to read this narrative (Gen.1:1-31, 2:1-3) without being struck by its dignity and lofty tone. Throughout a definite and progressive order is observed. The theology is advanced; God needs no physical means or material agency; His Word suffices. The whole narrative is an expression of the supreme truth that God is the author of the universe, expressed in a form suited to a people of high intelligence, developed culture, and lofty religious thinking.

The first six periods of this holy Covenant are stamped with the divine seal of approval: "And God saw that it was good." They are sealed with the irrevocable Word of the divine *Esse*, "And it was so!"

The Hebrew *'amar*, translated *said*, and the Greek *logos*, translated *word*, have the same meaning. Thus we see that *what God says is His Word*. St. John perceived the true meaning and the power of God's Word and recorded his understanding of the *Logos* at the beginning of the Gospel which bears his name:

When all things began, the Word already was. The Word dwelt with God, and what God was, the Word was. The Word, then, was with God at the beginning, and through him all things came to be; no single thing was created without him. All that came to be was alive with his life, and that life was the light of men.— John 1:1-4 (NEB).

This Word of might proclaims divine decrees, mandates, which embody their own law of enforcement: "Let there be light, . . . Let there be a firmament, . . . Let the dry land appear, . . . Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven, . . . Let the waters bring forth, . . . Let the earth bring forth, . . . Let us make man." Then follows the inevitable fulfillment of the divine decrees: "And it was so!" It is! It always has been! It always will be! And it will continue to appear as the Word of God brings it forth!

From this we draw the inescapable conclusion that what God says, His Word, is law — the law which ushers into human presence the spiritual realities which God has made and gives form to them. This Word is not dependent on any material process to produce or bring forth its own phenomena. God's Word suffices. The Psalmist proclaimed the same confirmation of the power of God's creative mandate:

By the word of the Lord were the heavens made;
and all the host of them by the breath of his
mouth.— Ps.33:6.

Referring again to the divine decree, "Let there be." There does not appear to be a Hebrew word translated *let* in the story of creation. This word is used in English translations to indicate an imperative sense. "Let there be" is not a command to make something out of nothing, but a demand that we *let* that which already *is* appear in consciousness. That which is always has been, is now, and always will be. But it must be brought to light — seen, comprehended, understood.

God saw everything that He had made to be good, even very good. Not good merely in a modifying sense, but *good itself* — good which embodies and expresses all that is Godlike. That which is good possesses divine qualities and activities, promotes success, unfolds well-being, and is genuine, perfect, lacking no necessary element. That which is good embodies and expresses the divine completeness. In God's world, in which all is good, all good is possible of attainment. In this world there are no boundaries or limits, no lack, no discord, no imperfection, no incompleteness. In God's good world there are no baffling obstructions to unfoldment, no fear, no discouragement, no disintegration. In this world of existing reality — the real world — everything partakes of the nature of the Creator.

In the record of the seven days of creation, we discover seven periods of ascending thought in which the nature of Deity is revealed — a self-revelation of Creator in creation. This revelation is not mysterious or hidden. It is plainly visible to those who see, not only with the eye, but also with the mind. The Apostle Paul endeavored to drive this point home in a letter to the Roman Christians in the first century A.D. He wrote:

All that may be known of God by men lies plain before their eyes; indeed God himself has disclosed it to them. His invisible attributes, that is to say his everlasting power and deity, have been visible, ever since the world began, to the eye of reason, in the things he has made.— Rom.1:20 (NEB).

Let us turn to the Bible and read our Covenant with God, the New Covenant of Godlikeness. As we read with the mind and not

just with the eye, we discover a new world. We discover not only our oneness with God but also our affinity with everyone and everything in God's world. We discover heavenly mysteries formerly hidden in the words of the Bible. And we discover that our reading of the Scriptures is a divine adventure.

In the opening sentence of our Bible we discover a fundamental truth on which everything which follows is founded:

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.— Gen.1:1.

The idea of time is not implied in the word *beginning*: That which *is* always has been, whether or not it has been known or seen. There never was a time when anything that is true was untrue, never a time when anything that is real was unreal. The phrase, "In the beginning," as used in this text, indicates what is of first importance, the basis of what is to be revealed. And what is to be revealed? A note in *The Scofield Reference Bible* (p.3), answers this question:

With Genesis begins that progressive self-revelation of God which culminates in Christ.

The unfoldment of the "progressive self-revelation of God" requires us to understand the nature of God. The name by which the Supreme Being first reveals His nature is *Elohim*. This Hebrew name for Deity defines the nature of God as the all-inclusive Creator, the Father and Mother of the universe, the All-in-all God whose creation is very good. The name *Elohim*, translated *God* in *The King James Version of the Bible*, is a uni-plural noun. This holy name, though rendered in the plural, does not imply more than one God; rather, it defines the All-inclusive One in its inherent threefold nature.

The New Covenant reveals the threefold nature of the Infinite in a divinely unique way. Three aspects of the divine nature which reveal the fundamental character of *Elohim* are presented: a creative aspect, a self-revealing aspect, and an interpretive aspect. These three are one. Dr. Scofield declares that this three-in-one nature of the all-harmonious, all-inclusive divine Being, known in all Christendom as *The Trinity*, is latent in the name *Elohim* — the Trinitarian name for the Supreme Being — a name

which reveals the divine nature of God, the divine nature of man, the divine nature of the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost — and their relationship to each other. The threefold nature of the creative Principle of the universe, embodied in the name *Elohim*, reveals the pattern of unfoldment through which the nature of God and of His spiritual creation is brought to light, and the way through which the Covenant of God with man is established in human consciousness.

The Hebrew word *bara* — to create — does not imply an original creative act. According to *Dr. Scofield*, the sense is: caused to appear; made visible. *Bara* also carries the meaning: revealing order where chaos appeared to be. This word is used exclusively to indicate divine activity. In this light we understand that the foundation of all things is that God, *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe, caused to appear, or made visible, the heaven and the earth and revealed the flawless order of His universe.

Heaven and earth! How are these realms defined in metaphysics? The Hebrew word *shamah*, or *shamayim*, translated *heaven* or *heavens*, means to be lofty, elevated. But this definition does not define a realm in time and space. The mystical sense of heaven as a kingdom located somewhere in the sky is yielding to the enlightened understanding of heaven as a divine state of mind. An exalted spiritual consciousness in which God is enthroned is heaven.

Throughout the ages heaven has been sought as though it were afar off, a kind of celestial terrestrial realm. Yet, nearly two thousand years ago the Master Christian, Christ Jesus, revealed the scientific fact that heaven, the kingdom of God, is very close to each one of us. He declared;

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.—

Luke 17:20,21.

This heavenly kingdom or dominion, this realm of supernal harmony where God reigns, is not a country we gain by dying. It is a state of mind we gain by living — living in obedience to the divine precepts, thus fulfilling our part of our Covenant with God. This heavenly, harmonious realm is within each individual con-

sciousness, as the Master declared. But if we are to find it, we must explore this infinite realm of *inner space* as diligently and as scientifically as our scientists are exploring *outer space*. The *within* determines the *without*. From the focal point of individual spiritual consciousness the light of heaven floods the earth and our earthly experience.

The Hebrew word *'erets*, translated *earth*, means to be firm. Earth is not the material substance it appears to be, as modern physicists are discovering. Nor is it the outcome of material evolution. In its metaphysical sense, earth typifies firmness or stability of consciousness in which the wonders of the kingdom of heaven appear. In the very beginning of the appearing of the spiritual realities of creation, earth is revealed as the sphere of operation of heavenly harmony — a concept which twentieth century thinkers are beginning to ponder.

Darkness and the mist of obscurity have seemed to envelop our sphere throughout the ages. So material has it appeared to be that mankind have spent many centuries seeking to learn how the earth evolved, how it came to be. One theory has given way to another, and this will continue so long as individuals base their search on the belief that matter is substance. To the spiritually scientific explorer the creations of matter are like apparitions rising from a mist which have no substance, no actual reality. As we look through the mist of materialism and behold earth as the sphere of heaven, we discover its divine origin, substance, spiritual evolution, and scientific order.

The discoveries of modern physicists concerning the mental nature of what is called matter-substance might well be the voice crying in the wilderness of antiquated theories, pleading to be delivered from the limitations of material concepts of creation.

The time of times is near when the thinkers of the world will accept the simple truth voiced in the first verse in the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In other words, first and of primal importance to understand, *Elohim* — the all-inclusive Creator, the Father and Mother of all — created heaven, the kingdom of God, and made visible the sphere of operation of this heavenly domain and its supernal order and called it *Earth*. But this creation extends far beyond the sphere we call our earth. God, *Elohim* created, or caused to appear, the whole universe! And God, *Elohim*, continues to make visible the things of Spirit

which the human senses cannot comprehend or behold. We are fast approaching that wondrous day of spiritual enlightenment when all mankind will join in the refrain of the inspired writer of the Book of Hebrews:

Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.—
Heb.11:3.

A new translation of these loved familiar words gives fresh inspiration to its message:

By faith we perceive that the universe was fashioned by the word of God, so that the visible came forth from the invisible.— Heb.11:3 (NEB).

God, who is infinite Spirit or Mind, could not create or bring forth out of His own divine nature and essence anything unlike Himself. Since heaven and earth are the emanation of the divine self-containment, they must be God-like — like God. How then can we escape the logical conclusion that both heaven and earth are spiritual! And that what we behold as creation and its phenomena “are the effects of the way in which this spiritual reality appears to us!” (See p. 8.)

The heaven and earth described in the first chapter of Genesis is the same heaven and earth which Isaiah and St. John saw and called “the new heaven and new earth” (Isa.65:17; Rev.21:1). The promise is that when we see heaven and earth in their spiritual nature, revealed in the New Covenant, the former limited, material concept of creation will pass away and not be remembered nor come into mind.

When we view earth through the lens of the material senses, we see earth as matter. When we look through the lens of the spiritual senses, we see earth as spiritual. Let us look at our earth and our whole universe through the windows of heaven and see it as the sphere of operation of heavenly harmony, as the prophet and the revelator saw it. The concept of both heaven *and* earth as spiritual is the first lesson we must learn in gaining an understanding of our Covenant with God. This was the first lesson God demanded that Moses learn when, on Mount Horeb, he saw a bush “which

burned with fire, but the bush was not consumed." The patriarch discerned in this phenomenon a marvelous thing: the substance of the bush was Spirit, not matter; hence it was indestructible, even by fire! In recognition of Moses' spiritual observation God declared: "The place whereon thou standest is holy ground." (See Ex.3:1-5.) The understanding of this fundamental truth — that the substance of the universe is spiritual — is holy ground, and gives us dominion wherever we are.

After the lesson of the burning bush, where God revealed to Moses the basic truth on which all spiritual education and unfoldment are founded, God commanded him to take seventy of the elders of Israel with him to the top of Mount Horeb, known as *The Mountain of God*, to teach them the same fundamental lesson. We read:

And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness.— Ex.24:10.

This vision of earth as "the body of heaven" is holy ground, comparable to St. John's vision of the new heaven and new earth — a citadel of spiritual consciousness wherein we have dominion:

And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.

Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie.— Rev.21:10,11,27.

The very beginning of our spiritual unfoldment is the realization that the heaven and earth which *Elohim* caused to appear are a unit, one compound spiritual idea — harmony and its sphere of operation. Nothing that defiles or works abomination of any kind can enter this city, or citadel of spiritual consciousness. Most of our troubles will be solved when we begin at the beginning, as the holy record in Genesis does, and realize that our universe and all that is therein is wholly spiritual, now!

It is not easy to give up commonly accepted theories and traditional beliefs. The vast majority of people reject the idea of the spiritual nature of creation as nebulous, incomprehensible. The relationship of heaven and earth seems obscure; heaven seems afar off; earth and one's earthly experiences seem to be devoid of heavenly harmony; darkness and ignorance seem to be upon the face of the deep things of God. The second verse in the Bible records this confused state of thought:

And the earth was without form and void; and
darkness was upon the face of the deep.— Gen.1:2.

Who or what said that? Certainly not the Word of God! A finite material sense, unable to comprehend the spiritual infinitude of creation, seems to have injected its chaotic view of creation into the holy record. But there was no reference to chaos in the original record of creation. The passage, "And the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep," was added by a later compiler to conform with Babylonian records of chaos and disorder of the universe. (See *IB*. Vol.I Exeg.p.467.) But since this Babylonian record found its way into the holy record of creation and has been generally accepted as part of the original record, it must be considered and disproved. It is, after all, only a finite concept of the infinite, an attempt of the carnal mind to attribute chaos, discord, void, and darkness to God and His creation.

When viewed through the lens of the material senses, the earth and our earthly experiences seem to be without form, without meaning, and void of heavenly harmony; and darkness, or unenlightenment, seem to be upon the face of the deep things of God. Peering through the keyhole of self and blinded by its own limitations, a finite sense sees only the manifestation of its own imperfection. It cannot comprehend the wonders of God's spiritual universe, for this sense abides in a room of mirrors instead of windows, and sees only the images of its own limited concepts.

The second verse in our Bible appears to be recording a finite material sense, voiced by mortals generally: "I don't see any spiritual creation. I don't see any harmony. All I see is disorder and one big void. Heaven hasn't any substance; besides, it's afar off, if it exists at all. And earth! Well what's in earth but toil and

trouble, fears and frustrations, chance and change? Nothing has any form, any meaning. Besides, it's so dark I can't see anything."

How many times have we viewed creation in this way? A finite personal sense always tries to make us believe that the harmony of heaven is afar off and that our life on earth is without meaning and void of heavenly harmony.

Although the finite sense heard in this lament seems quite positive, the irresistible spiritual force of the Infinite, which is the power of divine unfoldment, sprang into action and dispelled the finite sense with its dark images of thought. The same verse which records the confused view of creation records also the declaration of power which illumines the darkened sense and brings to light the grandeur and order of God's creation. Hear the Word of might which made visible the things of Spirit, which are invisible to the material senses — even that divine Word which launched the worlds in their orbits:

The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the
waters.— Gen.1:2.

"The Spirit of God," from the Hebrew *ruwach* and the Greek *pneuma*, meaning wind, spirit, breath, vital principle, mind, is "the breath of the Almighty," which gives inspiration and life to all. (See Job.33:4.) Christ Jesus called this mighty power *the Holy Spirit, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, and the Spirit of Truth*, which he said would teach us all things and lead us into all truth. (See John 14:16,17,26.)

In *The Abingdon Bible Commentary* (p.176), we read:

The doctrine of the Holy Spirit goes back to the wind (*ruach* = spirit) that blew across Semitic deserts, the phenomenal energy that animated Hebrew leaders.

The Spirit of God is the activating, irresistible divine energy, or force of good, which is always in full operation, constituting and controlling every effect from the flight of a sparrow to the rolling of worlds, from the cry of a new-born babe to the exultation of the new-born of Spirit. As we come into sympathy with this mighty power, we feel its influence in our lives. As thought becomes attuned to the Spirit of God instead of to the spirit of the world, we find that we are in tune with the Infinite.

At times this divine energy comes softly, like the dawn, bringing a sense of joy, strength, and spiritual inspiration, which lifts human consciousness to behold a higher sense of man's divine nature and infinite possibilities, of his relationship with God, and of his mission on earth. When Jesus was baptized of John, the appearing of the Spirit of God was gentle but dynamic. The power of the Holy Ghost opened the doors of his understanding, revealing to him his spiritual identity as the Son of God. Matthew records this appearing thus:

And lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.—

Matt.3:16,17.

At other times this divine power appears as a mighty irresistible force. There is a vivid description of such an appearing in the second chapter of *The Acts of the Apostles* in the New Testament, or New Covenant. The record states that on the Day of Pentecost there were gathered together a multitude from many nations of differing tongues who had come to hear Christ Jesus' disciples preach and teach the Gospel of Christianity. A language barrier might have kept these seekers of spiritual enlightenment from understanding what the disciples said. But something happened! *God poured out His Spirit upon them!* And this irresistible breath of the Almighty swept through the house, filling the minds of the people with the Spirit of God in that holy action we know as *The descent of the Holy Ghost*. The record declares:

And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. . . .

Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language.— Acts 2:2-4.6.

In one mighty breath the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, the Omniscience of *Elohim*, swept aside the language barrier and lifted the thoughts of those devout men and women into a spiritual dimension where they all heard and comprehended the language of Spirit. The effect of this action of the Spirit of God was that the message of the Christ, voiced by the Apostles, was heard by each man and woman present *in his own language*.

St. Paul's words explain this omniscient, transforming power of the Holy Spirit thus:

If they turned to the Lord the veil would disappear.
For the Lord to whom they could turn is the Spirit,
and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, men's souls
are set free.— 11 Cor.3:16,17 (JBP).

Today, as then, when we turn to the Lord, to the omniscient divine Mind, to learn what we need to know, instead of struggling vainly to learn the things of Spirit through the finite, mortal, or carnal, mind, the veil, or mist of obscurity that would hide our oneness with our infinite divine Mind, will disappear. And the Spirit of God will sweep away all barriers to natural normal communication between God and man, between men and nations, between man and every living thing in the whole world. The Spirit of God reveals in us a divine intelligence which enables each one to see his own activity fitting naturally into his brother's work. For where the Spirit of God is, men's souls, or senses, are set free from the confining and confusing limitations of finite materialistic thinking — free to explore the infinite realm of the omniscient divine Mind. Then the world will no longer appear to be a gigantic jig-saw puzzle, but all interests will be seen to be united in one all-inclusive divine plan.

In like manner, the Spirit of God moves upon the waters, or elements of thought, of those seeking to learn the true nature and origin of the universe. This mighty spiritual power literally rends the veil, dissolves the mist of the old materialism, and reveals the spiritual facts of creation. A material sense of evolution, which confines the evolving, or unrolling of the scroll of creation to material processes, is ruled out in the degree that consciousness accepts a scientific understanding, or spiritual sense, whereby to arrive at the real nature and cause of all creation.

As the vision of God's universe becomes clearer, seekers for truth will be able to discern the spiritual identity of all that God has made, and they will see, as did the Revelator, a new heaven and a new earth, a new spiritual concept of heaven and earth, coming down from God, from infinite, omniscient Mind, being reduced to human apprehension. (See Rev.21:1,2.)

The Spirit of God is the Word of *Elohim* which embodies its own law, enforces its own decrees, unfolds creation in accordance with the divine plan, and ushers into human presence the divine idea of all that God has made.

Chapter III

SEVEN PERIODS OF UNFOLDMENT

THE FIRST DAY

(Gen 1:1-5)

Let There Be Light!

Immediately following the mighty declaration of power — “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters” — which dispelled the darkened finite sense that could not see or comprehend the deep things of Spirit, we read:

And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.— Gen.1:3.

Spiritually interpreted these words mean: *There be light*, or there *is* light, because there always *was* light. The command is really a demand that we *let*, allow, permit the light to shine in our minds and hearts, for there is light, there was light, and there always will be light. *Let it shine!* Where? In our human consciousness, to illumine and enlighten us, that we may behold the appearing of the spiritual realities of God’s creation.

Where did the darkness go when the light appeared? It didn’t have to go anywhere, for it never existed as an entity. The Hebrew word *choshek*, translated *darkness*, comes from a root meaning withholding light; figuratively: misery, destruction, sorrow, ignorance, wickedness, night, obscurity. All that the word darkness implies is negative, without actual power or presence. It possesses no positive force that can withhold or withstand light.

The light which appeared at God’s command was not from the sun, for in the order of spiritual unfoldment — or the disclosing of the spiritual realities — the sun had not yet appeared. This light is the divine radiance of God’s own presence, the glory of God shining out from the Infinite, which enlightens the whole world. It is Godlikeness. It is the Christ, the divine manifestation of God.

This powerful light, or Christ, is like a laser beam. It pierces the darkness of materialism, penetrates the inner recesses of con-

sciousness, goes through obstructions, and accomplishes a twofold purpose: it obliterates darkness, or darkened material concepts and fills consciousness — yea, fills the whole earth with its holy light, with the divine nature, the Godlikeness which radiated in every thought and act of Christ Jesus. When the Light, or Christ, appears, darkness and chaos disappear.

Speaking of the Christ, the idea of divine Sonship, which he so gloriously exemplified, Jesus said:

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.— John 8:12.

Christ Jesus *let* the divine light shine in him so radiantly that he has been called *the divine manifestation of God*. Further, he *let* the power and the presence of divinity shine in him so completely that those who came into his presence were healed of all their diseases. He *let* the infinitude of supply shine through him and fed the multitudes with a few loaves and fishes. He *let* God's Word speak through him, so that even the winds and the waves obeyed him. And in wonder the people exclaimed: "He taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (Matt.7:29).

In this Christ-light, this manifestation of Godlikeness, we begin to see what we call earth and our entire earthly experience in its relation to heaven, the harmony of being. If we are wise, we will *let* this divine light shine in us; then we will never walk in darkness or be in doubt of our way. As we continue to *let* the Christ-light shine in and through us, we will be in truth "children of light, children of the day, and not of the night, nor of darkness," as the Apostle declared (1 Thes.5:5). We will be like a city set on an hill, which glorifies God and lights the way for others. Then we will fulfill the Master's estimate of his followers when he said, "Ye are the light of the world" (Matt.5:14-16).

And God saw the light that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.— Gen.1:4.

"God saw the light that it was good" — Godlike — like Himself, a perfect reflection of His thought, possessing divine qualities and activities. *Elohim* drew a line of demarcation between the light, the illumination of the spiritual senses, and the darkness, or ignorance of the material senses, thus making a clear distinction

between the spiritual reality and the material conception of creation. And these two concepts are as different as day and night.

The Christ-light of spiritual illumination, possessing divine qualities, shines in the darkness of the human mind, and though the darkness, or ignorance of materialism, may not comprehend the light, it cannot put it out. The Apostle John confirmed this fact when he wrote of the Christ as the light which was from the beginning, declaring further:

The light shines on in the dark, and the darkness
has never mastered it.— John 1:5 (NEB).

The fact that the light continues to shine in the darkness and that the darkness has no power to put it out has a parallel in the physical universe. As early as 1935 the stratosphere balloon Explorer II with its crew penetrated the stratosphere and photographed the earth and the sun and made many scientific discoveries. From that great height above the atmosphere of our sphere, the sun resembled an aluminum disk, apparently giving out no light whatever. The pictures disclosed a phenomenon which further illustrates the Biblical record, namely: The outer darkness is very real, like blackest night. And there is a distinct line, plainly visible to the eye, showing the division between the troposphere and the stratosphere — a line which literally divides the light on the earth from outer darkness. The light of the sun shines through the darkness but does not appear as light until it reaches the earth's atmosphere, which reflects the solar rays. It is this reflection that we see and call light. But the light shines in and through the outer darkness, even though not visible to the physical senses, and the darkness cannot master it or put it out. (See *National Geographic*, May 1936, pp. 693-714, Special Supplement: "Scientific Results of the Stratosphere Flight," by Captain Albert W. Stevens.)

In the same way, the light of the Christ shines in the darkened mortal consciousness. It is always there, but it is unknown and unseen until there is something to reflect it. And that something is called receptivity — a marvelous reflector of spiritual light. If one's consciousness seems to be darkened, lacking spiritual illumination, a humble prayer for receptivity will enliven the senses, making them active in reflecting light.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.— Gen. 1:5.

This Day is not a period of time; it is the unfolding of light, or spiritual illumination, the radiance of Godlikeness, which the darkness, the night of materialism, cannot quench. The light which God called Day is the Christ. Therefore each day is the unfoldment of Light, "that progressive self-revelation of God which culminates in Christ." The appearing of light is the appearing in human consciousness of the Christ, the idea of divine Sonship, the revelation of the divine nature in man.

The darkness which God called *Night* is not a period of time. The Hebrew word *layil*, or *leyl*, translated *night*, is from a root meaning to fold back; properly, a twist away from the light; figuratively, adversity. A twist, or turning away, from the light! How descriptive of many of our night experiences. Thus we see that the darkness which God called Night is not an entity in itself; it is simply a mental attitude of turning away from the Light which God called Day.

The First Day of spiritual unfoldment reveals the threefold nature of *Elohim*; and gives us the first statement of the Trinity: God, *Elohim*; The Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost; The Light, or the Christ. With this unfoldment in mind, we may paraphrase the First Day, or first period of the New Covenant record thus:

In the beginning, or of first importance, *Elohim*, God, reveals the creative aspect of His divine nature as Father-Mother, the all-inclusive Creator, and makes this compound nature visible in heaven and earth. In this revelation, we may see heavenly harmony and its sphere of operation to be one compound idea, reflecting the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God — heaven husbanding and the earth bringing forth what God has made.

The concept of earth wedded to the harmony of heaven seems incomprehensible to darkened material sense. So the tender, loving Father-Mother reveals His comforting, interpretive aspect as the science of creation, the Spirit of God, which dissipates the darkness of ignorance.

Then the light of the Christ, the idea of divine Sonship, the radiant reflection of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, shines forth. Thus the Infinite reveals its Christly aspect or nature to be the light of the world. God saw the light, the radiance of His in-

finitude, a perfect reflection of His own thought, to be good — perfect for the purpose for which it was brought forth — to manifest the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God in all the world.

God completely separates this glorious concept of divine Sonship from the dark, material concept thereof, and places it in a Holy Trinity. Here the love of the Father-Mother and the understanding of the science of creation, the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, holds this precious compound idea of divine Sonship safe from all mortal misconceptions.

Briefly stated, *Elohim*, the triune divine Principle of the universe, reveals His threefold nature thus:

The Creative aspect of the Trinity: God, *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe, the Creator, the All-in-all God, whose creation is very good.

The Interpretive aspect of the Trinity: The Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, the animating divine energy, force, or law which moves all in accord with the divine Principle of creation and reveals the indissoluble relationship between God and all that He has made.

The Self-revealing aspect of the Trinity: The Light, which is the Christ, the idea of divine Sonship, which enlightens the whole world with the Light of Life so that none should walk in darkness, in the ignorance of a mortal, material concept of themselves as the beloved sons and daughters of God.

This threefold understanding of the very essence of the divine nature is truly a holy city, a whole consciousness, a complete comprehension of what God is, as St. John discerned. The prophecy of the Revelator is that in this divine consciousness, in this understanding, or comprehension, of the divine nature, *There shall be no night*, no darkness, no turning away from the Light of the Christ, from the manifestation of the divine nature! The time for the fulfillment of this prophecy and promise is *now*. So powerful is this all-inclusive threefold nature of the Infinite that even a glimpse of it lifts us above the sod and leads us to a fuller realization of our true being as the expression of our Father-Mother God, embodying the masculine and feminine qualities of our divine Parent.

The Trinitarian concept of God may be traced throughout the Bible. It came to communion in the life of Christ Jesus, in whom the threefold nature of Deity, the divine completeness, was individualized. This threefold nature of the Infinite, which constitutes the divine completeness, was established as the basis of all Christian teaching, preaching, and healing by the Master Christian.

Through the power of the Holy Ghost, the mighty Spirit of God which ushered him into the world, the Master knew God as his Father and was thus able to identify himself as the Son of God. (See Luke 1:26-35; Matt. 3:16,17.) This was the science of the miracles he performed. He considered the understanding of the Trinity of such importance in our demonstration of spiritual dominion on earth, that he commanded his disciples in all ages:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.— Matt.28:19.

The Master's command is that we baptize, or completely submerge, individuals and nations in the name or nature of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Of course we cannot submerge everyone in an individual baptism of water. But through prayer we can clothe them in the divine nature, in the wholeness, or divine completeness, of the God-head.

The Trinity reveals God's triune divine nature. And through the New Covenant of Godlikeness, we learn that man and the universe, created in God's own likeness, embody and express this threefold nature of the Infinite. This great spiritual fact appears to be hidden in the mist of materialism which seems to cover the earth. But there is a remedy: The power of the Trinity gathers all mankind and all creation into the New Covenant relationship with God. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, the mists of a mortal, material existence are swept away. The light of the Christ dawns in the hearts of all men. And sooner or later, all will learn to know God as the only Father-Mother and to know themselves as the sons and daughters of God. In this way the Trinity will be individualized in each one of us as it was in Christ Jesus, and all will be baptized spiritually in the divine nature — in the name, or nature, of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy

Spirit. We have the Scriptural promise that this knowledge of God shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea, embracing all mankind in the glory of God. (See Isa.11:9; Hab. 2:14.)

Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent [have a new mind].— Acts 17:29,30.

Be careful that nobody spoils your faith through intellectualism or high-sounding nonsense. Such stuff is at best founded on men's ideas of the nature of the world and disregards Christ!— Col.2:8 (JBP).

For it is in Christ that the complete being of the Godhead dwells embodied, and in him you have been brought to completion. Every power and authority in the universe is subject to him as Head.—

Col. 2:9-10 (NEB).

Through the revelation and understanding of the Trinity, the three-in-one of the divine nature, the Covenant of Godlikeness begins to take form in consciousness, the kingdom of heaven begins to unfold in us, and the manifestation of the spiritual realities of God's creation begins to appear.

And the evening and the morning
were the first day.

(Gen.1:5.)

The question has often been asked: Why does the unfolding of each day begin with the evening instead of the morning? *Evening* and *morning* refer to the successive appearing of ideas, at first faint, then dawning into the morning light, and unfolding to the full effulgence of the risen day in the full-orbed light of spiritual understanding. Evening and morning also indicate gradations of light and shade, tones of thought, which become apparent as the Supreme Artist depicts the scenes of spiritual reality on the screen of unfolding thought. The *evening* referred to in Genesis does not indicate a sense of darkness, ignorance, doubt, or obscurity, but rather a humble awareness of what we need — a period in which to digest and assimilate the unfoldment of each day, and a quiet peaceful sense which is ready to accept the dawn of new progressive ideas, typified by the morning.

The evening of God's day is a time of preparation, a time of communing with God, of listening for divine directions. It is a time of quiet contemplation, of spiritual preparedness for the morning of the new day. Often in the quiet night watches the activities of the day begin to unfold in consciousness. The evening of God's day is a time to identify ourselves with Spirit, away from the demands of a mortal's day. It is a time for gathering new energy. It is in truth, a time of preparation for the divine adventure of new unfoldment. Always remember: the evening *begins* the new day! It is helpful to think of the evening as the beginning instead of the ending of a day. It takes away a sense of fatigue at the end of a day and enables us to gather fresh energy as the evening unfolds.

Through periods of orderly unfoldment all that is necessary to express the complete nature of God comes to light. The forms of creation are called the firmament, the sea, the dry land, the grass, herb, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after its kind, whose seed is in itself; the sun, moon, and stars, the moving creatures which the waters bring forth, the living creatures which the earth brings forth, the winged fowl to fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven (Gen.1:6-25). However, these things symbolize spiritual ideas of creation and their living identities and point to divine reality which the material senses cannot comprehend.

We cannot understand or behold the heaven and earth of God's creating through the five physical senses, for these senses testify only to their own nature, which is fallible and limited. So let us not try to take these troublesome unreliable senses with us up the Mount of Revelation of what God has made, for they are deceptive. We cannot depend upon these senses and their evidence to tell us the truth concerning the motion or the shape of the earth. They do not testify aright concerning the substance of the universe. Nor can they tell us of the nature of anything God has made, for God's creation is wholly spiritual. They cannot comprehend what is Godlike, or like God. They have no concept of any dimension of thought outside the material dimensions of prevailing belief. They have not penetrated the infinitude of the kingdom of heaven within to learn the science of the things of Spirit. Nor have they followed the admonition of St. James, given nearly two thousand years ago, to look into "the mirror of God's perfect law" and see therein what God's law reveals of transcendent reality (Jas.1:25, JBP).

If we wish to discover the truths of God's universe, we must look into the mirror of God's law and remember what we discern therein. Then we will find the evidence of the universe of Spirit, beyond time and space, unseen to the material senses, but clearly visible to scientific discernment. In this perfect law we will also see a perfect plan of unfoldment and a perfect purpose for everyone and everything in the whole universe. Mortals may see this plan and purpose as material evolution and the predestination of good and evil. But in the mirror of God's perfect law, we see God's perfect plan and perfect purpose coming to light — a plan and purpose in which "all things work together for good" (Rom.8:28).

When searching for scientific truths our astronomers, mathematicians, and modern physicists look beyond the evidence of the material senses and employ their scientific senses to investigate and explore their particular spheres. Those who search for spiritual truths must employ their spiritual senses when investigating and exploring spiritual spheres. The prophet Isaiah revealed the secret of his spiritual vision when he said:

Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the
earth beneath.— Isa.51:6.

Let us, like the prophet, lift up our eyes, our spiritual vision, to the heaven of spiritual reality, and through this divine lens, let us look upon the earth beneath and behold its spiritual nature. Then, like the prophet, we will declare "the end from the beginning" (Isa.46:10) instead of presumptuously beginning with the end and endeavoring to make cause agree with effect. To discover the nature of the universe, begin at the beginning, with the fact that God made heaven and earth and all that they contain in His own image, after His own likeness, and reach the conclusion that the universe is Godlike, spiritual. Premise and conclusion must be in perfect accord.

The First Day, or first period of unfoldment, is our starting point in all things and is of first importance for us to comprehend. It is the beginning of the revelation of the unfoldment of the divine nature in us and in our whole universe. As we acknowledge God as the only Father and Mother, the only Creator of the universe, we feel the divine energy of this primal truth as a mighty spiritual force — the Spirit of God moving on the elements of con-

sciousness, banishing the darkness of materialism, silencing the clamor of personal sense, and opening the door of the kingdom of heaven, revealing the Christ, the light of the world. The radiance of this first period of unfoldment of the divine nature reveals a world of marvelous light, in whose light shall we see light.

This is what the New Covenant is all about: All creation covenanted to God in a sacred bond of unity, all bearing the seal of Divinity, all expressing the glories of the kingdom of heaven revealed and released in man.

THE SECOND DAY

(Gen. 1:6-8)

Let There Be A Firmament!

As the second period of our Covenant with God begins to unfold we see the firmament, which God called Heaven, brooding over the earth, cherishing its sphere of operation. We also discover the way by which the harmony of Heaven is maintained on earth. The compelling force of the Spirit of God, moving on the face of the waters, stirs the elements of thought and brings to light in human consciousness a priceless divine attribute: a discerning and discriminating insight by which we may comprehend the deep things of God, learn the spiritual nature of all things, and distinguish between the materialistic beliefs of creation and the exalted, spiritual concepts of what God has made.

Hear the mighty declaration of power of the Word of God which releases the well-springs of understanding deep within us and leads us into the second period of advancing thought.

And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.— Gen.1:6,7.

The waters under the firmament are often referred to as troubled, erratic, having no certain course, subject to dangerous storms and unruly currents. They are typical of thoughts that are

unsettled, emotional, responding easily to lawless, rebellious forces. The waters above the firmament, known in literature as *the heavenly sea*, are called by St. John in Revelation (4:6), "the sea of glass," or the glassy sea, clear as crystal, in which are seen, as in a mirror, wonderful reflections, images of divine reality. According to the Psalmist, these waters above the heavens praise God continually (Ps. 148:4). They show forth God's laws, revealing mighty spiritual forces and deep currents of thought.

The listening ear may hear the Word of *Elohim* demanding: *Let* there be a firmament of spiritual understanding, a discerning and discriminating insight, in the midst of the waters, in the elements of your consciousness, to make a clear distinction between thoughts under heaven — thoughts floundering in the currents of materialism — and thoughts above the heaven — divine ideas emanating from the currents of Spirit. *Let*, or allow, the firmament of heaven challenge the thoughts you entertain; *Let* heavenly insight divide and classify them. And accept the divine decree that separates spiritual from material meditations and reflections.

The word *divide* means to separate or distinguish as by a line of demarcation, as fact is separated from fiction, reality is set apart from illusion, and substance is distinguished from simulation. The firmament of spiritual understanding which God called Heaven discriminates by setting apart the good from the evil, the pure from the impure, the substantial from the unsubstantial, the spiritual from the material. Spiritual discrimination sees through the mist of material obscurity and human theories and discerns divine reality instead of mistaken concepts of the corporeal senses.

The firmament of spiritual understanding established in the midst of the waters, in the elements of human consciousness, brings to light the spiritual nature of the universe which God created, or caused to appear, and enables us to behold this holy realm of Spirit right where a material sense sees only preconceived conceptions — images of its own misinterpretations and miscalculations of what God has made.

Some modern physicists, viewing the universe through their scientifically trained senses, are reaching conclusions that startle the materialistic observer and confirm the revelations of the spiritual astronomer. They draw a definite line of demarcation between the testimony of the material senses and the evidence of

their scientific senses, declaring: "Since every object is simply the sum of its qualities and since qualities exist only in the mind, the whole objective universe of matter and energy, atoms and stars, does not exist except as a construction of the consciousness, an edifice of conventional symbols, shaped by the senses of men." (See p.8.)

The firmament of spiritual understanding draws a definite line of demarcation between Spirit and matter and shows clearly that Spirit, God, is the reality and matter the unreality; Spirit is absolutely true or self-existent while matter is derivative, or dependent upon physical sense testimony; Spirit is that which is ultimate while matter is merely what is apparent. Or, as the modern physicists declare: "The reality of things is mental or spiritual, and so-called material phenomena are the effects of the way in which this spiritual reality appears to us." (See p.8.)

And God called the firmament Heaven.— Gen.1:8.

In our individual experiences, even while the firmament is separating us from the limitations and discords of material concepts, it is uniting us with eternal harmony, wedding us to spirituality. It is revealing to us the harmonious nature of all that the eye beholds, thus linking us to spiritual reality.

Something of the office of the firmament may be observed in the vast region called the sky. The stars and planets are separated from one another by the firmament. But this separation does not place barriers between the celestial bodies; it is the separation of distinctiveness. This separateness holds each of these bodies in its own individual orbit while moving each in harmony with all the others. Here it may be seen that although the firmament separates the heavenly bodies, it nevertheless unites them in a bond of union through the law of harmony — the law which mortals perceive faintly in forces of adhesion, cohesion, gravitation, and attraction. These forces, when viewed through the lens of spiritual understanding, are seen to be basic laws of universal oneness and unity through which the harmonious relationship of everything God has made is revealed and maintained.

In this second period of unfoldment God, *Elohim*, the only Creator, is revealed as the source of all wisdom and intelligence. In other words, the firmament of spiritual understanding, which

God has placed in the midst of the elements of our thought, enables us to comprehend the deep things of God and to wisely and intelligently draw a line of demarcation, or make a distinction, between what is genuine and what is counterfeit, what is real and what is unreal, what is true and what is merely apparent, between what is substance and what is shadow. Understanding, wisdom, and intelligence belong to God, the divine Mind. These attributes or properties of divine Mind do not originate in or proceed from a human brain, nor are they limited by the finite senses of the carnal mind. They originate in and proceed from the Infinite, the Mind which is God. Hence they are ever-present, all-powerful, omniscient, and ever-active in each one of us. The Spirit of God overrules any finite sense that would limit intelligence or spiritual understanding or infinite wisdom to the lower elements of the carnal mind, of which the waters under the firmament are typical.

... And it was so.—Gen.1:7.

It is! It always was so and always will be so! The divine *Esse* has spoken:

That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.— Eccl.3:15.

In the Book of Job we read:

There is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.—Job 32:8.

Inspiration, a quality of God, belongs to all His children. It is the activity of the Christ at work in us. The word *inspiration* is closely associated with the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God. The Hebrew word *neshamah*, translated *inspiration*, means vital breath, divinely breathed in. With this divine inspiration comes spiritual understanding as gently, naturally, spontaneously as breathing in the breath of the Almighty.

In our second period of unfoldment we begin to see divine reality with eyes inspired by Christly understanding; while fading from sight are the cruel outlines of mortal discords and material inadequacies. Inspiration impels! It acts! It cuts through the slow,

tedious ways of mortal planning and brings out new ways of accomplishing good. Inspiration quickly grasps the answers to problems. When the light of inspiration touches thought, ideas begin to fall into place. The path of progress is clearly defined. The way is plain. Truly, the inspiration of the Almighty, the All-might of *Elohim*, gives us understanding to comprehend the deep things of God.

Our second day, or second period of unfolding Light, follows the pattern of the Trinity:

God, *Elohim*, is the source of all wisdom and intelligence.

The Word of God, the ever active Spirit of *Elohim*, places this divine understanding in the very heart of human consciousness, to divide or distinguish between thoughts from heaven and earthly beliefs. At the same time the firmament of spiritual understanding unites creation in one all-harmonious plan, even while maintaining the separateness of identity.

As the second period of unfolding Light, the appearing of the Christ to human consciousness, becomes clearer, we see the firmament of Heaven overshadowing the human with the divine, as the heavens brood over the earth, embracing mankind and all creation in whatever state or stage of development they may be.

The firmament of spiritual understanding first makes the separation between what is good and what is evil, between Spirit and matter, and then reveals our at-one-ment with heaven and its harmony, links us with spiritual reality, and brings to our human comprehension that state of divine consciousness which our Master called *the kingdom of heaven*, in which we find the reign of harmony — all things working together for good.

And the evening and the morning
were the second day.
(Gen.1:8.)

The light of revelation of the first period and the dawn of spiritual understanding of the second period lead us into the third period of unfoldment of our Covenant with God, in which the specific comes forth from the general, identity emerges from the Infinite, and forms of spiritual creation begin to appear on the horizon of expanding thought.

THE THIRD DAY

(Gen. 1:9-13)

Let the Dry Land Appear!

As the third period unfolds the power of the Word, the ever-active Spirit of God, continues to move upon the face of the waters, or elements of thought, gathering together the infinite ideas of creation into channels of expression. In this period we begin to comprehend the individuality of the Infinite. Through the power of the Holy Ghost ideas spring forth from the infinite elements of divine Mind and etch themselves in consciousness. The Word of God describes this action:

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.— Gen. 1:9, 10.

Again the divine *Esse* declares: It is so! It is good! What is unfolding comes to light because it *is* so! It *is* actual! Therefore it *is* forever appearing. And it is always good. This action includes all the divine attributes. Everything about it is good — perfect for the divine purpose for which it was brought forth.

The waters typify the vast elements of the infinite Mind. But to the human mind they appear to be incomprehensible, even dangerous — a seething sea of impossibilities — instead of the infinite elements of divine Mind awaiting discovery, unfoldment, and development within our individual consciousness.

As a teacher reduces the vastness of a subject into specific ideas, beginning with the lesser and advancing to the greater, so the Creator, the loving Father-Mother, gathers the infinite elements of spiritual reality into a focal point of ideas, and the dry land, typical of the specific formations of the Infinite, appears, or comes to light.

Every idea of infinite Mind has its identity, that which identifies the idea to human consciousness; as in mathematics the idea of the number seven is identified by the figure 7. The value of the figure 7 is in the idea of the number seven, so that when you see the figure you think of its value. But they are one in your consciousness. As we grow in spiritual understanding of this period of

unfoldment, we learn a vitally important lesson in spiritual creation, namely, that ideas and their identities cannot be separated. They are one. Thus when an idea appears in consciousness, we should expect to see its identity, or that which identifies the idea to us humanly. In other words, we should expect to see the dry land appear!

In our individual experiences the significance of the creative mandate, "Let the dry land appear," is that we *let*, or allow, the Spirit of God bring forth in our consciousness, out of the infinite elements of divine Mind, the specific ideas we need every moment in forms we can see, comprehend, and utilize. In this way we find all our needs cared for. The source, Spirit, being infinite, the supply is spiritual and infinite, yet appears in forms which meet the human need. This truth is law.

The law of ever-appearing creation is illustrated in many places in our Bible. Notable among them is the record of the pot of oil that failed not. A God-fearing widow in Israel appealed to the prophet Elisha to save her sons from being taken bondmen in payment of her debts. Instead of offering to help her obtain money to pay her creditors, the prophet asked her:

Tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not anything in the house, save a pot of oil.

Then he said, Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.

And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.— II Kings 4:2-4.

The woman was obedient. Every empty vessel was filled with the precious oil, and yet the oil continued to flow. The oil was the evidence of Spirit's abundant supply of inexhaustible good. The source being infinite, the supply flowed from that infinitude, abundantly meeting her human need.

Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest.— II Kings 4:7.

This evidence of the ever-flowing oil, illustrating the ever-appearing of whatever meets the human need, is not just a beautiful story of a happening thousands of years ago. It is illustrative of an ever-operative law, active today and forever. And when we come into harmony with its holy power, when we comprehend the dynamic force of the demand that we *Let the dry land appear*, we *let* the ideas of God unfold in consciousness and evidence themselves in our experience.

In the third period of unfoldment of what God has made, the individuality of the Infinite begins to take form, and the nature of creation is specifically defined. The Great Artist depicts His thoughts on the canvas of earth and of our earthly experiences in form, color, light, and shade, in quality and quantity. But as with the figure 7 and the idea seven, the reality, life, substance, individuality, and immortality of all things remain as ideas in the Mind of the Artist, in the Soul of the Creator. They are therefore not limited, bound, or restricted by the forms which express them. The Great Artist expresses His own divine nature, His substance and wholeness, His wisdom, beauty, and immortality in everything He creates, or causes to appear. His Word proclaims the eternity of every individual expression of life through the idea of *the seed within itself*. We hear this law voiced thus:

And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:11,12.

God needed no process by which to bring forth the forms of spiritual creation. His Word was sufficient. It was so! The divine *Esse*, the *I AM*, said so! *Because it is, it must appear!*

He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.— Ps.33:9.

Reflecting the tenderness of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, heaven husbands and the earth brings forth the grass, the herb, the fruit tree, whose seed is in itself, after their kind. The

seed within itself signifies the forever appearing of God's ideas and their living identities in obedience to the law of unfoldment of the Third Day, in which the immortal nature of the spiritual realities of eternal Life and of the forms which express them is revealed.

In this unfolding we discover the secret of the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, of the never failing pot of oil. And in the degree that we comprehend the law of this unfolding, we discover our own never ending, never diminishing resources. We are able to see our visible supply emerging from the invisible infinite source, "coming down from God out of heaven" (Rev.21:2), completely independent of matter and its conditions.

The promise of this period of unfoldment is portentous: all forms of God's creation which the earth brings forth continue to reproduce themselves after their kind, maintaining their eternal identity, or individuality, not because of any life or intelligence of their own, but because they reflect the creative power of eternal divine Life itself. As our vision is spiritualized we see the visible forms of Life which the earth brings forth as wholly spiritual and link their beauty, majesty, grandeur, infinitude, and immortality with God, Spirit, and not with matter.

As darkness gives place to light, as ignorance yields to intelligence, as infancy grows to maturity, so does a material sense of creation yield to the spiritual facts of being. As in the cycles of light the seasons come and go, the sun appears and disappears, so in the cycles of life the evidence of life is seen advancing and receding. But just as the science of astronomy reveals the fact that light does not come and go, so does the Science of Life reveal the fact that life does not come and go, even though we lose sight of it. The life of Christ Jesus shows clearly, through the Resurrection, that life and individuality go on, even though they may be invisible to the human senses.

In this period may be glimpsed something of the metaphorical significance of "the tree of life . . . which yieldeth her fruit every month," and of the law of ever-appearing creation which governs its ever-recurring fruitage (Rev.22:2).

In the degree that we comprehend this law, it becomes to us the law of life which continues to unfold in individual consciousness until all ideas are resurrected from matter to their spiritual identification. As the comprehension of this law grows in us, we begin

to understand the law governing the seed within itself — every idea emanating from the divine Mind and perpetually renewing and reproducing itself from its infinite, divine source. The law of this Third Day discloses the transcendent truth that all of God's ideas are ever present; and where an idea is, the law of ever-appearing creation brings forth the form which expresses it. Everything God has made responds to the law of eternal divine Life.

In this third period of unfoldment of our Covenant with God, we feel the power of spiritual attraction lifting human consciousness above a material concept of creation to the spiritual. As we ascend higher and higher in the understanding of the spiritual nature of everything God has made, we emerge from the finite into the infinite consciousness of life and, in a measure, see all things as God sees them: wholly spiritual and God-like, reflecting the intelligence, power, substance, activity, and life of the Creator.

In the third period of unfolding Light, which God called Day, the pattern of the Trinity continues to reveal the Triune divine nature:

God, *Elohim*, our Father-Mother, or Origin, is seen to be the creator of everything that grows. At God's command the visible emerges from the invisible, and the individuality of the Infinite begins to take form.

The Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, reveals this scientific truth and causes to appear, or brings to light, the dry land, which God called Earth, in which is the seed of every living thing, reflecting the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*. Heaven husbands and the Earth brings forth divine realities seen as the grass, herb, and the fruit tree yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself, typical of every idea needed to feed, clothe, and house man — to nourish mind and body.

Every living thing, whose seed is in itself, typical of ever-appearing creation, partakes of the nature of God, eternal Life, and thus expresses the nature of the Christ, the full manifestation of all that God has made. Thus we see that from the beginning the Christ is our Saviour — the saving ever-appearing idea of all that exists.

Thus the Covenant of God with man continues to unfold its threefold divine nature.

In this period we begin to comprehend the true scientific concept of earth as wholly spiritual, reflecting the creative power of

the divine Principle of Life and reproducing to human view the spiritual forms of creation.

And God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:12.

The secret of “the seed within itself” and the law of ever-appearing creation is revealed in the evening and the morning of the Third Day of spiritual creation. In this period of unfoldment of our Covenant with God, the all-good substance of creation is discovered, even “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb. 11:1) — the substance which may be used, but not used up, because its source is infinite.

In the Light of this Day we begin to see, to comprehend in some measure, the power of the divine mandate, “Let the dry land appear!” We begin to feel the forces of the Spirit of God at work — spiritual forces which cause the ideas of divine good to appear — to emerge from the infinite elements of the divine Mind and become visible to human consciousness.

In the degree that the understanding of this divine law unfolds in us, we will be able to exert the power of the creative *let* and declare with divine authority: *Let* the specific ideas of divine good and their living identities that we need every moment *appear*, become visible! Then the divine *Esse* will declare in us: *It was so, and therefore it is so!*

And the evening and the morning
were the third day.
(Gen.1:13.)

THE FOURTH DAY

(Gen.1:14-19)

Let There Be Lights in
The Firmament of Heaven!

The first three periods of unfoldment of our seven-fold Covenant with God bring us naturally to the keynote of revelation — to the Fourth Day, or fourth period of unfoldment of the wonders of spiritual creation. In this period the Spirit of God takes us higher in the revelation of our Covenant relationship with God. Symbolically, we see the heaven, the firmament of spiritual

understanding, spreading above the earth like a great tent, hovering over and husbanding its sphere of operation and blessing all that is therein.

Lights appear in the firmament of heaven: specific reflections of the Christ-light are revealed, which give spiritual enlightenment on earth. These spiritual luminaries, of which the heavenly lights are typical, magnify the threefold nature of the infinite to human sight so that the divine nature becomes more apparent in all creation. In their light we see more clearly the wonders of spiritual creation — wonders which are invisible to the material senses but which are clearly visible to scientific thought through spiritual understanding. In their light the identities of spiritual creation become visible. In their light the spiritual significance of all that God has made may be seen and understood. Hear the Word of God, the creative *Logos*, the science (*episteme*) of God, which elevates thought to behold this divine unfoldment:

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.

And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so.— Gen.1:14,15.

These lights in the firmament of spiritual understanding which give light upon the earth are illuminations of divine intelligence that do indeed “divide the day from the night.” They enable us to draw a line of demarcation between the enlightened spiritual concept of creation and the darkened unenlightened material concept thereof. These lights, like powerful laser beams, pierce the veil of matter and material concepts and reveal divine reality — the wholly mental nature of all creation. And again the divine *Esse* affirms: “It was so!” *It is!*

The light of intelligence reveals the spiritual significance of God’s signs, seasons, days, and years, which are not measured by calendars but by divine events. The light of intelligence also reveals the vital fact that man and his activity and supply are not governed or limited by a finite, material sense of time, seasons, and cycles. In the light of his own divine nature, Christ Jesus saw beyond the material sense of the seasons and of seasonal fruitage

to the infinite timeless *now*. Hence he was conscious of the ever-presence of all that God has made. He urged his followers, then and now, to lift their perceptive faculties into a spiritual dimension and thereby see what he saw. To those who thought and lived within material dimensions and thereby saw only material concepts of creation and its fruitage, he said:

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.— John 4:35.

Are we *letting* the lights of heaven, in the firmament of spiritual understanding, help us to apprehend the ideas of Spirit, which material forms symbolize? Or are we believing only the evidence of the material senses? All that we behold in the natural universe is a hieroglyph of Deity, a picture of some spiritual idea which God has made, a visible symbol of an invisible reality. Recall the summation of the views of modern physicists concerning the mental or spiritual nature of the universe:

Their considered view is that physics suggests that the reality of things is mental or spiritual, and that so-called material phenomena are the effect of the way in which this spiritual reality appears to us. . . . Philosophers and scientists are arriving at the startling conclusion that since every object is simply the sum of its qualities and since qualities exist only in the mind, the whole objective universe of matter and energy, atoms and stars, does not exist except as a construction of the consciousness, an edifice of conventional symbols, shaped by the senses of men. (See p.8.)

Twentieth century scientists, whether or not they realize it, are beginning to see creation in the lights of heaven, in the firmament of spiritual, scientific understanding. Their search for truth is leading them to discover the spiritual nature of the universe. And they are beginning to give their consent, in their own way, to the authenticity of the record of creation in the first chapter of Genesis.

As we discern all things in the heavenly lights, all creation will be illumined with spiritual light, and we will see through the dark outlines of matter to the divine reality, to the qualities which exist

only in the mind. The poet John Greenleaf Whittier expressed it thus: "The outward symbols disappear from him whose inward sight is clear."

In the degree that we rise into the freer, unrestricted spiritual dimension of thought, we behold the spiritual qualities, ideas, and elements of which the material forms are but symbols. We discover that we are now living in the spiritual universe, in that holy realm our Master called *the kingdom of heaven*.

And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.

And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth,

And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness.— Gen.1:16-18.

The Babylonians and other heathen nations worshipped the sun and moon and believed that the stars and planets influenced their lives. In fact, they believed that the heavenly bodies were gods, and they devised a pseudoscience in support of their beliefs. But in the divine record these lights are declared to be created for the service of man, fulfilling a divine purpose. The lights, or spiritual luminaries, hold and distribute the light created on the first day. They illumine the universe and thus make visible what already exists. Their material symbols do not influence or control the lives of men.

It is conceded by many that the two great lights symbolize the Christ and the Holy Spirit, or the Spirit of God — the two majestic luminaries through which God reveals His divine nature on earth. The demand of this period is that we *let* these lights rule over the night of materialism and over the day of intellectuality, until that holy day dawns in consciousness in which there is no night (Rev.21:25).

"He made the stars also." The children of God who are enlightened and empowered by the Christ and the Holy Spirit are themselves luminaries in the darkness of ignorance, fear, and materialism. They shine as stars in the night. As we *let* the divine lights shine in us, our individual lights, our lives, like the stars, radiate and glow and give light to others along the way, and so indeed "give light upon the earth."

Christ Jesus confirmed this fact when he said to his followers in all ages:

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.— Matt.5:14-16.

The sun, moon, and stars, even when viewed through the lens of the material senses, serve a divine purpose in giving light upon the earth. How wonderful to see these useful symbols of divine light in their true nature, fulfilling their divine purpose: enlightening mankind and leading them day by day out of the darkness of materialism into the full radiance of spiritual enlightenment, into God's holy Day.

One of the demands of the fourth period of unfoldment is that we understand the divine nature of our heavenly lights and that we do not give power to the symbols which represent them. Christ Jesus condemned those who interpreted the things of God materially and looked to the sky for signs of the times. (See Matt.16:1-3.) If we look to the divine lights "for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years," as Christ Jesus did, instead of to the sun, moon, and stars, as did the Babylonian thinkers, we will see the signs of heaven in the signs of the times and profit from our spiritual observations.

It is vital to our spiritual unfoldment that we understand this simple but profound truth: the spiritual ideas which the sun, moon, and stars represent, and not their useful symbols, perform the divine functions of ruling over the day and over the night — over every phase of our lives — and of dividing the light from the darkness, making a distinct separation between scientific understanding and superstitious traditional opinions and beliefs.

The spiritual lights which give identity and form to the sun, moon, and stars illumine our consciousness and our world with the knowledge of the glory of God. The Christ and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, enlighten and illumine the universe. This unfoldment of light goes on until there is no darkness at all, no density of

ignorance, materialism, or unenlightenment, and we see all things glorified in the divine light, aglow with the radiance of primordial divinity.

The Trinity continues to reveal its threefold nature in this fourth period of unfoldment of our Covenant with God — a period which sounds the keynote of divine revelation, a period which enlightens the whole world with spiritual light. In this holy Light, which God called Day, we see all creation as God sees it — spiritual, perfect, Godlike. The *Logos*, the divine Word, illumines the universe with the light of the divine nature in a divinely natural way:

God, *Elohim*, is seen to be the Source of all light — of all enlightenment — all understanding, all intelligence, all knowledge.

The sun, symbolic of the irresistible radiance of the Spirit of God, is typical of the never-diminishing power of the Holy Spirit, enlightening human consciousness spiritually, vivifying the earth, and making visible to inspired thought what already exists.

The moon, symbolic of the reflected light of *Elohim*, is typical of the Christ, coming to earth in the darkness of ignorance, spiritual unenlightenment, and mortal fear, to comfort and light up the dark places of earthly experience and to distribute the light of the sun, even when earthly thought turns away from the greater light. The stars, symbolic of the light radiated in the lives of spiritual thinkers, reflecting, or giving out, the meridian light of divine Mind, symbolized by the sun, give light upon the earth when neither sun nor moon appears, and thus help to enlighten the darkness of mortal thought.

And God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:18.

The divine lights which God placed in the firmament of heaven to give light upon the earth and to rule over the day and over the night are *good*. They embody and reflect the divine nature; they are perfect for the purpose for which they were brought forth; and they do accomplish their divine purpose of making visible the things of Spirit which already exist and of enlightening and beautifying the earth.

As we view all creation — people, places, things, cause, and effect — in the heavenly lights which the sun, moon, and stars represent, their spiritual identity shines forth and we see them in

their divine nature as Godlike, as beautiful, intelligent, active, good, as expressing the glory of God — the glory which belongs to all and which is inherent in all creation.

And the evening and the morning
were the fourth day.
(Gen.1:19.)

THE FIFTH DAY

(Gen.1:20-23)

Let the Waters Bring Forth!

As we enter the fifth period of unfoldment of God's Covenant with man, we feel an acceleration of the action of the Spirit of God in the divine mandate:

And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.— Gen.1:20.

In Bible literature, the appearance of the moving creatures that have life signals a revolutionary forward movement of spiritual progress, an acceleration of unfoldment, a quickening of spiritual apprehension, the approach of a climax of holy action and fulfillment. The divine mandate demands that we *let* the waters, the vast elements of divine Mind, bring forth *abundantly* the moving, ever-active ideas of the divine Mind in our consciousness, and *let* them have full rein. The divine impulsion which activates the moving creatures impels us forward and lifts our thoughts to soar as the fowl that fly above the earth in the open firmament, in the heaven of spiritual understanding, thus elevating us above finite, stultifying, unprogressive material concepts of ourselves, of the earth, and of our earthly experience.

The divine impulsion of the fifth period of unfoldment of the divine nature in man and the universe gives spiritual momentum to our every thought and act. This divine impulsion counteracts negative forces of inertia, stagnation, restriction, frustration, immobility — stalemates of every kind — forces that would attempt to interrupt or slow down or bring to a halt the mighty movement

of the omni-action of divine Good, of which the moving creatures that have life are symbolic.

The divine impulsion illustrated in this fifth period neutralizes the drag or inertia of materialism. In aeronautics the drag is defined as total resistance to forward and upward motion. The pull of gravity plus the weight of the airplane constitute the drag. In order that an airplane may fly, the forward thrust must be great enough to neutralize the drag. An airplane is airborne when it has cast off its earth weights. As we *let*, or allow, the divine impulsion, typified by the moving creatures that have life, move us ever forward in spiritual understanding and accomplishment, we will cast off our earth weights and be lifted above the drag of materialism on wings of spiritual inspiration and aspiration, typified by the fowl that fly in the open firmament of heaven.

And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind.— Gen.1:21.

The whales and other living, moving creatures which the waters bring forth are symbolic of grand and noble ideas that are ever present and ever active in the elements of divine Mind. These grand and noble ideas move with unrestricted power and grace in individual consciousness as we are receptive to them, and as we *let* the waters, the divine elements, bring them forth abundantly in thought and action.

The fifth period of unfoldment of our Covenant with God and of the threefold nature of the Infinite teems with action. Everything moves! Everything progresses! Everything unfolds! And everything is abundant, expressing the infinitude and omni-action of the divine source, of Life itself! Further, everything is majestic, stately, reflecting the divine royalty of the Creator.

The prophet Ezekiel, in his first vision, describes, metaphorically, the action of the moving creatures that have life:

And I looked, and, behold a whirlwind came out of the north.
Out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures; . . .
And their wings were stretched upward, . . .

And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went.

And their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.—

Ezek. 1:4,5,11,12,16.

Wheels within wheels! A metaphorical figure which portrays, in some measure, the omni-action of Omnipotence. Many Bible commentators agree that the four dynamic creatures in Ezekiel's vision and those in St. John's Revelation (5:6-11) symbolize the Omnipotence, Omnipresence, Omniscience, and Omni-action of the Holy Spirit.

The power of the unfoldment of this period demands that we move with the moving creatures, respond to and become a part of the momentum of divine ideas as they unfold. As they go forward, we go forward on wings of spiritual inspiration, unrestricted by the finite limitations of corporeality and of earthward gravitation. The demand is that we do everything and go everywhere in the power of the Spirit of God with a certain sense of purpose and fulfillment, going straight toward our high goal, turning neither to the right nor to the left. This unfoldment of divine omni-action gives momentum, impetus, and power to the unfolding of the mighty ideas in consciousness and experience.

And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.— Gen. 1:22.

This is the first time the word *blessed* appears in the Bible. As we go forward in the unfoldment of the divine nature in man and the universe, the idea of being blessed has tremendous significance for us. The Hebrew word *barak'el*, translated *blessing*, carries the meaning of prosperity, of going forward, and of being divinely favored. The Hebrew *barak*, to bless, has many different meanings: to grant divine or heavenly favor; to hallow or consecrate; to make holy; to make successful in spiritual happiness and temporal concerns; to magnify and increase; to praise or glorify. In numerous instances the thought of God's blessing is linked with expansion, increase, multiplication, fruitfulness, prosperity — as in the verse quoted above: "Be fruitful and multiply."

God's blessing takes off human shackles and sets us free to move as do the majestic moving creatures in the heavenly freedom of the divine nature. God's blessing enables us to be fruitful in good works: to multiply, or demonstrate, the infinitude of everything our thoughts rest upon.

Although all of God's creation reflects the creative aspect of the Creator, the spiritual significance of the blessedness of fruitfulness and multiplication means much more than the reproduction of the species. The command, "Be fruitful and multiply," is a divine demand that we develop each idea that comes to us in thought and experience; that we bring out the infinite nature of each idea into clear, full, explicit expressions; that we bring to light, or make visible, all the hidden or latent qualities of each idea. The command also demands that we *let* each idea and element of creation expand our thought so that we may comprehend the infinitude of everything God has made. For every idea that comes to us is infinite and its development is also infinite.

Nothing that God has made is static. Everything unfolds endlessly — *ad infinitum*. The only limitation of any idea or item of creation is our own finite conception of its infinite nature. We are fruitful and multiply when we remove the swaddling clothes from our minds and let our thoughts expand to encompass the infinitude of lesser and greater units of creation, of every item in our lives.

Christ Jesus illustrated the power of this fifth period of unfoldment when he multiplied the loaves and fishes. Before performing this miracle, however, the Master *blessed* the apparently meager supply and thereby *let* their infinitude become apparent. He fed more than 5,000 men, beside women and children, with five loaves and two small fishes, and then took up twelve baskets full of fragments that remained after all had eaten. (See Matt.14:14-21.)

Christ Jesus understood the law of blessedness revealed in this fifth period of unfoldment. His understanding of this law opened the windows of heaven, and the manifestation of abundance poured forth from the firmament of spiritual understanding which God called Heaven. Because he knew the spiritual nature of everything God had made, he saw no material limitation of any good. And so the infinitude of each individual item of supply was made visible and practical to the multitude.

The infinite nature of each idea expands in our consciousness

and experience in the degree that our thinking reflects the infinite elements of the divine Mind which the waters symbolize. How far are we willing to launch out into these infinite elements of Mind?

We may see, in some measure, the spiritual action of the unfoldment of ideas and their identities in the illustration of a pebble dropped in water. While no material illustration fully depicts divine facts, the action of waves going out from a center helps us to see the nature of spiritual unfoldment. As each new wave forms it accelerates the movement of the waves already expanding. This movement of concentric action continues to be controlled from its center, no matter how far and wide the circumference of the expansion extends. The law of physics governing this action, the law of concentricity, is a finite human concept of the infinite law of unfoldment, which is the law of blessedness.

The action of spiritual multiplication may also be seen faintly in the movement of sound and light waves sent out from a television broadcasting station. The radiation of sound and light expands in all directions. But no matter how far these waves advance, they maintain their original identity, or wave length. Because they continue to be impelled and controlled by their center, they remain obedient to their point of origin.

The infinite nature of this action is also seen in the fact that no matter how many television sets are tuned to the same program at the same time, there is no lack of sound and light, of form and color. Any one who wishes to tune to a certain channel does so without fear that by his action others might be deprived of some part of the program. Millions of television sets can be tuned to the same channel at the same time and, depending on the condition of the receiving set, each one will receive the full program with no part of it lacking. Furthermore, the broadcast does not stop when it reaches our receiving sets. Even while our set is receiving all it needs to reproduce sound and pictures, the sound and light waves continue on their course, unchanged and undepleted by use. These waves, continually replenished by their central source of power, are used without being used up. No matter how far and wide they expand, they continue to be obedient to their point of origin and hence continue to partake of the nature of their source.

This action is typical, although, of course, not an exact illustration of the multiplication of ideas and their identities, which unfold infinitely from their divine source. The movements of merely

material forces are often met by opposing forces which interfere with their natural unfoldment. But the movements of God's ideas and their identities, of which the movements of the great moving creatures of the fifth period of unfoldment are typical, always remain obedient to their divine source.

Like the majestic creatures in Ezekiel's vision which move in obedience to the irresistible power of the Spirit of God, the grand and powerful ideas of omni-action of the fifth period of unfoldment "turn not as they go, but whither the Spirit directs them, there they go." In obedience to the law of spiritual unfoldment, the movements of God's ideas and whatever identifies these ideas to us humanly, remain obedient to their point of origin: they turn not out of their directed course. They are therefore never deflected, never changed, never depleted, never weakened, never limited in quality or quantity, in substance or action.

Spiritual unfoldment, unlike material movement, expands or increases *ad infinitum* because its source — the omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, omni-active divine Mind — is infinite. As our thought accepts and comprehends this fact, we will see the outward manifestation of everything in God's universe emanating from Divinity and expressing the power and presence, the quality and quantity of the divine nature.

The infinite manifestation of divine ideas and their identities in our lives is limited only by the degree of our receptivity. The illusion of limitation, inaction, frustration, lack of purpose, lack of progress, lack of supply is broken by the understanding of the law of the fifth period of spiritual infoldment of our Covenant with God.

As we *let* the waters, the elements of divine Mind, bring forth abundantly in our consciousness the moving creatures that have life — the moving ideas of God that have vitality, power, infinity — they will bring forth, or reproduce, in us and in our experience their own characteristics of power and action, of substance and intelligence. And they will expand in infinite dimensions because impelled by the irresistible force of the Spirit of God. As we *let* this divine action take place in us, our lives will teem with the grandeur of spiritual progress and accomplishment. By the law of ever-appearing creation, all of God's ideas continually reproduce themselves in us as we *let*, or permit, them to guide and govern us. As we go forward willingly and joyfully in these

advancing spiritual footsteps of unfoldment, we gain momentum with every step and discover that progress is natural and effortless.

In the fifth period of unfoldment we may see something of the action of the threefold nature of the Trinity:

Elohim, our Father-Mother God, is the divine source of all movement.

This divine source reveals the law of the Spirit of God, which moves us in new dimensions of spiritual unfoldment.

The Christ brings to light, makes visible, the forms which symbolize the fruitful, abundant, dynamic, ever-active ideas of God.

As we focus thought on ideas instead of on the forms which express them and keep in mind the substance instead of the shadow of spiritual reality, we will see the outward manifestation of all things partaking of the nature of their spiritual origin in quality and quantity, unchanged by the things with which they come in contact and undiminished by use.

And God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:21.

The unfoldment of this holy day is good — Godlike! The omniscience of good, the infinite, unrestricted power of the Spirit of God — its grandeur, magnitude, power, and infinitude — is revealed therein. The secret of the divine impulsion which gives spiritual momentum to our every thought and act is discovered in “the evening and the morning” of the Fifth Day.

As we move with the moving creatures that have life, that have being, vitality, and expression, in the mighty waters, or infinite elements of the divine Mind, and ascend with the fowl, the spiritual aspirations, that fly, or ascend effortlessly in the open firmament of the heaven of spiritual understanding, we cast off our earth weights, the bonds of corporeality and materialism, and break through the barriers of limitation and mediocrity. These mighty ideas give majesty to our character, inspiration to our endeavors, force to our actions, success to our aspirations. They

impel accomplishment and lead on to fulfillment in the ever-expanding elements of infinite Mind.

And the evening and the morning
were the fifth day.
(Gen.1:23.)

THE SIXTH DAY

(Gen.1:24-31)

Let the Earth Bring Forth!
Let Us Make Man in Our Image!
Let Them Have Dominion!

The mighty irresistible movement of the Fifth Day, or fifth period of unfoldment, literally propels us into the sixth period of our Covenant with God, where the climax of creation awaits our discovery. As the Sixth Day dawns upon the horizon of our understanding, we hear the mighty voice of the Covenant proclaiming:

Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.— Gen.1:24.

There is a shade of difference between *the moving creature* of the fifth period and the *living creature* of the sixth period that is both interesting and thought-provoking. It is, in a sense, the difference between doing and being. The moving creatures symbolize the dynamic revolutionary elements of the divine Mind that impel all things forward in spiritual unfoldment and progress. The living creatures symbolize the qualities of the divine nature which give form and character to God's creation and typify not so much what we do as what we are. This period of unfoldment brings to light qualities of intelligence, nobility, usefulness, faithfulness, strength, beauty, grace, courage, humility, and gentleness — qualities we see expressed, in some measure, in the animals, the living creatures of the earth, all of whom manifest, in greater or lesser degree, the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

The first demand of the sixth period is that we *let* the earth bring forth the living creature. *Let* specific ideas come forth in our experience from the infinite elements of Mind in living, active, practical, useful forms. These ideas and their identities are not theoretical, fragmentary, nebulous, or visionary. They are living identities which come forth at God's command and are manifested in our consciousness and experience. However, thoughts that go off on flights of fancy, day dreams that are not made practical, are not alive and are therefore not related to the living creatures of this period of our unfoldment. Every idea that unfolds or takes form in consciousness must bring forth the living creature after his kind — must have its visible counterpart or identity. Otherwise it is still-born and is not a living creature.

God said of this unfoldment, "It was so" — is alive, is evident, has being, identity, character, and is useful and productive. This is the law of unfoldment of our Covenant with God.

And God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:25.

Like every period of unfoldment, the unfoldment of the sixth period is good — Godlike. What greater benediction could any unfoldment have than to be accounted good — the very essence of God, the nature of Divinity.

But this is not all of the unfoldment of this period. This glorious Day has not yet reached its meridian. However, to comprehend the completeness of this holy Day, we must rise higher in spiritual understanding. We must *let* the unfoldment of this period lift us into more spiritual dimensions of thought and contemplation.

God's creation unfolds on an ascending scale. Through periods of discovery and progress thought is exalted and prepared to comprehend more of the grandeur of the divine nature. The law of unfoldment demands that we broaden our viewpoint and rise higher in the comprehension of the spiritual realities of being with each period of unfoldment. There can be no resting on our laurels, no satisfaction with the *status quo*, no retirement in unfoldment. Unfoldment continues *ad infinitum* and demands that we move with its mighty impulsion.

We are now approaching the climax of creation, the highest unfoldment in the line of spiritual discovery of what God has made. But what is now appearing on the horizon of our understanding is

not a new creation. It is rather the gathering together in one all-embracing divine idea all that God has created — an idea which embodies all the glories of heaven and earth. This idea is God's own image and likeness!

Hear the divine mandate through which *Elohim*, our Father-Mother, the divine *Us*, brings forth this mighty idea of creation after the pattern of the Trinity. Listen prayerfully as the Word of God makes manifest in one body of consciousness all that has been revealed in the six days of creation, in the six periods of unfoldment of the New Covenant.

And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.— Gen.1:26,27.

The import of this momentous fact — that God created man, or made manifest, His own image and likeness — is so great and so vital for us to understand that it is repeated three times:

Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.

So God created man in his own image.

In the image of God created he him.

Note well the words: "Let *us* make man." The divine *Us* has been the Creator from the beginning. *Elohim*, the Hebrew name for God, is in the plural. However, this plurality does not refer to more than one God, but to the All-inclusive One. It reveals the infinite threefold nature of the Supreme Being in its creative aspect, its interpretive aspect, and its self-revealing aspect.

Every period of unfoldment has been after the pattern of the Trinity. And now the All-inclusive divine intelligence of the universe has individualized the Trinity and brought forth one all-inclusive idea to embody and give form to the threefold nature of the Infinite and to express the likeness of all that God has revealed of His own divine nature.

The likeness of God is not a mortal creature. The image of *Elohim* is not patterned after any physical likeness. Man, His im-

age, is wholly mental or spiritual. Like the universe which he epitomizes, man, the image and likeness of *Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother, is constituted of qualities which exist only in the Mind of the Creator and is a structure of consciousness, not a construction of matter. What we see and call man is simply "the effect of the way in which this spiritual reality appears to us." (See p. 8.) In other words, what we see and call man is our present concept of what God has made. The description of man in the first chapter of Genesis has nothing to do with mortality and physique. A translation from the Icelandic Bible reveals clearly the mental and spiritual nature of man:

And God said, Let us make man after our mind and our likeness; and God shaped man after His mind; after God's mind shaped He him; and He shaped them male and female.— Gen.1:26,27.

We belittle God when we substitute the symbol of man for the divine image and likeness and then attempt to reconcile the nature of Divinity with the nature of mortals. The mortal sense of man is a shroud, covering and hiding the divine likeness. Personality is a mask, or *persona*, through which a personal sense of existence would attempt to sound its name and nature and proclaim that it is God's image and likeness. In varying degrees mankind express the divine likeness as they forsake the mortal for the immortal and embody and express the divine qualities of Spirit, God.

The Apostle Paul declares that the desire to clothe the mortal with immortality, as one would put on a new garment over an old one, instead of completely putting off mortality and being clothed anew with immortality, hinders our spiritual growth. His words make this crystal clear:

We are oppressed because we do not want to have the old body stripped off. Rather our desire is to have the new body put on over it, so that our mortal part may be absorbed into life immortal.—

II Cor.5:4 (NEB).

Man is the generic name for All that God, the divine *Us*, has unfolded out of the infinitude of His own self-containment in the six periods of unfoldment. God said, "Let *Us* make man in our own image, after our likeness," Or, let *Us*, *Elohim*, the triune divine

Principle of the universe, cause to appear in one embodiment our perfect image, the likeness of all that has been created, or brought to light, of the divine nature. Everything in the universe, resolved into thought, is included in the generic term *man*.

The likeness of Spirit is not a material form, but a mental image, a composite of divine qualities which exist in the Mind of the Creator, God. The image of Spirit could not emanate from dust any more than an element of light could emerge from darkness. Our image in a mirror does not have to be created. It *appears* when we stand before a mirror. Just so, the divine likeness of God *appears* to us when we look in the perfect mirror of God's law. (See Jas.1:25, JBP.) In much the same way the true nature of the celestial universe appears to astronomers when they view it within the framework of their science of astronomy.

St. Paul gave us the key to this scientific view of man and the effect of this view upon our lives. He wrote first of the veil, which, like a dense fog of material sense, covers our faces and makes our minds insensitive to the divine likeness that we see in the mirror of God's law. However, he declares that when we turn to the Lord, who is the Spirit of the New Covenant, the veil is removed, or dissolved. The Apostle concludes his dissertation thus:

Because for us there is no veil over the face, we all reflect as in a mirror the splendor of the Lord; thus we are transfigured into His likeness, from splendor to splendor; such is the influence of the Lord who is Spirit.— II Cor.3:18 (NEB).

Gerald Warre Cornish, in his incomparable translation of Paul's Epistles, *Saint Paul From the Trenches* (pp.51,52), declares:

The veil represents the hardening of their hearts and the dimness of their eyes, whereby they cannot discern the spiritual sense of the Scriptures. . . . Like Moses, who in the divine presence removed the veil which he had worn in the presence of the people, so we behold the glory of the Lord; and, looking, are changed — changed from the perishable and mortal — into the image of His glory, the image that is to say of eternal Spirit.—

II Cor.3:13-18.

Just as earth is "the body of heaven," so is generic man the body of Spirit, the embodiment of the Infinite. (See Ex.24:10.) This body,

or embodiment, of Spirit is wholly spiritual, like the Creator, and cannot be defined or confined within the limits of matter and the material senses. All the qualities, elements, substance, intelligence, action, functions, faculties, and abilities of man are likewise spiritual; hence their immortality and indestructibility. Man, the body of the Infinite, is a body of consciousness — the consciousness of what God is — and can be comprehended only through the spiritual senses, those senses which sense the things of Spirit.

A material sense of body causes us to be body worshippers, to bow down to a matter body — as to a graven image — and beg its permission to exercise man's God-given dominion over all the earth. This is idolatry. Nearly two thousand years ago St. Paul expressed amazement at the tendency of mortals to classify body as material and limited. He asked:

What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which you have of God, and ye are not your own?

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit which are God's.— 1 Cor.6:19,20.

The New English Bible translation of this passage is even stronger:

Do you not know that your body is the shrine of the indwelling Holy Spirit, and the Spirit of God's gift to you? You do not belong to yourselves; you were bought at a price. Then honour God in your body.—

1 Cor.6:19,20 (NEB).

The Gerald Warre Cornish translation transcends human comment:

Your bodies are spiritual structures, the spirit that dwells in you is of God, and your bodies are correspondingly spiritual, as temples, rather than animal organisms; they owe allegiance not to the physical self, but to Him who redeemed them at a price. God Himself is to be glorified in your bodies. (*St. Paul From the Trenches, p.14.*)

The term *man* reflects the plural of majesty, the all-inclusiveness of the Infinite. Man is the full expression of all that

has been unfolding from the beginning and includes all ideas and their identities which have been coming to light in every period of unfoldment. Hence the plurality of the word *them* in the imperative mandate: "Let them have dominion" — dominion over the sea and all that is therein, dominion over the air and all that is therein, dominion over the earth and all that is therein.

What is dominion? Dominion implies control, command, authority, jurisdiction, ascendancy, supremacy, and sovereignty. He who has dominion is not subject to external rule or control. The word dominion, as used in the first chapter of Genesis, has nothing to do with domination — being lord over others. The meaning of the Hebrew word *radah*, translated *dominion*, means: to tread down, to crumble off, to subjugate; hence to have dominion. This word is used exclusively to denote man's God-given dominion over all the earth. This definition shows clearly that having dominion means overcoming evil, treading on the head of the serpent, literally grinding to powder anything that raises its head against the power of God. Having dominion is a full-time spiritual activity.

Having dominion over all the earth begins with having control over one's self. The wise man in Proverbs declared that he who rules his own spirit is greater than he who takes a city (Prov.16:32). When we exercise control over unlovely, materialistic, sinful qualities in ourselves we are able to express spiritual authority over them in the world.

When we understand that all creation has one God, one Father-Mother, we learn that everyone and everything includes the same inherent qualities we include, and we lose all enmity towards them. When we look for Godlike qualities in others — in man and beast — we help to bring out the divine nature which is inherent in all. When we remember that God created the trees, the grass, the herbs, the mountains and valleys, the air, water, and land, we understand their divine nature and are therefore at peace with our environment. As we learn our spiritual relationship with all creation, we discover the law of harmonious relationship with everyone and everything in the world.

God has given us His own divine nature which has ascendancy, authority, even sovereignty over the carnal qualities of animal nature. Hence the need of understanding the divine nature and of *letting* this Godlikeness unfold and develop in us. For it is the divine nature in each one of us that has dominion over all the

earth. In the degree that we express the divine nature, we hold the scepter of spiritual authority in our human experience.

“So God created man in his own image.” In this way God, the divine Father-Mother, brought forth His own image, His own likeness, to express His own divine nature, and crowned him with dominion.

“Male and female created he them” The image and likeness of the divine Father-Mother embodies and expresses the masculine and feminine qualities of *Elohim*. It is natural that men and women reflect the qualities of both their parents. It is natural that men and women embody and express the compound nature of *Elohim*, God, and thus manifest the divine completeness indicated in God’s holy name, Father-Mother. Each one of us must express the tender, gentle, intuitive, faithful, loving qualities of God’s Motherhood and the strong, powerful, courageous, mighty, intelligent qualities of God’s Fatherhood. Otherwise we are pitifully incomplete and bereft of the dominion that the divine completeness bestows.

Throughout every period of unfoldment the nature of God’s Fatherhood and Motherhood is revealed. Heaven husbands, and the earth brings forth all things in the likeness of *Elohim*. And the finished figure of creation which God called *man* — a generic name embodying the masculine and feminine qualities of the Creator — expresses the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*. This perfect man images forth the majesty and dominion of the divine completeness — all the Godlike ideas revealed in the periods of unfoldment of spiritual creation, all the glorious wonders of heaven and earth.

The divine completeness will be expressed by individual men and women in proportion to their spiritual growth. In the degree that the periods of spiritual unfoldment of the divine nature come to their communion in us, we will grow to the stature of manhood exemplified by Christ Jesus, to full spiritual maturity, and have the dominion which Godlikeness possesses and expresses — the dominion of the perfect man.

As the holy record of man and his spiritual dominion continues, we discover a kind of summary of all that has been revealed of God’s creation and a renewal of the demand that man exercise his God-given dominion:

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.— Gen.1:28-30.

“And God blessed them” — male and female — with divine favor and consecrated them in His own likeness, to express the divine nature, to image forth the glorious majestic and tender qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

And God commanded:

“Be fruitful” — fruitful in good works.

“Multiply” — increase in spiritual power and in the understanding of the periods of spiritual unfoldment, that the earth may be replenished with this knowledge of God and His glorious creation, as the waters cover the sea.

“Subdue it” — overcome every suggestion that God’s creation is material and subject to mortality, to dust and decay; identify earth with heaven and its harmonies.

“Have dominion” — dominion over all — in every sphere, in every dimension, on every level, in all periods of unfoldment. Man is not subservient to anything on earth. His godliness is head over all.

Dominion! God’s first gift to man! This dominion includes not only dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and over everything that creepeth upon the earth; but also dominion over the elements — ability to move freely and purposefully in all spheres of thought and action, in all periods of unfoldment; and to have dominion over opposing forces of the carnal mind that would generate mental and physical storms.

God commands man to exercise dominion over everything that lives and moves and has being — that he be master of the earth and of everything therein; that he be superior to his environment.

For man, God's image and likeness, created after the similitude of the divine Mind, is lord of all.

In the degree that we comprehend the divine nature and strive to express Godlikeness, we find that everything we have is blessed of God. The divine blessing removes limitations, dissolves finiteness, lifts us into spiritual dimensions of thought and action, and cherishes and protects us. And what God has blessed is blessed, is transformed with the divine likeness. And nothing can annul this divine blessing or reverse it.

And God saw everything he had made,
and, behold, it was very good.
(Gen.1:31.)

Throughout the holy record of creation God's approval of what He has brought forth out of His own divine nature has been heard, like a gentle benediction — "And God saw that it was good" — reiterating the fact that creation, in every period of unfoldment, is *good* — Godlike. Now in the sixth period we hear His full approval of the embodiment of all that He has imaged forth out of His own infinitude: Everything was and is *very good!*

God beheld His own divine nature — His perfection and completeness — expressed in and as His image and likeness, man, and saw that it was indeed very good — the epitome of Godlikeness. His threefold divine nature had been completely expressed in and as man. Truly, "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9). In this perfect man God gave and continues to give a full and complete expression of Himself. And this divine perfection is ours in the degree that we express the divine nature.

The climax of creation
has been revealed!

It is essential to our spiritual progress that we see everything God made as God sees it — as *very good*. God never made evil. In fact, God does not even see evil. The Bible says so. (See Hab.1:13.) Further, *Elohim* could not impart anything unlike Himself. God, who is all-good, has no elements or qualities out of which to produce evil or imperfection. Hence the ungodlike qualities that cause enmity between man and man, between men and nations, between man and beast, between man and environment, have no identity

and are not native to God's spiritual creation. Nor are they native to the visible identities that have come forth at God's command. Neither are they native to mankind.

Because everything God made is good, what is not good was never really made. Therefore evil never came into actual being. It has no more identity or reality than a mistake in mathematics or a shadow on a wall. Evil's apparent presence, together with its assumed power and action, is like the outer darkness, which, though appearing to be real, has no substance. Divine good, like the light, shines on in the darkness of evil. And evil's apparent presence cannot displace, destroy, or master good, for good is the very substance of divine creation and *is* everywhere, whether or not we recognize it. The acknowledgment of ever-present good is the beginning of wisdom — the wisdom that comprehends the Infinite.

As we comprehend more and more of the goodness of God and *let* this divine good characterize our every thought and act, we will express the Godlikeness that loves everything God has made — the grass, the herb, and the fruit tree whose seed is in itself, the sun, moon, and stars, the living creatures, the sea, land, and air, and everything and everyone in the whole universe. And we will understand that they are good, all-good, because God made them so. Therefore we will find nothing but good in them. Further, we will love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves, thus fulfilling the two great Commandments in the law of Love, which gathers all creation into a bond of union. (See Mark 12:28-34.)

In this holy relationship — the Covenant relationship of God and man — we discover what we really are, God's own image and likeness. As we learn that we are transformed into this divine likeness by the renewing of our mind, we will *let* God remold our minds from within and move us quickly toward the goal of true maturity. (See Rom.12:2, JBP.) And we will eagerly put off the old man, the old mortal nature, and all that is associated with a mortal sense of life, and put on the new man, the new divine nature of God's creating, the ever new spiritual concept of ourselves. (See Eph.1:22-24.)

The question is naturally asked: Why are we not demonstrating the dominion of our divinity? The answer is really quite simple: We are unaware of the divine power within us. Again — Why? Because we are asleep, dreaming the Adam dream of mortality

with its materialism, limitation, fear, inadequacy, insufficiency. Two thousand years ago the Apostle Paul reminded the people that they were children of the day, not of the night, and that "It is time to wake up to reality" (Rom.13:11, JBP). *The Living Bible's* translation of Paul's words underscores the need to rouse ourselves from this dream state: "Time is running out!" It's later than you think! It's high time to awake from the mortal dream to the immortal reality and learn that *now* are we the sons and daughters of God (1 John 3:1-3, JBP). Too long have we slept and dreamt as mortals, like infants unaware of their potential stature of manhood and womanhood. Hear the Apostle's commentary concerning this infantile unawareness of man's dominion:

The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;

Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his sons into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.— Gal.4:1,3,6,7.

In the degree that we let the Spirit of God lead us in the footsteps of spiritual unfoldment revealed in the days of creation and express more of the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, we do indeed *wake up and grow up*. We forsake the mortal concept of ourselves and put on the new spiritual concept of man in God's likeness. As we express the qualities of the divine nature, our Christliness shines as the stars in the firmament of heaven, and the divine completeness finds expression in our individual manhood and womanhood. Thus we become better, finer, nobler, happier, more successful men and women. As we continue to grow in the understanding of the perfect man, we arrive at real maturity, spiritual maturity, "that measure of development which is meant by the fulness of Christ" (Eph.4:13, JBP).

We are helped onward and upward in our search for and discovery of the divine likeness in ourselves through the understanding of the Trinity, revealed in the New Covenant. In this Trinity we find the pattern of unfoldment in individual consciousness of all that God has imaged forth out of His own divine

nature. The pattern of unfoldment remains the same throughout all time as it was in the beginning.

Therefore:

It is essential that we acknowledge God, *Elohim*, as our Father-Mother — as the one Source, Origin, or Creator of all that exists.

It is essential that we acknowledge the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, as the Comforter, for “Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you” (Acts 1:8) — when we let the Spirit of God move upon the waters, or elements of our thought, and govern or influence all our thoughts and acts.

It is essential that we acknowledge the Christ, the Light of the world in whose light we see not only our own divine nature and completeness in God’s likeness, but also the divine nature and spiritual completeness of everyone and everything in the universe.

In the degree that we acknowledge the threefold nature of *Elohim*, our triune divine Principle, the power of the Trinity will be individualized in us as it was in Christ Jesus. And the Godlike qualities of the divine nature, *expressed*, will exercise spiritual authority, yea, divine sovereignty — the dominion of heaven on earth. Dominion! God’s first gift to man! Let us not have this dynamic divine power in vain. Let us exercise our divine sovereignty. And everyone and everything we touch with our divinely royal scepter and our Christlike compassion will be transformed with the divine likeness.

Let us never forget the keynote of the sixth period of unfoldment:

God created man in his own image, in the image of
God created he him; male and female created he
them.— Gen.1:27.

God, *Elohim*, our divine Father-Mother, created, or brought forth, His own image and likeness and called this finished figure of creation *man*. God’s likeness is not essentially male. Man is a compound name, embodying both the masculine and feminine qualities of the divine Father-Mother, as the holy record declares: “Male and female created He them.”

As we strive to express God, which the Covenant of Godlikeness demands, we are really endeavoring to show forth the majestic qualities of God's Fatherhood and the tender loving qualities of God's Motherhood. This endeavor is not really a struggle. It is a divine adventure, in which we discover and express our divine completeness. For when we express both the masculine and feminine qualities of *Elohim* we find that we are naturally expressing the divine authority, or spiritual sovereignty, of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God. Then all sense of incompleteness, imbalance, limitation, and the like, are literally swallowed up in our spiritual maturity. We discover with joy that we are a *new* creature, and that a *new* life has already begun. (See II Cor.5:17, NEB.)

We are never alone in our divine adventure. The Spirit of God, the mighty force of the Infinite, is with us all the way, moving on the waters, or elements of our consciousness, remolding our minds from within — guiding, instructing, and guarding us. As we *let* the Spirit of God lead us in the footsteps of spiritual unfoldment revealed in the days of creation, we will reach the goal of our divine adventure — spiritual maturity, divine completeness. And the peace which passeth all understanding will be ours.

And the evening and the morning
were the sixth day.
(Gen.1:31.)

As we *let* the pattern of unfoldment revealed in the first chapter of our Bible be established in our consciousness, the evening and the morning of the sixth day will herald our ascension into the seventh period of spiritual understanding of the Sabbath Rest, the full comprehension and expression of the divine nature of everything God has made.

Thus the Spirit of God proclaims the Word of might which leads us into the seventh period of unfoldment, into the Sabbath Rest of fulfillment. The periods of spiritual unfoldment have come to their communion. The unfolding is complete. Heaven and earth — harmony and its sphere of operation — are fully expressed. And we may echo the words of wisdom recorded in the book of Ecclesiastes:

I know that whatever God does lasts forever; to add to it or subtract from it is impossible. And He has done it in such a way that man must feel awe in His presence.— Eccl.3:14 (NEB).

The holy record which begins, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” and ends, “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished,” has accomplished its divine purpose. The Word of God — What God said — has revealed, or brought to light, everything God has made. Here we have the unimpeachable record that *Elohim*, our Father-Mother — the divine *Us* — has fully wrought out the Infinite. Here too we find that everything created embodies the divine nature.

And God saw everything that he had made,
and, behold, it was very good.
(Gen.1:31.)

THE SEVENTH DAY

(Gen.2:1-3)

Thus the Heavens and the Earth
Were Finished, and All the Host of Them.
(Gen.2:1.)

Through six periods of unfoldment the grand realities of heaven and earth have come to light. Now they are finished. We have come full circle. Unfolding creation is not a straight line starting *here* and ending *there*. It is without beginning or end, a continuing unfoldment of that which is. The wise man understood the nature of unfolding infinity and inscribed this deposition:

Whatever has been already is, and whatever is to come has been already, and God summons each event back in turn.— Eccl.3:15 (NEB).

A fact is a fact — always has been, always will be — though millennia may pass before some facts are discovered, or come to light. In the wiseman’s words we perceive or discover a marvelous fact — a fact too transcendent for the material senses to grasp, a fact which can be comprehended only by our spiritual, scientific senses, namely, that every integral part of the whole is itself infinite, every individuality, every item, aspect, and facet of creation reflects the essence and wholeness of infinity.

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.— Gen.2:2.

God rested! Yet God is never idle. God is Omni-action itself! What is this Sabbath Rest? The Seventh Day is not progression toward new unfoldment, but the development of what has already been revealed — a new concept of action. The Sabbath Rest is really fulfillment, in which the kingdom, the power, and the glory of the new heaven and new earth are fully developed in individual human consciousness. It is a time to *let* the Infinite have its way in us!

The activity of the Seventh Day may be likened in some measure to progress within the scale in music: elaboration by means of development wherein the harmonies of the scale are discovered, unfolded, developed, and expressed. Think of the harmonious masterpieces, the intricate compositions that have unfolded in music without going outside the scale, by simply developing what is already there. In the six periods of unfoldment we learn what is within the scale of the infinite harmonies of God's creation and discover the wonders of the kingdom of heaven within each one of us.

In the seventh period however, we rest — not in idleness — but in the satisfaction of knowing that all good already is, that the fulfillment of the wonder and glory of the kingdom within us is only awaiting discovery and development in our consciousness. Christ Jesus told us this (Luke 17:21). And the Spirit of God thus expressed activates this divine good in our experience.

Our Sabbath Day, or seventh period of unfoldment, has no labor in it. The expression of our infinite capacities — infinite health, strength, joy, supply, life, substance, compassion, and opportunity — is not laborious. In this holy period of development of divine good, there is no drag of materialism, no earthward gravitation, and no sense of unholiness, inadequacy, incompleteness, or frustration. All Sabbath activity is spiritual, though appearing humanly. Hence it is spontaneous, effortless, and joyful.

Our progress will be accelerated and the demonstrations of our infinite capacities will be natural and effortless as we turn from the contemplation of a finite material sense of our world and

realize that now we are living in the boundless realm of the infinite, in the spiritual universe revealed in the seven days of creation. Here in God's world all good is possible of attainment. Here we discover that "things impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke 18:27).

We should pause often for "station identification" to be sure we are on the beam. When we stay in tune with the Infinite, we will not wander into the by-ways of a finite material sense of ourselves, of our world, or of our daily experiences. When we walk in the Spirit, in the spiritual dimension of thought and experience, we naturally express the dominion, or spiritual authority, of the kingdom of heaven. When we consciously abide in the Sabbath holiness, we know that every place on which we stand is holy ground, where we are safe, free, fearless, unlimited, and at peace.

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified
(hallowed) it; because that in it he had rested from all
his work which God created and made.— Gen.2:3.

We feel this Sabbath blessing when we rest, or abide in the consciousness of the divine completeness indicated in God's finished work. *It is so!* Now! Good needs only to be brought to light, made manifest through the law of unfoldment, the law of ever-appearing creation — the law which causes the invisible spiritual verities of God's finished creation to become visible, tangibly present.

Apparently the observance of the Seventh Day as a Sabbath of rest unto the Lord sprang from God's command to keep this day holy. A careful and prayerful study of Moses' teachings concerning observance of the seventh or Sabbath Day as a day of rest, shows clearly his reason for such a demand. Each time he commanded his people to "Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy" (Ex.20:8), he told them *why* they should so do, as the fourth Commandment clearly states:

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the
seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath
day, and hallowed it.— Ex.20:11.

Keeping the Sabbath Day holy demands that we set aside a time for spiritual contemplation, a period for rest from material activities, a time to still the ever-flowing currents of mortal thought,

a time to meditate on the wonders of God's creation unfolding in the kingdom of heaven within each one of us, a time to remember that God, Spirit, infinite Mind, created heaven and earth and all that is therein, like Himself, and that all creation is therefore spiritual, now!

The command not to labor on the Sabbath Day is a perpetual reminder that the periods of spiritual unfoldment of the wonders of God's creation have come to their communion, that they are present in consciousness now, and that the visible and the invisible ideas of creation constitute one stupendous whole, whether or not we comprehend their glorious presence and power. The acknowledgment of this truth one day each week helps to free our thought from the limitations of finite material contemplations. It helps us to see through the mist of materialism to the divine realities of spiritual creation. Keeping the Sabbath a holy day establishes all our days in the same harmonious pattern of unfoldment. It has been truly said, "As goes your Sabbath, so goes your week."

Few of the Hebrews understood Moses' teachings, and as time went on the real meaning of Sabbath observance was lost sight of. The prophets and a few spiritually minded individuals comprehended the power and the glory of God's creation which the Fourth Commandment declares. But generally, Sabbath observance became a fetish, or it was not observed at all. The great prophet Isaiah reminded his people of the relationship between keeping the Sabbath a holy day and the dominion promised to the Godlike. He declared:

If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words:

Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.— Isa.58:13,14.

Through a wholly material concept of observance of the Sabbath Rest, the Jewish hierarchy condemned Jesus for healing the sick

on the Sabbath Day. With spiritual authority the Master replied to their accusations:

My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.—
John 5:17.

The Master did not consider that the work of healing was labor which defiled the Sabbath. It was as though, in healing on the Sabbath, *he saw everything God had made, and, behold, it was very good!* In a sense, all of Jesus' work took place in the Sabbath holiness of his consciousness of the perfection of God's universe and of all that is therein. To him, every day was a Sabbath, holy unto the Lord. Christ Jesus' spiritual vision of man's perfection and his inherent ability to express Godlikeness was so clear, so bright, it outshone the dark shadows of disease, and disease vanished in the light of his own spiritual illumination. There was no labor in this holy work.

At one time a ruler of the Jewish synagogue rebuked Jesus for healing a woman on the Sabbath Day — a woman who was "bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself" (Luke 13:11). The record states that Jesus said simply:

Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.
And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she
was made straight, and glorified God.—
Luke 13:12,13.

Following the pattern in Genesis, when *God spake and it was done*, Jesus spoke with divine authority and perfection *appeared*. *His Word sufficed!* There was no process involved and no evidence that the Master labored in performing this healing. Yet, with a great show of indignation, the ruler of the synagogue said:

There are six days in which men ought to work: in
them therefore come and be healed, and not on the
sabbath day.— Luke 13:14.

Jesus' reply left no doubt as to his scorn for the ruler's outward show of piety:

Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the
Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and
lead him away to watering?

And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?— Luke 13:15,16.

At another time, the Pharisees rebuked Jesus for permitting his disciples to pluck ears of corn on the Sabbath. The Master's reply was a lesson in metaphysics:

The Sabbath was made for man's sake; man was not made for the sake of the Sabbath.

That is why the Son of Man is master even of the Sabbath.— Mark 2:27,28 (JBP).

Christ Jesus rested in demonstrating his God-given dominion, or sovereignty, on earth. He rested in the scientific knowledge that all creation was patterned in the divine likeness. He rested in developing the theme of his life work: "The kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). He rested in the knowledge that God was his Father and our Father, our divine origin, or source. He rested, or abode steadfastly, in the realization that in him was fulfilled all the periods of spiritual unfoldment of the divine nature. He was ever conscious of the fact that "In him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col.2:9) — that in him God gave a full and complete expression of Himself.

When we *let* the mind that was also in Christ Jesus govern us we will honor the Sabbath as he did and enter into his holy rest, into his tranquility, his holy activity, his divine authority — his dominion. Therefore,

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus.— Phil.2:5.

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind.—
Eph.4:23.

In the degree that we abide in the divine Mind in which Christ Jesus rested and let our nature be transformed by the renewing of our mind, we will move quickly toward the goal of true spiritual maturity, "to that measure of development which is meant by the fulness of Christ" (Eph.4:13, JBP), and enter into the Sabbath Rest of fulfillment, perfection, and blessedness. The grand Symphony of the Infinite, the harmony of heaven, will sound throughout our

whole earthly experience as we commune with our divine Mind, seek the glories of the kingdom of heaven within us, and thereby let the scale of divine Life be more fully developed and expressed in our humanhood. Then we will feel the heavenly restfulness of our Sabbath Day.

What is it that seems to keep us from being conscious of our dominion and of the restful action of our Sabbath completeness? The answer is simple: We haven't finished our work. We haven't properly utilized the understanding already revealed to us. We have not kept pace with the unfoldment of the spiritual realities of creation that have come to light. We have failed to destroy the accumulation of human misconceptions that belittle God and His glorious creation. We have not forsaken material theories and finite assumptions which act as laws of limitation and restriction. In other words, we have not fully accepted God as the only Cause and Creator. We do not really believe with all our heart that God is All-in-all. Hence we continually break the great First Commandment:

Thou shalt have no other gods before me.—
Ex.20:3.

Or, as restated by Moses and by Christ Jesus:

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord;
And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine
heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy
might.— Deut.6:4,5; Mark 12:29,30.

Further, we have not used our Bible, our Chart of Life, as our guide-line in daily affairs. We have not adhered to the law of unfoldment, as revealed in the very first chapter of our Bible.

There is still much work for us to do. To enter into our Sabbath Rest we must be willing to have a new mind and think differently about ourselves and about our world. This willingness is humility, a powerful spiritual quality — the key which opens the door of consciousness and releases the wonders of the kingdom of heaven within us, so that they pour forth spontaneously in infinite forms of expression. Through humility the power of the Spirit of God acts as a mighty impetus to activate the God-given talents lying dormant within us.

Why is it so vitally important that we embody and express humility? Because in it there is no opposition to divine guidance and correction. In humility the Spirit of God has its way. To feel and express true humility requires much overcoming of a personal sense of self. The nature of a mortal does not yield readily to the divine nature. But yield it must. In the words of St. Paul, we must "compel every human thought to surrender in obedience to Christ" (11 Cor.10:5, NEB).

The Apostle understood all too well that overcoming a mortal sense of self requires a battle. He also knew that this battle must be fought with spiritual weapons, not with those used by men in material conflicts. He wrote:

The weapons we wield are not merely human but divinely potent to demolish strongholds; we demolish sophistries and all that rears its proud head against the knowledge of God. We compel every human thought to surrender in obedience to Christ.— II Cor.10:4,5 (NEB).

In the Book of Revelation the idea of overcoming everything unlike God, good, in individual consciousness and experience is linked with the dominion revealed in the sixth period of unfoldment — dominion given to man, the image and likeness of God. Hear a few of the prophecies that will surely come to pass as we overcome in ourselves what is unlike the divine nature:

He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations.—
Rev.2:26.

To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am sat down with my Father in his throne [having complete dominion, the divine authority or sovereignty of the Father].— Rev.3:21.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God and he shall be my son.— Rev.21:7.

We should welcome every challenge to overcome mortal, material concepts of ourselves and of our world and thereby claim our divine heritage, the heritage of the sons and daughters of

God — the dominion of the kingdom of heaven on earth. In the degree that we overcome the old materialism, the old material concepts of heaven and earth and man, they will fade from sight, and the new heaven and new earth and new man — the wholly new spiritual concept of everything God has made — will come to light in consciousness. And that which identifies the divine reality will appear in our experience.

The question is: Are we ready and willing to abide in the new heaven and new earth? Are we ready and willing to actually live in the seventh period of divine fulfillment? Are we ready and willing to be the new man who is at home in the spiritual dimension? Our Sabbath Rest, or divine restfulness, depends on our answers to these questions.

There is no power on earth that can keep us from rising higher and higher in the understanding of the unfoldment of the days of creation and of the power which goes with this understanding. In the degree that we make every day a Sabbath unto the Lord, a holy day in which we honour God, we will *rest*.

In this holy day, this seventh period of fulfillment, *there is no evening and no morning*. The unfoldment is complete. The seventh angel in Revelation confirms this in his proclamation: *There shall be time no longer!* Hear the Revelator's words:

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer.— Rev.10:5,6.

The prophet Zechariah foresaw this timeless holy day, this seventh period of fulfillment of the glories of heaven and earth and man, when he wrote:

And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark:

But it shall be one day which shall be known to the Lord, not day nor night: but it shall come to pass, that at evening time it shall be light.— Zech.14:6,7.

St. John described the light of this holy day of fulfillment as the light, or spiritual enlightenment, of the holy city:

And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.— Rev.21:23-25.

In the undiminished light of the Christ, which the darkness of ignorance and materialism has never been able to diminish or master, the new heaven and the new earth and the holy city are appearing on the horizon of universal comprehension. A mighty impetus is at work in human consciousness everywhere. The stirring in world thought confirms this. The Spirit of God, the irresistible force of *Elohim*, is demanding now, as in the beginning: *Let there be light!* And light is appearing. This holy light is penetrating the dark corners of the earth, and humanity is feeling and responding to the divine demand to come out of the darkness of ignorance and oppression and to rise above limiting concepts of itself and of its world.

The angel of Revelation, who foresaw the day when there would be no night of materialism, no ignorance or unenlightenment, saw “that the mystery of God,” hidden in the periods of unfoldment would be finished, or fulfilled, in the Seventh Day — the period which is now unfolding on the horizon of enlightened thought. We read:

In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.— Rev.10:7.

This prophecy embodies its own fulfillment. In the seventh period of the Revelation of the Genesis of our Bible, the hidden purpose of God shall be fulfilled. What is this hidden purpose of God? The Revelator does not leave us in doubt:

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.— Rev.11:15.

The seventh angel of Revelation has sounded the mighty message which ushers in the millennium. Individual unfoldment has expanded, like radio waves going out from a central sending station, to encompass universal thought. With prophetic certainty the Revelator has disclosed what will surely come to pass on earth as the Revelation of the periods of unfoldment of the Genesis of our Bible come to fulfillment in the minds of men. All will come under the Dominion of the New Covenant — the Covenant of Godlikeness, the Covenant in which the universe and everything therein, including individual man, is covenanted to God, good, to Spirit and its holiness.

This unfoldment is gaining momentum every day. And e'er long, the kingdoms of this world — whether they be called the nations of the earth or whether they be identified as the mineral, vegetable, and animal kingdoms — all will become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. And all sovereignty will be vested in God's image and likeness. Everything in heaven and earth will express the divine nature and be obedient to the law of God, good.

The seventh angel, the angel of the seventh period of unfoldment, saw this millennial estate and revealed it to the beloved John as a present reality. And John's spiritual, scientific vision saw that "what is to be hath already been." The prophecy is already accomplished as scientific fact. Through our spiritual, scientific vision, we too may see it — and soon!

The upheaval going on in the world today is the resistance in the minds of men to the force of the Spirit of God as it exposes and denounces materialism on all levels. Cataclysmic events are even now exploding age old superstitions, penetrating the clouds of sense, dissolving the mist of the Old Covenant, and revealing glimpses of God's spiritual universe — His kingdom come! But right where destructive forces seem to be at work, the Spirit of God, the power of the Holy Ghost, is sweeping over the world, as it did on the Day of Pentecost. And sooner or later, all mankind will hear the message of the New Covenant in their own language — in words they can understand. (See Acts 2:1-6.)

The periods of spiritual unfoldment of God's creation and of the divine nature expressed in man and the whole universe are drawing to their communion in the minds of men. The spiritual enlightenment which is now flooding individual consciousness will shine on earth as the stars in the firmament of heaven, lighting the

way for all mankind to understand God, to behold the kingdom of heaven within themselves, and to see the glories of this kingdom, this heavenly dominion, manifested on earth. The time of times is near when earth will hear the voice of the Angel of divine Revelation proclaiming from the heaven of spiritual understanding the Word of God that will transform the whole world and all that is therein into a universe of marvelous light:

Behold, I make all things new.— Rev.21:5.

In the Sabbath Day of fulfillment of the days, or periods, of unfoldment of the wonders of God's spiritual universe, all things are seen in this fresh new light — the light of the Christ, which God called *Day* (Gen.1:5). We have the authority of Holy Writ:

If a man is in Christ, he becomes a new person altogether — the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new.— II Cor.5:17 (JBP).

In the degree that we understand these things and express the Godlikeness that is our divine heritage, we will see the divine nature shining through all creation. In the undimmed light of the Christ, we will see everything as it was “in the beginning,” when “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good” (Gen.1:31). And the millennial estate described by the prophet Isaiah will come to pass in our individual and collective experiences:

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.

And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice's den.

They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.— Isa.11:6-9.

As we identify all creation spiritually, in its divine nature, not only will the lion lie down with the lamb, but moral courage will abide with tenderness, human might will abide with gentleness, intelligence will abide with patience, profundity with simplicity, meekness with nobility, brother will abide harmoniously with brother, and nation will not rise up against nation.

The millennial estate is the state of mind, or consciousness, in which we discover God's own likeness, the spiritual idea of everything and everyone. In this grand estate we find the perfect coordination and cooperation between everything in the great body of heaven called the universe and in the individual body of heavenly harmony called man. The great prophet foresaw the time when—

The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: . . . they shall see the glory of the Lord, and the excellency of our God.

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein.

No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there:

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. — Isa.35:1,2,5-10.

We have Biblical assurance that in this holy land, in this new concept of heaven and earth,

God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.— Rev.21:4.

Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind.— Isa.65:17.

We do not need to wait for all mankind to accept the new-old concept of God's universe. The new world is waiting for us to possess it. We can enter this holy realm, this Sabbath holiness, at any time. When we agree to think in the spiritual dimension, walk in the Spirit, and abide by the laws of heaven, we will find that we are living in the new earth, in the sphere of heavenly harmony, where we actually stand on holy ground. And our days will be as *the days of heaven upon the earth* (Deut.11:11-21).

In the Seventh Day, the day of fulfillment of the periods of unfoldment, the Trinity comes to its communion in individual and universal consciousness. In this holy Trinity we discover the nature of *Elohim*, the Trinitarian name for the Supreme Being, in its threefold nature, as —

God, the only Creator.

The Spirit of God, the mighty force of the Infinite.

The Son of God, the Christ, the Light of the world.

In this holy relationship of God, the Spirit of God, and the Son of God revealed in the Trinity, we discover a bond of union which unites all elements of God's creation. This bond of union is a spiritual compact, or Covenant, the New Covenant of Godlikeness: Creation like the Creator! In the New Covenant we discover the spiritual fact that God and His creation are in perfect agreement — the divine likeness inherent in every created thing. In this union we discover the harmony of heaven on earth — a veritable symphony of life wherein all things work together for good in one harmonious whole.

The Spirit of God, which leads us into every period of unfoldment of our Covenant with God, teaches us how to move with the momentum of divine unfoldment. As we rise to the zenith of unfoldment in our Sabbath Day, the Trinity will be individualized in

us as it was in Christ Jesus. And we will express the spiritual maturity and divine authority he expressed.

As the Spirit of God, the mighty force of the Infinite, continues to move on the elements of individual and universal consciousness, sweeping over the earth like a great river at flood tide and filling the minds of men with spiritual enlightenment, the prophecy will be fulfilled:

The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. —Hab.2:14.

And God's kingdom will have come on earth as it is in heaven. Everything in God's universe will be seen in a new spiritual light. None will walk in darkness, in ignorance of their spiritual identity. But all will know themselves as the beloved sons and daughters of God, living in God's world, possessing and expressing the divine sovereignty of Godlikeness, *The Dominion of the New Covenant*.

Hold that fast which thou hast,
that no man take thy crown.
(Rev.3:11.)

Chapter IV

THE OLD COVENANT

There Went Up a Mist from the Earth.
(Gen.2:6.)

The Old Covenant is the record of a mortal, material concept of creation. In this record material views of God and man and of all creation are set forth graphically. Here we find creation depicted in the likeness of a Lord God, Jehovah — a finite sense of Deity — a manlike God who creates all things out of the dust of the ground, a God who loves and hates, whose creation is at enmity with the creator.

The record of the Old Covenant, which begins in the second chapter of Genesis, is a misconception of the New Covenant. We are not bound or covenanted to the Old Covenant's conditions unless we agree with them. As you read this second account of creation, which is really an allegory, note well how it differs from the holy record in the first chapter of Genesis.

It is not difficult to accept evidence presented by bibliographers that the second account of creation was not written by the same hand which inscribed the first record. Nor is it difficult to accept their conclusion that this second record had its origin in old Babylonian myths. However, the allegory which has been recorded serves to present a picture that resembles a mirror in which mortals may see themselves in varying degrees of unfoldment until they emerge into the light revealed in the first record and see themselves as God sees them.

The record of the New Covenant (Gen.1:1-31; 2:1-3) states conclusively that God had finished His work. Creation was complete, and God saw that it was very good. Then follow two verses in which a sense of duality comes into the record. The recorder states that the Lord God, *Yaweh*, Jehovah, did what God, *Elohim*, had already done:

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,

And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. — Gen.2:4,5.

The double term *Lord God*, or *Jehovah God*, reveals a confused concept of the Supreme Being, a concept which attempts to bring God down to man instead of lifting man up to God. *Yaweh*, translated *Lord* in the *King James Version of the Bible*, comes from the primitive Arabic or Semitic and generally signified one Deity, limited and anthropomorphic, and belonging only to one tribe of people. The term also indicates a deity knowing both good and evil, who blesses or curses at will.

In this re-statement of creation, the understanding of God as *Elohim*, the triune divine Principle, seems lost, and the translation concerning Creator and creation is at variance with the original record. However, this passage is a confirmation that everything existed in the Mind of the Creator before it was seen, or brought to light — before it was imaged forth.

The translator of this account of creation does not appear to have been moved by the Spirit of God. There is no record of spiritual light, the light of the Christ, in which to view creation and discern its divine nature. No mention is made of sun, moon, or stars to give light upon the earth, nor of the firmament of understanding to divide the spiritual reality from that which simulates it. Further, there is no record of the grand moving creatures which, metaphorically, give action and momentum to spiritual unfoldment and progress. The translator seems not to have comprehended the creative mandate which causes plants, trees, and herbs to grow and be fruitful. He limited such growth to the tilling of the soil and to rainfall. But he does acknowledge that every plant and herb grew before there was either a man or rain upon the earth. This is a useful hint to us today. If we could discern the spiritual fact that everything grows because God commands it to do so, because growth is the irresistible nature of everything God created, or made visible, because the seed within itself contains, or includes, everything necessary to bring every idea and its

identity to fruition, there would be no drought, no parched ground, no arid thought, no dearth of ideas, no insufficiency, no poverty, no barrenness in all the earth.

We may conclude that the original record of creation became confused with the Babylonian records, wherein evil is pictured as real and powerful, not because either Creator or creation had changed, but because the people's concept of the Creator and of creation had changed. The worshipper of Jehovah could not conceive of plant growth without rain nor of cultivation until there was *a man to till the ground*. He knew not man having dominion over all the earth, possessing by reflection the creative *let* — the authority of *Elohim*.

And so begins a record of creation which had its origin in the minds of men instead of in the Mind which is God — a record which begins with mystification produced by dualism in thought and ends in frustration and death. But let us keep the record straight and identify all creation with *Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother, the origin of all things. Then we will see creation to be like the Creator. For according to the creative mandate — like produces like — everything that unfolds remains obedient to its point of origin and retains its original nature and character.

In the degree that we *let* the Spirit of God move on the face of the waters, on the elements of our consciousness, we are able to see through the mist of material theories that characterize all things materially. For the Spirit lifts thought above the mist of confusion, above conflicting theories, into the heaven, or firmament, of spiritual understanding, from which vantage point we see all things clearly.

A clear view of anything cannot be seen through a mist. The first words of the Old Covenant should alert us to the fact that what is to follow is not a clear view of creation, for we read:

But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.— Gen.2:6.

At the very beginning of this record of creation we are faced with obscurity — a veil or mist, a scrim, if you will, through which we are asked to behold unfolding creation. But the mist obscures the heavenly, divine view of what God has made. There is no light to illumine the scene, only darkness, chaos, and old night. Hence we do not see clearly what we are asked to behold. This mystic

veil, typical of a confused, dim sense of creation, like those recorded in Babylonian mythology, obscures the light of revelation. But whether we see our world through a glass darkly, or through the lens of spiritual vision, our views of the universe do not change God's creation.

It is difficult to see clearly through a mist. Lovely familiar scenes are obscured, distorted, and often unrecognizable. The mist may be likened to the lens of materialism through which we can see only material views of spiritual realities, in much the same way that if you look at a white object through a blue lens you see a blue object. But where is the blue object? Only in the blue lens. So it is with the mist in Genesis. The beauty, grandeur, order, and infinitude of God's creation cannot be seen. In place of harmony we find disorder, inharmony, incompleteness, and imperfection. The vastness of man's spiritual dominion, when seen through the mist, appears to have shrunk to the size of a garden called *Eden*.

The view of creation recorded in the Old Covenant is wholly material because it is seen through the lens of the material senses. *Our beliefs interpret what our eyes behold*. Recall, at the beginning of the unfoldment of spiritual creation, a finite sense attempted to inject into the record a material view of what God had made. But the Spirit of God swept away the mist and revealed the spiritual view of creation right where the material senses beheld a material view — darkness and chaos. In the Old Covenant there is no record of the Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost, the interpreter of God's universe. And so the mist, or mystification, remains. And as we attempt to look through the recorder's mist, we see the same things he sees.

Both Moses and St. Paul called the mist of materialism a veil which obscured and distorted spiritual views of everything the eye or mind beholds. On Mount Horeb, known as *the Mountain of the Lord*, God revealed to Moses the spiritual nature of creation and gave to him the law of Commandments, to spiritualize the minds of his people. So wonderful was the spiritual view of creation that Moses' face shined with the holy light of divine revelation. He was literally transfigured spiritually, as was Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. When Moses' people saw his face shining with the holy light of spirituality they were afraid, as were Jesus' disciples. The radiance of the revelation of spiritual creation and of man's spiritual being was more than they could comprehend. So

Moses put a veil over his face while he talked with them, (See Ex.34:29-35; Mark 9:2-9.)

St. Paul declared that the veil which hid from Moses' followers the spiritual illumination that glorified him, was on the minds of the people of his day:

Their minds had been made insensitive, for the same veil is there to this very day when the lesson is read from the old covenant; and it is never lifted, because only in Christ is the old covenant abrogated. But to this very day, every time the Law of Moses is read, a veil lies over the minds of the hearers.—

II Cor.3:14,15 (NEB).

Gerald Warre Cornish's inspired translation of St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians (pp. 51-52) adds a new dimension to the Apostle's words:

The veil represents the hardening of their hearts and the dimness of their eyes, whereby they cannot discern the spiritual sense of the scriptures. When Moses is read in their synagogues, the veil is on their hearts still. For the real meaning of that ministry is a spiritual one.

Without the Christ-light to illumine us, the veil of materialism is still upon our hearts and minds when we read the Old Covenant. But as followers of the Christ we have no veil over our faces. No mist of materialism obscures our view of God's creation. And our faces should shine with the holy light emanating from our spiritually illumined consciousness.

We must *let* the Christ rend the veil of materialism. We must *let* the Spirit of God dissolve the mist of ignorance in our hearts and minds. Then we may read the Old Covenant *with open face* — with the veil removed, the mist dissolved — and see clearly the inspired Word of God where the uninspired material record appears.

Let's turn to the Bible and read the allegory of the Old Covenant.

Chapter V

THE FIRST FAMILY OF THE OLD COVENANT

ADAM AND EVE

The story of Adam and Eve is the beginning of the record of the Old Covenant of mortality, the story of a mortal concept of God, of man *not* made in God's image and likeness, and of creation at odds with the Creator. It is a story of mortals in tune with the finite, in agreement with all that is mortal and material. It is a story in which man is depicted as made from the dust of the ground, unable to rise above his origin, or source, and having no dominion at all. It is a story which illustrates the resistance of mortal man to the strict demands of the Covenant of Godlikeness, and in a sense it depicts the history of all mortals who make their covenant with the material senses and find themselves enslaved by their own finite mortal beliefs.

Adam and Eve have their beginning in a mist. Or, rather, we first see them through the mist of obscurity, or veil of materialism. Let's use our scientific vision and see through this misty view of man. Let's translate the material record with our spiritual senses. The record states:

But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.— Gen.2:6-8.

This account is quite different from the majesty of the record of man created in the image and likeness of God, having dominion over all the earth. What has happened to God? What has happened to man? Where is the Covenant of Godlikeness?

Nothing has happened to God. Nothing has happened to man. This account is not the true record of creation. Instead, it is a mortal, material view of what God has made and of how He made it. In the first record it is God, *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of all, the All-inclusive Creator, who created man and the universe after His own likeness. In this second account it is a Lord God, Jehovah, or *Yaweh*, who is credited with creating man and the universe in his likeness. But what is this creator like?

Yaweh, or Lord God, was primitive man's nearest approach to knowing what God is. This concept of God was of an exalted anthropomorphic Deity who loves and hates, who blesses and curses, who begins creation with a mist instead of with light, with confusion instead of enlightenment — a Lord God whose creation is completely like himself, a mass of contradictions.

This manlike Deity is pictured as having formed man from the dust. The Hebrew *yatsar*, translated *formed* (Gen.2:7), and *bara*, translated *create* (Gen.1:1), are quite different. *Bara* — to create — does not imply an original creative act; the sense is: caused to appear; made visible (see p. 27). *Yatsar* — formed — carries the meaning: to mold into a form some substance, as a potter squeezes clay into shape. The substance squeezed into shape to form man is *dust*, a term used metaphorically to denote nothingness. Into this inert mass of nothingness, the Lord God breathed the breath of life. "And man became a living soul" — a body of sensation in matter. Fantastic! According to this account, man is nothing more than a puppet come to life. This was primitive man's concept of his beginning, his origin. How different from God's creation of man in His own likeness, imaged forth out of His own infinite selfcontainment, embodying and expressing the divine nature and character, wholly like Himself — Godlike, spiritual, perfect — shaped after the divine Mind.

According to the second account, Adam, made of the dust of the ground, was placed in a restricted area, a garden called Eden, where he saw materialized everything that God had made. There was nothing original in this garden; only a mortal view of what already existed. To the material senses Adam's garden was a veritable paradise. But the first description of this garden indicates to the perceptive viewer that its apparent beauty and goodness are illusory. Instead of the paradise it appears to be, it is a kingdom divided against itself, including opposing forces of good

and evil, typified by a tree of knowledge. It also included a serpent, or the tempter, as we soon discover. We read:

And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.—

Gen.2:9.

This misty view is apparently a mortal concept of the third period of spiritual unfoldment, in which the earth, at God's command, brought forth everything needful to feed and care for man. And wonder of wonders — the tree of Life is glimpsed in the midst of the garden! However, the doubleminded senses misinterpret the appearing of this mighty symbol of divine Life. For beside the tree of Life, like a shadow seen through double vision, there appears on the retina of the recorder's view another tree, typical of the knowledge of good and evil.

The God whose creation is very good did not create anything typical of both good and evil. The dualistic belief that both good and evil, Spirit and matter, combine in Creator and creation produces conflicting concepts, the outcome of which is confusion and mystification. It is little wonder that those who hold such beliefs have not yet discovered the origin and spiritual nature of the universe, which God saw to be *very good*, like Himself.

Although the record states that there was no rain to water the ground, we discover a mighty river that performs this vital function — a river which, throughout the Bible, is type and shadow of the river of Life giving nourishment, refreshment, and prosperity to the earth and to all that is therein.

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.

And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that encompasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is
it which goeth toward the east of Assyria.
And the fourth river is Euphrates.— Gen.2:10-14.

Theories abound regarding these rivers. The Hiddekel is generally believed to be the Tigris. Pison is thought to be the Indus; Gihon to be the Nile. And, of course, the Euphrates is the river we know today by that name. However, some bibliographers associate the great river with the Persian Gulf, and the four rivers as heads flowing into it.

As this mighty river flows out from the boundaries of Eden, its foursquare nature is revealed — the omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, and omni-action of divine, infinite good — the substance of creation revealed in the periods of unfoldment in the original record of God's creation.

It is evident that Adam and/or the recorders glimpsed some meaning of this great river, or it would not have appeared in the record. But this apparently casual view of its foursquare nature did nothing to restore Adam's soul; his spiritual sense of what God had made. There is no indication that any idea of immortality or infinity developed in Adam's garden, his body of consciousness. One brief view of the tree of Life and one glimpse of the river of Life, and we hear no more of these mighty, majestic ideas of immortality, of eternal Life, and their glorious indentities in Adam's record.

The prophet Ezekiel saw the water of the great river of Life flowing out from the sanctuary of the house of God, not out from Eden. He saw the vision of the tree of Life growing beside the great river:

... And the waters came down from under from the
right side of the house, at the south side of the altar.
... at the bank of the river were very many trees on
the one side and on the other.

And it shall come to pass, that every thing that
liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall
come, shall live: and there shall be a very great
multitude of fish, because these waters shall come
thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall
live whither the river cometh.— Ezek.47:1,7,9.

St. John, the Revelator, saw the same vision and recorded it thus:

And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out to the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.— Rev.22:1,2.

There is no record that Adam partook of the fruit of the tree of Life or moved with the momentum of the mighty river of Life. The tree of Life found no fertile soil, or receptivity, in Adam's garden or consciousness, in which to grow. And his finite sense permitted the great river of Life to pass him by.

Are we duly aware of the presence and power of the tree of Life and the river of Life in our garden, in our consciousness? Whosoever eateth of the fruit of this tree and drinketh of the water of this river shall live forever — shall have no consciousness of death, no sense of failure, frustration, incompleteness. He shall be successful in all that he turns his hand unto. Such an one shall indeed be —

... Like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.— Ps.1:3.

The record of Adam and the Old Covenant continues:

And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.— Gen.2:15-17.

The actual location of Eden is unknown. Speculation places it in the general vicinity of the area now known as the Middle East. Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Babylonia have been considered as logical locations. Some bibliographers believe it might have been in the land of Egypt; however this location is questioned because the Bible states specifically that the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers flowed through or out of Eden. In the unfoldment of the

Covenant, the physical location of Eden is not important. "Eden belongs less in the realm of geography than in the soul of man" (*Harper's Bible Dictionary*, p. 148). The vital question is: What does Eden stand for in the revelation of man's relationship with God?

In *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible* we find this thought-provoking information: The Hebrew 'Eden is the masculine form of the feminine 'eden, meaning pleasure, delicate, delight. This word comes from a primitive root, 'adan, meaning to be soft or pleasant; figuratively, to live voluptuously, to delight self.

Eden does not, then, stand for a spiritually delightful place. Eden is typical, not only of a place where one's delight is for one's self alone, but is also typical of a material sense of body in which we believe the Lord God has placed us and in which we live. No matter in what exterior place we may abide, material evidence is conclusive that we live *in* a material body. This was Adam's real Eden which he was to dress and keep.

Adam accepted into his garden, or body of consciousness, the spurious suggestion that the knowledge of both good and evil was necessary to his well-being; for later, when it was suggested that he eat of its fruit, he did so without question. And it is the fruit of this tree, rather than the wondrous fruit of the tree of Life, that appears to be so beguilingly attractive, alluring, fascinating, and enticing to the Adams and Eves of this world; even though the uncompromising divine judgment is that eating the fruit of this tree means certain death: *mortis*, mortality, finiteness, frustration, incompleteness, and failure.

Wisdom obtained from eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is not wisdom at all. It is a misconception of the firmament of spiritual understanding as revealed in the second period of unfoldment of the Covenant of Godlikeness. This is the understanding which distinguishes between good and evil, the real and unreal, the spiritual and material, between what is actually true and what is merely apparent. The wise man does not need to partake of the fruit of this tree in order to know that such opposing and conflicting knowledge as good and evil is not good for food. It does not make one wise. Instead, it adulterates one's real knowledge and produces confusion continually.

The firmament of spiritual understanding within us discriminates between the real and unreal, between good and evil, accepts the good and rejects the evil. To partake of fruit typical of knowledge that both good and evil are real is to have within our "house," our body of consciousness, opposing forces that cause this structure to be subject to every wind and wave of doctrine. Such an unstable structure of thought is easily shaken. Because it is not founded on the rock of spiritual understanding, it falls. And great is the fall thereof (Matt.7:27).

The Old Covenant continues to present a view of God's creation seen through the mist:

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.— Gen.2:18-20.

The concept of Deity as Lord God, or Jehovah, possessing glorified material qualities and characteristics, beholds man as imperfect and incomplete. Our concept of man can rise no higher than our concept of God. Hence Adam, typical of mortal man in all ages, is pictured as imperfect and incomplete, like, yet unlike Jehovah. The record implies that Jehovah did not at first know just what Adam lacked, what kind of help would meet his need for fulfillment, what would bring to him a sense of his completeness.

We are told that out of the ground from which Adam was made the Lord God formed the beast of the field and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. Being made of the same common dust, Adam and the beasts should have had something in common. But there is no record that Adam either shepherded them or found any kinship with them. Not a happy picture! But when one attempts to view anything through a mist, with no light or spiritual understanding to illumine thought, the mist, or veil, often acts as a kind of mirror in which we see our own

likeness — our own sense of things. We formulate a vision out of our own knowledge.

Our scientific senses should reject the opinion that Jehovah created what God, *Elohim*, has already made. The belief of creatures emerging from dust, like apparitions rising from a mist, is but a mortal, material concept of spiritual creation, in which the visible forms of creation emerged from the invisible spiritual realities, imaged forth out of divine Mind's own self-containment.

The beasts of the field described in the Old Covenant are not a new creation. They are a misconception of the living creatures of the sixth period of spiritual unfoldment which *Elohim* imaged forth. When seen through the mist, or when materially conceived, they appear to be wholly material. "Material phenomena are the effects of the way in which spiritual reality appears to us; their forms are shaped by the senses of men." (See p. 8.)

Jehovah did not reveal to Adam the divine nature of every living thing. Instead we are told that the Lord God asked Adam to give names, or natures, to the living creatures. How unnatural that man should be asked to tell God how to identify creation!

In the periods of unfoldment of the original record, the divine nature of everything in heaven and earth is revealed. The name, or nature, Adam gave to all things is with us still, unless we see through the mist of materialism and discern God's divine nature instead of the material nature described by Adam. Today, as then, whatever name or nature we give to every living thing, that is the name thereof — that is their nature as far as we are concerned. And we are at peace or at war with all things, depending on what name, or nature, we give to animate and inanimate forms of creation.

Let us rejoice that the name, or nature, which Adam bestowed upon every living thing is only a mortal concept of their divine nature. Through spiritual discernment we can see creation as God sees it — as very good. With the record of spiritual creation in the New Covenant as our point of reference, we can identify all living things as Godlike, and be at peace with them.

Adam is presented as the figure of man. But there is no evidence that Adam ever grew to real manhood, mentally or spiritually. His thinking, as pictured by historians, remains in embryo. There is no spiritual maturity in him. Why? Because no periods of spiritual unfoldment have taken place in his consciousness. Adam's *days* bear

little resemblance to the mighty periods of spiritual unfoldment of the New Covenant — periods which lift us higher and higher in spiritual understanding and in the comprehension of the divine nature of everything in God's universe.

As we continue to view Adam's record, note how the finite sense of the recorder contrasts with the infinitude of God's creation and makes graven images of spiritual realities. But let us not be taken in by what is presented to us. In the degree that we can understand that everything presented in the Old Covenant is but a misconception of God's creation, we will be able to see through the mist, or the myth of the material record, and behold spiritual reality. And we will feel the power and dominion that accompany this understanding.

There is nothing in what Adam saw that brought to him a sense of his own completeness. His material senses identified everything materially. Hence, all that he saw was a material concept of what God had made, and there is no satisfaction in finite material concepts and what they bring forth. The idea of man expressing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God was beyond Adam's comprehension, beyond the scope of his understanding or demonstration. Like so many mortals, he refused to grow up — to grow to the full stature of spiritual manhood, to spiritual maturity. And like Peter Pan, Adam, typical of mortals generally, insisted on living in a make-believe world.

In an unsatisfied sense of incompleteness, Adam went to sleep and dreamed of a most fantastic way in which his completeness should come to him. He must have had some glimmer of the fact that his completeness, or wholeness, lay within himself, but he imaged it forth in a most peculiar way. Or, rather, the ancient materially-minded compilers, unable to comprehend the wonder and glory of spiritual creation, in which the visible emerged from the invisible reality, drew upon old Babylonian myths of creation and gave us this record:

And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.— Gen.2:21-23.

The record states that the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. Unbelievable! God doesn't put us to sleep. God wakes us up! But how convenient to have a mortal misconception of Deity on which we can blame anything we don't understand.

The *deep sleep* which fell upon Adam was not a natural sleep. The Hebrew word *tardemah*, here translated *deep*, is from *rawdama*, to stun, i.e., stupefy; a lethargy, or (by impl.) a trance. Adam's deep sleep was a mesmeric sense, a kind of self-hypnotic state which often comes upon mankind when they are confused by something they cannot explain. He was mesmerized by his inability to find his completeness, his sufficiency.

When one is asleep — the deep sleep of mesmeric influences — the most impossible things seem to happen. The amazing statement of how woman came to be is the product of the Adam dream. The story illustrates primitive man's belief that self-division is a process of multiplication, and is indicative of the Oriental concept of womanhood — her origin and her subordinate relation to man. The story also points to the general belief, even today, that woman is less than man, that God intended she be a second class citizen, always subject to the decrees of men. *Elohim* made no such decree. "Male and female created He them." Co-equal, to express the divine nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

The similarity of the English words *man* and *woman* is also found in the Hebrew *ish* and *ishshah*. Here it is seen that in both the Hebrew and English languages the word for *woman* includes *man*. This is most thought-provoking. It is as though this compound name *Ish-shah* — *wo-man*, is trying to tell us something. Could it be that the power of the word, embodying the idea of the male and female of the sixth period of spiritual unfoldment, forced its way into the language and into the record? It is as though the finished figure of creation, expressing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, God, would not remain hidden, even though an Oriental myth tried to obscure the majesty and might of God's image and likeness — the divine completeness. This is not to imply that Eve, the woman in Adam's dream, is a prototype of the

compound nature of *Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother. But that the figures of Adam and Eve are mortality's concept of the divine completeness.

The fact that the new concept of man is called *ish-shah - woman* — foreshadows the day when the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim* — the divine completeness — will be expressed by individual men and women everywhere. As we progress in the understanding and demonstration of the periods of unfoldment, we will grow in Godlikeness until we attain full spiritual maturity. But such growth does not appear to be a part of Adam's experience, not even in his dream.

Meanwhile Adam slept on. And then there appeared another impossible situation, a veritable nightmare — a talking serpent! This creature, presented as a figment of Adam's imagination, typifies the voice which at times seems to be within us suggesting fear, lack, incapacity, incompleteness — a limited finite sense of ourselves and the diabolical belief in a power apart from God. It is the siren voice of the Old Covenant seeking to ensnare the clear thinking of mankind. The serpent is also typical of the temptations of the world, suggestions of the alleged power of the carnal mind to adulterate the divine influence in man, suggestions of thought and action that are contrary to the laws of God and to the divine will. The serpent is typical of thought that rebels or revolts against authority, the mental reasoning which strives to override the Word of God and to silence the voice of conscience.

But the serpent has also been a symbol of wisdom. However, the implication is that —

Wisdom apart from obedience to God degenerates into cunning, and degrades and envenoms man's nature. Wisdom yielding to divine law is the source of healing, and so the serpent form became a symbol of health. But from the beginning, the serpent has been the emblem of the spirit of evil. (*Peloubet's Bible Dictionary*, p. 606).

The serpent as a symbol of wisdom is a travesty on the firmament of spiritual understanding, revealed in the second period of unfoldment in the New Covenant — understanding that opens the doors of consciousness that we may behold and understand the wonders of earth and heaven and man. How could a picture of a serpent coiled around a staff become the symbol of wisdom? It

emerged from the belief that knowledge of both good and evil are real and are necessary to man's health, education, and general welfare. Beware of such knowledge! Remember the serpent in the garden of Eden, coiled around the tree of knowledge of good and evil, tempting man and woman to eat of its forbidden fruit.

The serpent has come to symbolize Satan, the adversary, the accuser, devil, an evil influence — subtle, treacherous, malicious — having personified qualities that are dangerously fascinating, mesmeric, or magnetic. Too often mortals personify this evil influence. They conjure up a bizarre masculine figure differing slightly from the appearance of a man in having horns and hoofs and probably a tail, and in possessing unlimited subterranean powers. But the Revelator saw the nature of this evil as a great red dragon, subtly and openly pursuing its victims, tempting them to acknowledge and thus to become servants of a power apart from God.

The subtlety of the serpent suggests that there is always an animal quality in man to which it can speak — a quality that will yield to its influence and suggestions. The supposition is that there was such a kindred quality in Eve which caused her to listen and to yield to the serpent's suggestions. Hear the translator's record of the encounter between Eve and the serpent:

Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.— Gen.3:1-5.

To be as gods, instead of being Godlike! That is the subtle enticement of the tempter — then and now! And mortal man and mortal woman take in the subtle deception and fall to the level of the serpent's lie!

The Lord God had commanded *the man* not to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of both good and evil. The serpent, therefore, “more subtle than any beast of the field,” did not approach Adam, but spoke to Eve. This should be a warning to each one of us that the tempter, seeking to demoralize our manhood — our strength, accomplishment, steadfastness of purpose, success — approaches us or tempts us through the gentle, tender, naive, submissive qualities of our womanhood, whether we be men or women.

The temptation in Genesis is not unlike the temptations which came to Jesus in the wilderness. However, Jesus rebuked the tempter with the Word of Scripture and refused to be drawn into an argument (Matt.4:1-11). Eve listened to the suggestion, subtly presented, that God knows both good and evil. Although the original record plainly states that “God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good.”

Eve appeared to be fascinated by the serpent’s suggestions. Some untamed desire caused her to respond to the tempter’s mesmeric influence. The first effect of a mesmeric or hypnotic influence is to change the nature or character of an individual so that he does not think or act naturally, nor does he express his natural intelligence. This is clearly seen when a snake hypnotizes a bird. The bird apparently loses its power to fly and comes down to the serpent’s level. It thus becomes an easy prey to the serpent. So with persons. Under hypnotic influence, a person is no longer himself. His thoughts and acts are controlled by the hypnotizer. Thus he yields to whatever suggestion the hypnotizer implants in his mind. And so it was with Eve:

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 of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.— Gen.3:6.

In *The Interpreter’s Bible* we find this graphic word picture of Eve and the serpent’s temptations:

The suggestion came sliding in like a serpent’s subtlety: “Why not have everything? Why not know more about life? Why not try the taste of sin?” . . . Eve adopted the suggestion after a little

manipulation of her conscience. . . . The serpent that managed such adroit persuasion was not only in the Garden of Eden. It comes plausibly up to every one of us, presenting the idea that we can know better than God. (*IB*, Vol.I, Expos. p.504.)

The Biblical record declares plainly that disobedience to God brings a conscious and an unconscious sense of guilt and shame. We read:

And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.— Gen.3:7.

Although the record implies that after partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge that both good and evil were real and desirable their eyes were opened, their first sense of themselves thereafter was one of nakedness. What was this nakedness of which they were ashamed? Webster's definition of the word *naked* includes this revealing comment: "To be naked is to be without qualities of power, worth, dignity; having no means of defense or protection." When Adam and Eve were aware of their nakedness, conscious of being without power, worth, or dignity, they were immediately aware of God's presence. Some may call this divine presence *conscience* which was a silent rebuke to them.

And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: And Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden.—
Gen.3:8.

The translator interprets this passage as though it were the Lord God who was walking in the garden in the cool of the day. But God is omnipresent Spirit and does not walk about as do mortals. Adam and Eve were walking in the cool of the day. Why this mention of the climate of the garden? During the brief moment of meekness, in which the man and woman recognized that they were naked — without power, worth, or dignity — they become conscious of a change in the weather, in the mental atmosphere. What was it?

The Hebrew word *ruwach*, translated *cool*, is the same word used in Genesis 1:2, in the New Covenant, which is translated *spirit* —the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, the power and presence

of *Elohim*, the interpretive aspect of the Trinity appearing to consciousness. The Spirit of God, which moved on the face of the waters in the first period of unfoldment, moved on the elements, or stirred the thoughts of Adam and his wife in the garden. And though briefly, changed their thinking and made them aware of the divine presence and power. For one brief moment they were ashamed when confronted with *conscience*. The Holy Ghost touched them, but their determined materialism was so great that the mighty Spirit of God did not bring about repentance and reformation in them. Otherwise this would have been a different story, with a different ending.

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?— Gen.3:9.

A higher sense of God and man challenged Adam. But he did not rise to the challenge. The question, "Where art thou?" is one we should oft ask ourselves. Where are we in our thinking? What are we accepting as real and powerful? What are we doing? What are we accomplishing? Is our daily life a pattern of spiritual unfoldment in which the divine nature shines forth? Are we moving nearer and nearer to spiritual maturity? Adam's reply to this question was vague and evasive:

I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.— Gen.3:10.

Quickly came the rebuttal:

Who told thee that thou wast naked? — Gen. 3:11.

Who told you that you were bereft of power? Who robbed you of your spiritual dignity? The answer was obvious: actions speak louder than words. The Lord God knew the answer but demanded a confession:

Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?— Gen.3:11.

Adam, like so many mortals, when confronted with his shortcomings, attempted to put the blame on others. He intimated that the Lord was partly responsible for his disobedience, the woman completely so, but that he, Adam, was blameless:

The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.— Gen.3:12.

But the Lord God did not accept this excuse. Adam himself had been forbidden to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil before the woman was created. The record declares plainly:

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.— Gen.2:16,17.

Adam never admitted his guilt. And where there is no repentance and reformation, there is no forgiveness, no release from the penalties attached to wrong doing.

And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done?— Gen.3:13.

The woman, seeing her error, acknowledged it and put the blame squarely where it belonged:

The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.—
Gen.3:13.

In both Hebrew and English the word *beguile* means: to lead astray, to seduce, deceive utterly; to delude, or overreach, by artifice or craft; to practice tricks or deception or impose upon by false statements. In her acknowledgement the woman exposes the nature of the serpent as a beguiling, crafty, seductive, deceptive influence or suggestion within one's own range of thought. This influence or suggestion tempts one to seek wisdom, power, and pleasure in materiality, in a mixture of good and evil, a compound in which there is continual conflict — the conflict, or war, between Spirit and the flesh, against which St. Paul warns us.

The serpent is the symbol of evil in all its disguises, always attempting to overreach good with its beguiling suggestions — suggestions that we either take in or reject. We need not condemn ourselves when evil suggestions come to us. These suggestions come to everyone at one time or another. It is what we do with these suggestions that influences us and causes either guilt or in-

nocence on our part. In the allegory we may see the serpent as the symbol of revolt against God, the flesh forever warring against Spirit, which tempts mankind with subtlety and craftiness. But remember: the serpent is not an animal; the devil is not a person; evil is not a thing. This adversary of mankind is a beguiling immoral and malevolent influence which tempts us to agree with its suggestions that evil is as powerful as good, that evil is pleasant and desirable, that evil can result in good, and so on. And when we agree with this adversary, when we obey its suggestions, we become servants to sin and thereby lose our natural moral freedom.

The Lord God's denunciation of the serpent and its guile was swift. His words give us a pattern to follow in condemning the tempter and rejecting its suggestions:

And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.— Gen.3:14.

Don't give this subtle, seductive, deceitful, godless figure of evil a leg to stand on. Let it crawl on its belly and thus be identified in its true nature. Feed it with dust — with nothingness! Don't take it into the bosom of your thinking and let it feed on you. Don't nourish its lies by believing or fearing or responding to them. The only food it needs is a listening ear. Above all, don't repeat any of its lies, for thus do you spread its influence, thus do you become the pawn of evil, thus do you become identified with its animalistic nature.

The Lord God continued His denunciation of the serpent. And note well: *There is no record that the serpent talked back to God.*

And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.— Gen.3:15.

In this denunciation the Supreme Intelligence of the universe proclaims a law that there will always be antagonism and hostility between the serpent and the woman. The Word from on High is that woman will never be at peace with the serpent, with evil, nor become a partner in its subtle, evil ways. There will be continual

warfare between its seed and her seed until the head of the serpent is crushed — until sin is completely deprived of intelligence, influence, and power.

The representatives of evil, those who obey the grosser elements of human will, those who are servants to sin, are known as the seed of the serpent. The representatives of good, who know and do the will of God, Good, and who strive to overcome evil in all its forms, are known as the seed of the woman. In time to come the seed of the woman became known as the seed of Abraham, children of faith, regardless of their color, creed, race, or sex. The classification is symbolic and does not refer to blood descent. (See Gal.3:7,8,16.)

The enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, the warfare between evil and good, is vividly illustrated throughout the Bible. This enmity continued to increase in such violence that in the Book of Revelation the serpent is known as the Great Red Dragon. We read;

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.— Rev.12:17.

But we are assured that the heavenly host is always at hand to help the woman and her seed in the battle with evil in every guise (Rev.12:7-9). It is needful that we remember this, for the warfare between good and evil, Spirit and the flesh, the divine will and human will, continues in individual experience and in the world. Each one must fight and win this battle, as Christ Jesus did in his wilderness experience. And in the degree that we, as individuals, win the battle with evil in all its forms, we help to win the larger conflict in the world.

The commandment, “Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good” (Rom.12:21), is no less binding upon us than are the Ten Commandments in the Hebrew Decalogue (Ex.20:1-17). To overcome evil is not only a divine demand. It is also a law of self-preservation. The promises of dominion to those who overcome evil are worthy of our earnest consideration. Two of these promises are of special interest to us in our study of the story of Adam and Eve.

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.— Rev.2:7.

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.— Rev.21:7.

The divine proclamation that the woman will crush the head of the serpent is a promise that divine intelligence will enable the representatives of good to penetrate all of evil's subtleties. And even though evil may strike at a weak point, or Achilles' heel, of those striving to overcome the subtle and open aggressions of this devilish enemy, it will not be able to destroy them. Divine intelligence will enable the seed of the woman to see through evil's subtlety and crush it. The promise is that the representatives of good will be able to refute and overcome every intelligence or power or plan to accomplish any deadly purpose or to influence them in any way.

Those who do not crush the head of the serpent but yield to the subtle suggestion that both good and evil are desirable to make one wise and dominant, pay a stiff penalty. In each case the punishment is commensurate with the wrong doing. To the woman the Lord God said:

I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.— Gen.3:16.

According to various Bible commentators, the woman's punishment is not that she shall bring forth children; that was to be an honor for the Oriental woman. The punishment is that child bearing shall be physically painful. However, this punishment is not really a law, for many simpleminded people in all ages, knowing nothing of such a curse, have brought forth children naturally and painlessly. The punishment further relegates woman to a secondary role in life, to being subordinate to her husband. But the promise is that woman will *crush* this suggestion when she awakes from the mesmerism of the Adam dream and discovers the nature of God as Father-Mother. In this discovery she will learn that womanhood, expressing the Motherhood of God, is not subordinate to anyone or anything in the world. Then she will no longer

be in subjection to the Adams of this world. She will be subject to God alone, her Creator. And there will be mutual love and respect in all relationships, each individuality expressing the dominion of Godlikeness in which is no domination.

And what of Adam? How is he to expiate his sin? The record is plain:

And unto Adam he (the Lord God) said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;

In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.— Gen.3:17-19.

The ground which the Lord God cursed was not a location in time and space. It was the state of mind in which Adam lived when he turned from God, accepted the spurious knowledge that both good and evil were real, powerful, and necessary to make him wise, and believed that this knowledge would make him as a god. In acknowledging that a mixture of good and evil was essential to his well being, Adam cut himself off from the blessing of God — the natural unfoldment of good.

The nature of our thinking determines the nature of our experiences. The Master Christian emphasizes this point in his Sermon on the Mount:

Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.—

Matt.7:17,18,20.

It should have been no surprise to Adam to find his experiences unfolding on the level of his mentality. Being at enmity with God, Adam was at enmity with God's creation. Conflicting forces based on the belief in both good and evil as real and powerful, caused *the*

ground — his environment — to be at enmity with him, so that it did not yield its natural fruitage. He blamed his misfortune on God. How easy it is to say that we are under a curse when things go wrong.

Being commanded to till the ground is no curse. Such activity has brought great pleasure and reward to hundreds of thousands of peoples throughout the millennia. *The Interpreter's Bible* (Vol. I, Expos., p.510) informs us that the command to till the soil carries the meaning of unremitting and frustrating pain or sorrow. And that "Adam's relationship with nature, like his relationship with God and his fellowmen, was in disorder."

In the original record of creation, God had blessed the earth for man's sake and given him freely of the fruitage thereof. Adam, failing to understand the spiritual nature of the earth in which everything was and is good, did not comprehend the law of ever-appearing creation, which caused the earth to bring forth abundantly everything necessary to meet man's needs. Hence he saw the ground to be at enmity with his efforts to cultivate it, and concluded that the ground was cursed.

What appears to be a curse is nothing more than the effect of refusing to acknowledge God as the Creator and source of all good and failing to comprehend the blessing that God's goodness bestows upon man. When we accept the forbidden knowledge that both good and evil are real and powerful, immediately conflicting forces begin to operate in our consciousness and experience — forces which tend to neutralize each other. And the inevitable result is lost paradise, chaos, and old night. Our work becomes hard labor, unremitting, frustrating, unrewarding. For the law was and is that every tree bringeth forth fruit after its own kind.

Until Adam and his wife had eaten of the forbidden fruit, she had been called only by the name *woman*. But now we read:

And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she
was the mother of all living.— Gen.3:20.

It would seem that Adam gave to his wife her name and her nature, as he had done to the animals, thus confirming his sense of her inferiority to himself. While the name *Eve*, from the Hebrew *Havvah*, means *life*, and Eve is the first woman of whom we have a

written record in our Bible, she is not the mother of all living. Her sons went out from the family fold and married wives who had been born, we know not how. But in the allegory of the Old Covenant, Eve, a product of the Adamic dream, symbolizes the beginning of a mortal sense of life and the reproduction of the species through woman. The reproduction of mortals through the male of the species did not last long. How long will it be before a more spiritual concept of man's origin reveals a higher pattern of unfoldment of the race of man?

The record of the Old Covenant continues:

Unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.— Gen.3:21.

Adam and Eve, the mortal material concept of the male and female of God's creating revealed in the record of the New Covenant, were not clothed in the beauty of holiness. We know not what kind of skins the Lord God made for them, but they are typical of the animal natures Adam and Eve expressed. Certainly this clothing is a far cry from the robe of righteousness which the prophet Isaiah describes as suitable clothing for the child of God (Isa.61:10). Nor does it even remotely resemble the seamless robe of spiritual perfection with which Christ Jesus was clothed (John 19:23).

And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.

Therefore the Lord God sent him from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.— Gen.3:22,23.

The recorder implies that the Lord God knew both good and evil, and that Adam's knowledge of this duality caused him to be like Jehovah. But the word given previously was that partaking of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil brought upon Adam a curse of servitude and ultimate death. The implication in this verse is that having become as a god Adam might eat of the fruit of the tree of life and "live forever in his fallen condition" (*Companion Bible*, p. 8). The reason given for Adam's expulsion from the garden was "to keep the way of the tree of life."

A note in *The Interpreter's Bible* suggests that this verse (Gen.3:22) was not from the hand of the recorder of the Adam story in Genesis but was "borrowed" from "The Eden Saga," from Babylonian "myths." (See *IB*, Vol.I, Expos., p. 514.)

The concept of a Deity who knows, embodies, and sends forth such conflicting forces as good and evil places us in a precarious position. For *we are like our concept of God!* Eating of the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of both good and evil, believing that we can use both good and evil methods to accomplish any purpose, robs us of our understanding of the goodness of God. Further, we lose the consciousness, or the awareness, of God's spiritual universe, the kingdom of heaven at hand, in which all is *very good*. This was Adam's loss — a loss illustrated in the events which followed:

So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.— Gen.3:24.

The door is shut! And "the way of the tree of life" is securely guarded, so that none may enter but those who have the right. In Hebrew literature the Cherubims are symbolic of the divine presence. The flaming sword is symbolic of divine power guarding and enlightening. "The way of the tree of life," the way of immortality, of spiritual life, cannot be entered by the Adams of yesteryear or the Adams of today until they repent, think differently, and reform, until they "put off the old man with his deeds and put on the new man" — until they leave the old materialistic way of life and are made new in mind and spirit. Then they will find "a door opened in heaven" (Rev.4:1), which leads not to Eden, but into heaven itself, God's kingdom, where all is good, as God declared it to be.

Meanwhile Adam and Eve stand outside their Eden. By partaking of the knowledge that both good and evil are real and powerful, the man and the woman adulterated their consciousness of good and its almighty power, and thereby produced, or brought forth in their experience, conflicting material conclusions in thought and experience. They found themselves afraid, ashamed, limited. Nothing within their thinking corresponded with Godlikeness. And so they lost what little dominion they had seemed to

have. But it was not God who cast them out. It was their material, carnal, sinful, disobedient thinking that robbed them of their Eden. And sooner or later this becomes the lot of all who eat of the forbidden fruit.

In this second record of creation we see man as a finite mortal — incomplete, lacking integrity and moral stamina, disobedient to God, eager to blame his shortcomings on someone else. And we are left with a sorry picture of man as a common weakling — unsatisfied, self-righteous, unhappy, homeless, and afraid — covenanted to and dominated by a material concept of God and man and of all creation. This is not the Godlike man made in Spirit's own image and likeness, in whom the divine nature unfolds. The mortal described in the second record is a caricature of man in quality, substance, character, completely unlike the man Spirit brought forth. Such a mortal material concept of man is not a model after which we should pattern our lives. Nor should we accept him as our ancestor. But in the degree that we accept a misconception of Creator and creation as true, we are bound by its limitations — we are held on the level of our beliefs.

The story of Adam and Eve might well be the story of any mortal who does not know and love God. Not knowing God aright, one is easily deceived by the serpentine suggestions, insinuations, and mesmeric influences which so misrepresent the truth that it is difficult to determine the difference between fable and fact. The record of Adam and Eve portrays the material inquisitiveness that leads mortals to investigate materiality, which is a veritable Pandora box. Having done so they find themselves swallowed up in the mist of confusion and materialism which goes up from earthy beliefs and from dusty, obsolete, unscientific thinking.

Because the mist of materialism seems to be so dense, the Adams of this world fail to comprehend the spiritual nature of creation, as recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, in which the earth brings forth at God's command. And so they find themselves in a land where they must till the ground out of which they believe they were taken. Consequently they experience hard labor, frustration, failure, and insecurity. They become subservient to a material concept of creation and find themselves at enmity with their environment. For one's experiences are leveled by one's beliefs.

Sooner or later each one must learn that what one sees as a

material kingdom, good or bad, is but an externalization of one's own thoughts. No matter where one goes, his experiences will be the same until his thought changes. It behooves each one of us to obey the Master's first recorded command: "Repent," have a new mind, think differently, "for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." God's spiritual universe is here now, waiting for us to go in and possess this holy land. (See Matt.4:17.)

The understanding of God is the beginning of all wisdom. Not knowing God aright, mortals cannot know themselves as God knows them. Adam's limited material concept of God, man, and the universe limited him in all directions and robbed him of his spiritual dominion. He was blind to the grandeur which belongs to man made in the image and likeness of God, for he did not know God, *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of all. Instead of being a Godlike man, Adam, desiring to be like a god, created for himself a man-like God. Instead of reflecting God's dominion over all the earth, he was bound by his own limitations.

This is the Old Covenant. Unfortunately, it is the covenant with which most of us bind ourselves. And it is this covenant which many mortals believe is represented in their lives. Those who attempt to pattern their lives after the Old Covenant find that they have no dominion at all — that life is one continuous struggle.

By contrast, in the New Covenant we find the comforting assurance that *Elohim*, God, not only created all to be like Himself, *very good*, but also that He maintains His own creation, including man. Man was not commanded to till the soil. Everything grew at God's command: "Let the earth bring forth!" And man was given the dominion, or spiritual authority, indicated in this creative mandate. When we more fully recognize that "The earth is the Lord's. and the fulness thereof" (Ps.24:1), we will see the earth bringing forth abundantly everything we need.

The fact that man is not made to till the ground is not a plea for idleness or for beggarly instincts to prevail in our lives. Nor is it an excuse to look to others to meet our human needs. We will till the soil, or work with our hands, until we understand the spiritual nature of the universe, recognize the holy land in our midst, and feel within ourselves the divine authority of the creative mandate: "Let there be!" *Let* everything God made *be*, or appear in whatever form we need it.

Until we, like Christ Jesus, can multiply the loaves and fishes by spiritual means and find our money in the fish's mouth, until we can find our health, happiness, and supply to be the outgrowth of our spirituality, of our own Godlikeness, we will be tillers of the soil in some measure. Meanwhile, in the degree that we work faithfully in the Father's vineyard, we will find our work in earth's vineyards less and less laborious. As we cultivate spiritual ideas they will bring forth fruit that will meet all our human needs.

Let us look away from Adam to Christ Jesus as our model and thus ascend in a degree above finiteness and mortality, above the mist of materialism, above the curse of a limited personal sense of things. Then we will behold all ideas and their identities coming forth at God's command, as in the New Covenant — the visible emerging from the invisible.

St. Paul used the figures of Adam and Christ Jesus to illustrate the Old and the New Covenants:

The first man (Adam) is of the earth, earthy: the second man (Jesus) is the Lord from heaven.

As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.—

I Cor.15:47-49.

Because this message is so vitally important for us to understand, let us also hear the *Gerald Warre Cornish* translation of the Apostle's words, which transcends comment:

The absolute distinctness of species on earth is a lesson to us, whereby the mind grasps the significance of the great spiritual category of things wholly distinct from the earthy. These things possess spiritual bodies and have no connection with earthy bodies. The glory is distinct. This is the distinction implied by the Bible between Adam, "formed of the dust of the ground," who became "a living soul," and that other man who is wholly spiritual with a spiritual body, and is conditioned by Spirit only, who gave him his appropriate form. This man is of heaven, not of earth, a different order of being, in a different state of existence from that of Adam. Now we have known that former man, and we shall also know that distinct and separate man who is a spiritual being. We have borne that image which is the appearance of an earthy physical man, we shall also bear

that distinct heavenly stamp, the peculiar spiritual mode of being.— (*St. Paul from the Trenches.* pp 41-42.)

The Apostle declares further: “We are not sufficient of ourselves to bear the image of the heavenly.” The Spirit of God written in us accomplishes this. Paul emphasizes this point:

Not that we are in any way confident of doing anything by our own resources — our ability comes from God. It is he who makes us competent administrators of the new agreement [New Covenant], concerned not with the letter but with the Spirit. The letter of the Law leads to the death of the soul; the Spirit alone can give it life.— II Cor.3:5,6 (JBP).

The true knowledge of God and of the Son of God — knowledge obtained not from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but through revelation and through periods of divine unfoldment — annuls the conditions of the Old Covenant which bind us to mortality. And this true knowledge establishes the New Covenant of Godlikeness in our lives. The Old Covenant is done away in Christ.

Well might one ask: Inasmuch as Adam seems to typify everything that is mortal, sensual, and limiting, why does he have such an important place in the Bible? Adam is the first man whose record includes any knowledge of God. There is no evidence that Adam understood the nature of *Elohim*, but Adam was ashamed when rebuked by a higher concept of Deity than he had previously known. He is important to us because in his experience a dam of gross materialism was broken and the light of truth began to shine through. From this point of departure, the knowledge of God began to unfold in the minds of men.

The Psalmist sang:

I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.—
Ps.17:15.

And mankind will never be satisfied until they awake and discover their likeness to God. Adam was asleep to the grand realities of spiritual being. *There is no record that he ever woke up!* Even the shock of being forced out of Eden did not arouse him.

It is only as we awake from materialism, from the Adam dream, and discover our relationship with God that we can find freedom from the binding and blinding conditions of the Old Covenant. The

conditions of the New Covenant are simple but profound: Be Godlike, and thereby have dominion — divine authority on earth. Then will be given to us the *Key of David*, the key of love, which unlocks the Gate Beautiful leading into the Holy City, into the holy or whole consciousness of the complete spirituality of heaven and earth and man. Then will we behold and abide in the new heaven and new earth. Then will we no more grieve over lost Eden. No more will we see Paradise afar off. No more will we yearn in vain to partake of the tree of Life or to drink of the river of Life. For within this new concept of heaven and earth we find:

... a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.— Rev.22:1,2,14.

The first book in our Bible holds within its pages the prophecies of the last. Genesis is fulfilled in Revelation. Through the vision of St. John, the Christ speaks to all who love and worship God aright and who live by the rule of brotherly love:

These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth and no man openeth;

I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: ...

Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name [my new divine nature].— Rev.3:7,8,11,12.

With such a prophecy waiting to be fulfilled in our lives, how long are we going to remain a part of Adam's dream and sleep the sleep of spiritual immaturity? Let us awake from this mesmeric

dream, the *deep sleep* of the material senses, and behold the world of spiritual reality all around us! Let us heed the Apostle's call:

Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead,
and Christ shall give thee light.— Eph.5:14.

After demanding that we take the offensive and overpower evil with good, the Apostle stresses the need of overcoming all errors within ourselves. He insists on obedience to law, both moral and civil. And concludes his admonition by declaring that all the commandments are summed up in one demand: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." He then asks:

Why all this stress on behaviour? Because, as I think you have realized the present time is of the highest importance — it is time to wake up to reality. Every day brings God's salvation nearer than the day we took the first step of faith.

The night is nearly over, the day has almost dawned. Let us therefore fling away the things that men do in the dark, let us arm ourselves for the fight of the day! Let us live cleanly, as in the daylight, not in the delights of getting drunk or playing with sex, nor yet in quarrelling or jealousies. Let us be Christ's men from head to foot, and give no chances to the flesh to have its fling.— Rom.13:11-14 (JBP).

When we awake to the glorious fact that *now* are we the sons and daughters of God, *now* are we God's likeness and not the likeness of Adam, we will stop peering at ourselves and others through the mist, through the lens of the material, or personal senses. Then will we put off the old man, the old way of thinking of ourselves, and put on the new man, the Christ-man, the Christly character of godliness. Then will we lay aside the old mortal nature, be mentally and spiritually remade, regenerated, and put on the new nature of God's creating. Then will we behold and abide in the new heaven and new earth and live the new life in righteousness and true holiness, in which is no illusion, no dark shadows of Adam's dream. Then will we have right to the tree of Life and will enter in through the open door into the city — into the consciousness of the divine completeness indicated in the Trinity. Then will we partake of and express full spiritual maturi-

ty. Then will the threefold nature of the Infinite be individualized in us.

We will know God, *Elohim*, as our Father-Mother, the only Cause, Creator, or origin of all creation; and we will express the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

We will feel the Spirit of God moving in the elements of our thought, transforming and transfiguring our minds and bodies; and we will express the power and presence of the Spirit of God in all that we think, say, and do.

We will confidently acknowledge that now are we the sons and daughters of God; and we will embody and express the threefold nature of the Infinite in our daily lives, as Christ Jesus did. We shall also bear that distinct heavenly stamp, the peculiar spiritual mode of being.

Then will we express dominion over all the earth. For then will the conditions of the Old Covenant be nullified and the conditions of the New Covenant be fulfilled in us.

But what of Adam's progeny — a people whose history comprises the greater part of the Old Testament of our Bible? Let us consider their record, not so much as human history, but as a record of the conflict between good and evil, between the spiritual and material, between the real and unreal, between fable and fact, between phenomena and illusion — typical of the enmity or antagonism between the serpent and the woman.

The conflict between good and evil is illustrated dramatically in the history of Adam's two sons. This conflict is, in a sense, typical of the conflict in Adam's individual consciousness, and is typical of the conflict in each one of us.

The opposing views of creation are often so closely intertwined that it is difficult to distinguish the genuine from the counterfeit. But if we remember that God, Good, is All, we will understand that what appears to be evil and material is but a mortal concept of what actually is. Spiritual, scientific discernment penetrates the mists of materialism and beholds the unfoldment of God's perfect creation right where mortal, unscientific vision sees the Adam dream.

As we read the record of Adam's progeny, let us do so with eyes wide open, with no veils on our faces. And we will see, as do the

more advanced twentieth century scientists, that “the reality of things is mental or spiritual, and that so-called material phenomena [and patterns of human behaviour and experience] are the effects of the way in which this spiritual reality appears to us.” (See p. 8).

CAIN AND ABEL

The story of Cain and Abel, the two sons of Adam and Eve, is a story of the conflict between the Old (Cain) and the New (Abel) Covenants. In the lives of these two individuals we see clearly the warfare between good and evil, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between the testimony of the spiritual senses and the evidence of the material senses. This conflict, or warfare, is typical of the enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The recorded history of these two brothers is brief, but the lessons we may learn from it are many.

And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bare Cain, and said, I have gotten a man from the Lord.

And she again bare his brother Abel.— Gen.4:1,2.

Cain is not typical of “a man from the Lord.” Eve had conceived this son in Adam’s own likeness, not “in the image and likeness of God.” Abel, not Cain, fits the description of *a man from the Lord*.

Cain and Abel are representative of the forces of degeneration and regeneration, of evil and good. Cain is typical of the sons of Adam in all generations. Abel is typical of the sons of God. Cain brings forth the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, with evil predominating over good. Abel shepherds the living creatures of God’s creating into green pastures of spiritual life and leads them into the fold of God’s love. Here we see the figures typical of the two covenants: man conceived in Adam’s likeness and man conceived after the likeness of God.

And Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the Lord.

And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering;

But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.— Gen.4:2-5.

The meaning of the names of Adam's two sons is important to us in understanding the allegory God has written in their history. Abel's name, from *Hebel*, meaning *breath, that which ascends*, indicates a more spiritual concept of man than does Cain's name, from *Kayin*, meaning *a spear*. Cain's name is also associated with *Kanah* meaning *gotten or acquired*, indicative of a dominant acquirer.

Abel, a keeper of sheep, was a shepherd. He is typical of the Christ, the Great Shepherd, who has oversight of God's creatures. *Josephus* tells us that Abel was a lover of righteousness and believed that God was present in all his actions. He excelled in virtue. Abel's name is synonymous with righteousness, and he brought forth in his life the first-fruits — the very best.

Cain, a tiller of the ground, was a *dominant acquirer*, intent on material gain. *Josephus* tells us that Cain was wholly intent upon getting. He first contrived to force the ground instead of being satisfied with what grew naturally, in obedience to the creative mandate, "Let the earth bring forth." This summation of Cain's character is not intended to be a condemnation of agriculturists. It is an allegorical statement indicating pride in presenting to God something he had made instead of seeking what God had created. According to tradition, Cain, as Adam's elder son, was the heir of what his father had and of what his father was. Cain was, in a sense, a projection of Adam. His concept of Deity, and consequently of himself, had risen no higher than had Adam's. In fact, his concept of God and man had degenerated. He fulfilled the prophecy that Adam and his progenitors should till the ground in sorrow, and that the ground would bring forth thorns and thistles — frustration, toil, and little reward — as though the ground were at enmity with the tiller.

That God had respect to the offering of either Cain or Abel is not a true interpretation of the ancient records. The character of the worshipper, not his offering, is judged. The impersonal law of the

New Covenant judges our lives! A good tree brings forth good fruit; and an evil tree brings forth evil fruit. Conversely,

A good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

For every tree is known by its fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil; for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.— Luke 6:43-45.

“Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell.” He was angry because his offering — his presentation of himself and of his work — did not measure up to what Abel was and what he accomplished. No mention is made of burnt offerings or sacrifices, although many individuals have placed that interpretation upon the offerings of the two brothers. What were these offerings? How were they made? St. Paul gives us the answer in his admonition to the Christians in Rome:

I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies [your very selves] a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.— Rom.12:1.

With this concept of sacrifice in mind, hear the words of the great Apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrews:

By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, his goodness was attested, for his offerings had God’s approval.—

Heb. 11:4 (NEB,KJV).

By him therefore let us offer the sacrifices of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.

But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased.—

Heb.13:15,16.

The Lord questioned Cain concerning his attitude:

Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?

If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him.— Gen.4:6,7.

“If thou doest well.” Abel’s gift to God was that he had done well. He was faithful in expressing the goodness of God; he excelled in righteousness; and he saw the manifestation of God’s goodness everywhere. By reason of his own Godlikeness, “he saw everything God had made, and, behold, it was very good.” His Christliness was revealed in his shepherding of *the living creatures*, in loving and caring for God’s little ones. He naturally accepted the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness, and his dominion was truly God’s kingdom come. Abel’s success was evidence that he was cultivating the spiritual talents of righteousness, not tilling the barren soil of material pleasures, human ambition, and personal sense.

Being successful — doing well — means having an abundance of love, joy, grace, kindness, patience, endurance — all the Godlike virtues. Our supply is but the evidence that we have done well, that we have cultivated our spiritual talents and brought forth the fruits of righteousness in our lives.

“But if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door.” When we do not do well, when our efforts are not successful, do we recognize that some error is in our efforts, that what is wrong lies within ourselves? And do we humbly pray that the sin or error which lieth at the door be revealed to us so that it may be corrected? Or are we rebellious and envious of another’s success? Do we, in self-righteousness, insist that circumstances are against us or that some person has gotten in our way? Do we strive willfully or sit idly, wondering why success does not come to us? When we are unsuccessful, when we do not do well, we need to look within our own door. We need to search our thinking to see what Adam-like qualities we are expressing, what un-Christlike methods we are using, what ungodliness we are harboring in our hearts. For it is what we are that brings forth fruit after its own kind. Our thoughts have a way of finding expression in our deeds. Our whole life is a projection of what we are thinking.

God's warning to Cain told him exactly what the error was and how to get rid of it:

If thou doest not well, sin is at the door, crouching in readiness to spring on thee, and make thee a prey, but you must resist its promptings. (*Dummelow's One Volume Commentary of the Holy Bible, p.11.*)

Sin's subtlety and cunning craftiness, like the serpent, seeks out our Achilles heel — any weak point through which we may yield to its suggestions, or any magnetic element that will respond to its promptings.

When sin desires to possess us, God's command is that we shall rule over sin. This is the same advice God gave to Eve: Crush the head of the serpent; take from sin its claim to intelligence and power. It cannot rule over us unless we are in sympathy with and respond to its suggestions. But there is no indication that Cain listened to or heeded the divine warning.

Fortunate and blessed indeed is he who hears the divine approbation:

Well done, thou good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord. — Matt.25:21.

Is not this a restatement of the Covenant, or spiritual agreement, between God and man — the Covenant of Godlikeness which gives man dominion over all the earth!

Abel was a faithful shepherd who first of all shepherded his own thoughts and brought them into the fold of the Covenant of Godlikeness — the New Covenant. He led them into pastures of righteousness which were evergreen, beside still waters of the river of Life. Truly, he that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city. This is the beginning of our kingdom; our dominion must go forward from the focal point of our own thinking. Like Abel, we must be faithful in shepherding all our thoughts into the fold of righteousness, that each one of them may be covenanted with God. Sweeter words have not been spoken than the Master's commendation: *Thou hast been faithful!* There is no greater reward.

Let us turn again to Genesis for the conclusion of the story:

And Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel, his brother, and slew him.— Gen.4:8.

Cain did not heed the warning of the Lord to strive against sin. His envy of Abel's success was so deep-seated, his hatred so rife, he plotted to get rid of his brother, as though to destroy Abel's superiority that shamed his inferiority.

Envy is always a murderer. One who envies cannot see the riches of the kingdom of heaven within himself. He sees only the evidence of these riches in the well being of others. He is unwilling to develop the talents of righteousness which God gives to all, but he covets the reward of the righteous. He buries his talents in the earth and completely covers them with resentment, jealousy, covetousness, and greed. His whole attitude towards life is negative. Positive scientific ideas and methods are strangers to him. He does not bring forth fruit worthy of recognition and acceptance. Consequently, he does not hear the *Well done, thou good and faithful*, of the Lord.

Unlike Abel, Cain was not willing to sacrifice a mortal sense of existence so that his life might be an exemplification of godliness, in keeping with the Covenant, or spiritual agreement between God and man. Hence he could not reap the reward of righteousness. He covenanted himself to a material concept of existence, and this so dimmed his vision of the infinite goodness of God that he lost sight of the fact that God is the source of all good. His whole concept of substance was material, limited, circumscribed. Seeing his brother's success, his spiritual abundance, from a material standpoint, he erroneously concluded that by making war upon him he could wipe out the rebuke of his own lack of spiritual riches and that by appropriating his brother's gains he could pass them off as his own.

The beloved John wrote of this son of Adam:

Cain . . . was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.—
1 John 3:12.

In the Epistle which bears his name, St. James admonished:

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.— Jas.4:7.

Had Cain resisted the evil impulses which came to him, he would have had an offering to bring before God that would have been acceptable. For he who overcomes evil within himself receives the same blessings as the righteous ones who turn naturally from the tempter's suggestions. The promise still stands:

He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. — Rev.21:7.

But Cain had already yielded his thinking to the godless suggestion that materiality was attractive, important, necessary, and desirable. When he saw his brother Abel reach the place of well-being by seeking first the kingdom of God, or the dominion of Love within himself, and when he found that his own mortal striving after material things had not brought him the reward of success, it was more than he could bear. Envy and greed seemed to triumph. He killed his own brother! And when questioned by God concerning Abel, he arrogantly replied:

Am I my brother's keeper? — Gen.4:9.

There was no repentance in Cain's thought, no turning away from the envy and greed which had ultimated in the murder of his brother, so there was no possibility of his inheriting the blessing of God.

When prophesying the coming of the Messiah, who would teach of the kingdom of heaven, John the Baptist said that before one could know of the kingdom he must "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance" (Luke 3:8). The Greek word *metandia*, translated *repentance*, means: to think differently, to reverse one's decisions, compunction which includes reformation, to have a new mind. Cain's unrepentant sense was punished by divine justice. Not being willing to change his own thinking he had to suffer from its effects. The Lord said unto him:

But now art thou cursed from the earth, . . .
When thou tillest the ground, it shall not

henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive
and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.—

Gen.4:11,12.

The curse on Cain is the same curse which Adam brought upon himself, and is nothing more than failure to see the blessing which God's goodness bestows on man. God did not curse Cain or Adam. The Lord said that Cain was cursed. But this was only a statement of the evidence apparent in Cain's actions. It was not a divine pronouncement or decree. God is incapable of cursing any one or any thing, for God is good.

Cain's thinking was so circumscribed by his own limited mortal concept of existence that he could not possibly conceive of the magnitude and glory of the kingdom of heaven being within himself. His material senses could not recognize the riches of the kingdom of heaven before his eyes. Cain never did repent. And the greatest punishment that can come to man is summed up in one short sentence in Holy Writ:

And Cain went out from the presence of the
Lord. — Gen.4:16.

Cain's thought could not come into the presence of the Lord, but Abel's had never left. Cain's mortal sense of existence could not comprehend the spiritual facts of being, while Abel's loving, spiritual nature brought him into a realization of the omnipresence of good. The valley of death was to Abel no vale of tears, but the valley of humility, of great overcoming, through which he could walk without fear, because he knew that God was with him. Abel's Covenant with God was intact. Although killed by his brother, he was never separated for a moment from his Father-Mother, God. For him there was no departure from the Father's house, from God's kingdom. It was Cain who went out from the presence of the Lord.

Although Cain had shown neither sorrow nor repentance for his sins, he did show fear when judgment was pronounced on him:

My punishment is greater than I can bear.—

Gen.4:13.

Thinking only of himself and with no thought of remorse for his cruel deed, Cain lamented:

Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

And the Lord said unto him, Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold. And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

And Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.— Gen.4:14-16.

Jehovah did not impose an arbitrary penalty on Cain. He merely stated the inevitable effect of Cain's crime — a life of wandering. A definition of the word *wander* reveals the nature of Cain's thinking and consequently of his experience after the murder of Abel: without a fixed course, aimless journeying, shifting, rambling; to go astray morally; to dissipate in roving.

When Cain went out from the presence of the Lord he led a completely cultureless existence. He dwelt in *the land of Nod*, the meaning of which is *wandering*. This *land* is typical of a consciousness of instability, confusion, frustration, godlessness, and lack of direction. In years to come Cain must have gained some sense of stability — good or bad — for we are told that he built a fortified city and named it after his son Enoch (See Gen.4:17). However, this Enoch was quite unlike Enoch, "who walked with God" (Gen.5:24).

When Cain expressed fear that in his wanderings as a fugitive and a vagabond hostile strangers might kill him, the Lord God set a *mark* upon Cain — what it was we know not — a mark that people everywhere would recognize, a mark that would deter or prevent anyone from killing him. Death was not to be an easy way out for Cain. He must expiate his sins. (See *The Mark of the Beast*; Rev.13:11-18; 14:9-11; 15:1-3; 19:20; 20:4.)

The genealogy of Cain (Gen.4:17-24) indicates that his descendants were a bloodthirsty tribe, wrecking cruel vengeance on all who offended them. However, the record shows that in the sixth generation Cain's progeny made considerable progress in mechanical arts and inventions. They are credited with inventing the organ and harp and were artificers in brass and iron. But there is no record that Cain or any of his descendants learned to know or

to express God, good. *Josephus*' words describe Cain's character and influence: "He changed the world into cunning craftiness."

In the allegory of the unfolding of the two Covenants, Abel stands as the figure of the Son of God, while Cain stands forever as the figure of the evil one. We turn from Cain and for what he stands with loathing, while Abel lives in our hearts as the prefigurement of Christ, the ideal man, and as the first exemplar of the New Covenant.

PART II

THE ANTEDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS

Chapter VI

S E T H

The Progenitor of the People of the New Covenant

The recorded history of Seth and his progeny is brief. But it is not as human history that we study it. The few passages in the Bible about Seth reveal a pattern of unfoldment in the understanding, or knowledge, of the one God and of man in His image and likeness. They reveal the spiritual agreement of God with man — an agreement which is afterwards called *The Covenant*. Yet they also reflect the resistance of a material concept of existence to the spiritual revelation, unfoldment, and demonstration exemplified in a covenant which mortal man attempts to make with God and with the material senses — a covenant which belittles Deity and binds man to matter and mortality. These two covenants, illustrated in the first and second chapters of Genesis, are identified herein as the New and the Old Covenants.

Even though the conflict between the Old and New Covenants is evident throughout the history of the generations of Adam and Eve, the Scriptures give us innumerable illustrations of the triumph of good over evil and of the spiritual ascendancy and dominion of those individuals who acknowledged the omnipotence and omnipresence of God, good, and walked in the way of righteousness.

Seth was the third son of Adam and Eve, the younger brother of Cain and Abel. In the line of spiritual unfoldment, the experiences of this family reveal the pattern of the history of mankind.

In the story of Adam and Eve we find the story of the Old Covenant of materialism — a story in which a wholly material concept of life is vividly exemplified.

In the lives of Cain and Abel we find the story of the Two Covenants — a story in which the conflict between good and evil, between righteousness and unrighteousness, between the

spiritual concept of life and a material fleshly sense of existence, is graphically portrayed.

In the lives of Seth and his progeny we find the story of the New Covenant of Godlikeness — the story of the children of promise in all ages, in which the holy relationship of God and man is beautifully illustrated.

Those who are led by the Spirit of God into the Covenant of Godlikeness, who find their relationship with God, Spirit, who believe the promises of God — they are the sons and daughters of God. (See Rom.8:14.) Though they may be unenlightened, they will be receptive to the Word of God and will naturally move with the currents of Truth; the unseen realities of Spirit unfold spontaneously in them, and in them the promises of God are fulfilled.

Those who are covenanted to a material concept of God, man, and the universe, those who are bound by tradition and commonly accepted procedures, those who deny revelation if it does not conform to human reason, those in whom determined materialism is so ingrained that it cannot be broken — these are not the sons and daughters of God, the children of promise. Hence the promises of God cannot be fulfilled in them until, through spiritual baptism and regeneration, they come into the knowledge of God, of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit.

The record of those great sons of God, known to Bible readers as the generations of Seth, begins in the fourth chapter of Genesis, the twenty-fifth verse, and it is still going on. But let us begin at the beginning.

In the first chapter of Genesis we read:

And God, said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion.—

Gen.1:26.

And now we read:

And Adam knew his wife again; and she bare a son, and called his name Seth: For God, said she, hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew.— Gen.4:25.

“God hath appointed!” Eve saw in Seth one who was *God-appointed* to show forth to the world the nature of the Christ, which Abel had exemplified. This is the first time the name, *God,*

Elohim, has been mentioned since the mist went up from the earth. The appearance of it here reveals a marvelous fact: Eve's concept of Deity has risen above the limited, finite concept of the Supreme Being as Jehovah, or Lord God — a manlike concept of God who loves and hates, blesses and curses, and knows both good and evil — to that of *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe, whose creation is very good, like Himself. Through all the upheaval in the garden of Eden, through all the vicissitudes that followed expulsion from the garden, the unfoldment of the divine nature had not stopped. It had at last caught up Eve in its glorious spiritual unfoldment. The higher concept of Deity which came to Eve through this unfoldment spiritualized her concept of man, and she brought forth a son who expressed this higher concept. Furthermore, she beheld God's divine purpose for this son.

When Eve said, "God hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew," it is as though she were saying: "God has had mercy on me: He has given me another seed through whom the idea of divine sonship, expressing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, might be exemplified to the world."

But Adam did not see Seth in this light. As though to contradict Eve's spiritual concept of her son, we find Adam declaring his concept to him:

And Adam lived an hundred and thirty years, and begat a son in his own likeness, after his image; and called his name Seth. — Gen.5:3.

It was as though Adam refused to acknowledge God as the Creator of man. Or, the recorder insisted on presenting man in the likeness of Adam, and wrote as though Adam were saying, in substance: "I, Adam, have created a son in my own likeness, after *my* image."

For a time Seth seemed to do nothing to disprove Adam's insistence that *he* had begotten a son in his own image and likeness. The concept of man that Adam entertained seemed to overshadow the vision of man that had come to Eve. But Eve's spiritual conception of her son prevailed. We read:

And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos; then began men to call upon the name of the Lord. — Gen.4:26.

“He called his name Enos.” The name *Enos* means a mortal, hence mortal man. Could it be that when Seth saw that he had brought forth a mortal in the likeness of Adam instead of a son in the likeness of God, he awakened from the Adam dream, from the mesmeric material concept of creation? Certainly a higher and holier concept of God touched his thought for — “Then men began to call upon the name of the Lord.”

What does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord? At times it may seem to be a plaintive call, “Lord, Lord, have mercy on me.” But there is a much higher meaning: Men began to call forth in themselves the *nature* of God; they began to express the goodness of God, instead of accepting as inevitable the nature of gross, sensuous materialism which Adam had bestowed on them. They began to feel divine power within themselves, power which developed in them a mighty individuality. In years to come *the name of the Lord* was enunciated by Moses as *I AM*. But this name was known from time immemorial. (See Ex.3:14,15.)

Recall the importance of names and their meanings in the Bible. The name of a person, place, or thing indicates its nature, its character. The name of the Lord indicates the infinite nature of God as good, which is reflected throughout the first chapter of Genesis in the original record of creation. Therefore, when men began to call upon the *name* of the Lord — to call forth the divine nature — it means that they began to see through the mist of materialism to the spiritual reality, to the divine nature which God had bestowed on His creation. They began to discount the evidence of the material senses and to think of creation in a scientific way — creation like the Creator. They began to see what God saw, that everything He had made was very good. They began to express the divine nature and to see the divine nature in everyone and in everything.

Seth began to perceive the nature of God as good; therefore he saw the reflection of good everywhere. In this acknowledgment of the goodness of God, the goodness of man became apparent.

There is a short paragraph concerning Seth in *Josephus' History of the Children of Israel* which is enlightening. He wrote:

Now Seth, when he was brought up, and came to those years in which he could discern what was good, became a virtuous man; and as he was himself of an excellent character, so did he

leave children behind him who imitated his virtues. All these proved to be of good dispositions. They also inhabited the same country without dissensions, and in a happy condition, without any misfortunes falling upon them. . . . Now this posterity of Seth continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe, for seven generations. (*Josephus*, Chap.II, Par.3; Chap.III, Par.1.)

Tradition tells us that the millennial estate of Seth and his progeny continued for over a thousand years. It was an age the like of which the world has not since known. "They esteemed God as the Lord of the universe." They came to understand and to express the nature of God revealed in the first chapter of Genesis as *Elohim*, the infinite, universal Creator, the All-in-all God, whose creation, like Himself, is very good. Eve bequeathed this higher concept of Deity to her son when she realized that God was the only Creator and that God had appointed Seth to fulfill Abel's mission, that of giving to the world an exemplification of man in God's likeness, having spiritual authority on earth.

With this higher concept of God, a nobler expression of man was immediately evident. The goodness of God began to appear in the minds of men. Seth began to see through the mist of material reasoning to the spiritual reality; he began to turn away from the unreliable conflicting testimony of the five physical senses. In other words, he began to think scientifically, and in this scientific consciousness, "He could discern what was good, and became a virtuous man." The first evidence of his discernment of that which is good was the expression of the priceless quality of virtue.

This word is worthy of our earnest consideration. Webster says of it: "Virtue is not to be considered in the light of mere innocence or abstaining from harm, but as the exertion of our faculties in doing good." *Virtue*, from the Latin *vir*, meaning *man* (generic man, not a male creature), means: manly strength, excellence, supernatural power; capacity or power adequate to the production of a given effect; energy; efficacy; potency; operation of law; ability to act; accomplishment. The one synonym of virtue is *goodness*. But the antonyms of virtue — weakness, impotence, ineffectiveness, evil, sin, crime — read like a summation of the characters of Adam and Cain.

Through Seth men came to esteem God as the Lord, the Governor, of the whole universe. They began to understand that God is

the only Cause and Creator, the only Father of man. And they began to see the earth and all that is therein in its spiritual nature. The scientific thinking of Seth enabled him to turn from the evidence of the material senses in much the same way an astronomer discounts what his eyes behold. And Seth bequeathed to his progeny this glorious heritage of scientific vision whereby they were able to understand God as the Creator of good only, and to see the earth as the sphere of the operation of heavenly harmony. Not only did men begin to call upon the name of the Lord and to express the divine nature, but they also began to understand God and to come into some understanding or knowledge of the Son of God.

Righteousness reigned within these righteous men, and they reigned like kings upon the earth. Like so many Godlike individuals in the Bible, their recorded history is brief. We can readily see that it is not their human history that is important to us, but their character, their divine nature, their dominion. We can learn from them something of man's relationship with God, which gave them divine authority on earth — The Dominion of the New Covenant.

Chapter VII

SETH'S PROGENY

Let us turn again to the Bible to the fifth chapter of Genesis to see the good that is stored up for us in the list of the begats recording the days of Seth and his progeny. The key that will open the door of our understanding concerning the generations of Seth is the spiritual meaning of the names of these individuals. Don't think of these men as mortals who lived several thousand years ago. Think rather of the uninterrupted unfolding of the spiritual understanding of the divine nature, the unfolding of good in human consciousness, which their record reveals.

Humanly, these men were rulers of great dynasties who kept the light of spiritual understanding burning throughout their ages. Spiritually, their history is the history of the children of promise in all ages, the record of those who, through spiritual regeneration, acknowledge God as their Father and who let their lives express Godlikeness, the divine nature of the Son of God. Let us read their history prayerfully, for we may be reading our own.

You have probably heard more about the venerable ages these men attained than the divine nature they expressed. The life span accredited to each exceeds that of any other individuals in recorded history. It is important for us to know not only the years of their ascendancy, but also the meaning of their names. For hidden therein, awaiting our discovery, are qualities of thought through which mankind passes before reaching the millennial estate pictured by Isaiah (Isa.35:1-10; 65:17-25).

The following chart, giving the meaning of the names and the ages of Seth and his progeny, may help to trace the pattern of unfoldment revealed in their lives. (See Gen.4:25,26; 5:6-32; 9:28,29.)

Seth	<i>God-appointed</i>	912 years
Enos	<i>A Mortal, Mortality</i>	905 years
Cainan	<i>Possession, Dwelling Place</i>	910 years
Mahalaleel	<i>God Shines Forth</i>	895 years

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Jared	<i>Ruling, Coming Down, a Descent</i>	962 years
Enoch	<i>Dedicated, Ascendant, Well Ordered, Disciplined</i>	365 years
Methuselah	<i>The Man of a Dart, Javelin, Sword, Spear</i>	969 years
Lamech	<i>Powerful</i>	777 years
Noah	<i>Comfort, Rest.</i>	950 years

There will be many who will reason that these years were not measured by the same calendar that we now use. Others will insist that the number of years attributed to these men indicates the period of the dynasty in which they reigned, and the length of time in which their influence was felt. Still others will believe that it is not impossible that holy men, imbued with the Spirit of God, should live hundreds of years. The Apostle Peter declares with authority:

One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.— II Pet.3:8.

It is not time that we are considering, but periods of spiritual unfoldment — the unfoldment of the divine nature in man — whether the periods be called a day or a thousand years.

Through the posterity of Seth we can trace the pattern of individual progress from the gross materialism of Adam, which so often seems to be the lot of mankind, through Seth, in whom the tide of materialism was stemmed and the understanding of God and of the Son of God began to dawn in the minds of men, to Noah, in whom the nature of the Comforter, the power of the Holy Spirit, was exemplified.

In previous chapters the natures of Adam, Cain, Abel, and Seth have been discussed. The meaning of their names is as follows:

Adam	<i>Red clay, earth, of low degree</i>
Cain	<i>Acquisition, possessor, spear, lance; a dominant acquirer</i>
Abel	<i>Breath, that which ascends</i>
Seth	<i>Appointed, substituted</i>

Adam symbolizes mortality. He is typical of all mortals who make their covenant with a material concept of life

and find themselves bound by their own mortal misconceptions. Although not a wicked man, Adam is typical of the determined materialism expressed by mortals — materialism which completely obstructs the light of spirituality and refuses to yield to divine directions.

Cain, the outgrowth of Adam's gross materialism, symbolizes degeneration — all that is evil, malicious, and sensuous in the nature of a mortal. In him we find the grossest elements of mortal thought. He typifies the sinister evil mind which attempts to reduce all progress to its own low level by subtle methods; and failing in that, would murder the representatives of righteousness in an attempt to erase its own inferiority.

Abel symbolizes the nature of the Christ in man, the type of innocence and purity which brings to the Creator the fruits of a good life. Abel, a shepherd, was self-disciplined; he shepherded his own thoughts into the fold of righteousness and is typical of those who help others find their green pastures and safe abiding place. In him we find the nature of Godlikeness. In him the light of spirituality burns brightly.

Seth symbolizes the virtuous man in all generations — pure, honorable, intelligent, good, of excellent character — in whom the Christly nature shines and through whose children and children's children the divine nature is revealed for all the world to see and to emulate. Seth is typical of those righteous men and women who, through growth in grace, grow to the full measure of the stature of Christ, to full spiritual maturity.

When Cain killed Abel, it appeared that evil had triumphed over good, that the seed of the serpent had destroyed the seed of the woman. But Eve's redeemed womanhood, expressing the power of the Motherhood of God, brought forth another seed, the good and virtuous Seth, God appointed to fulfill Abel's mission — to exemplify the nature of the Son of God. Through the progeny of Seth, "who imitated his virtue," the power of the divine nature in man is wondrously illustrated — power to overcome the wiles of

the devil. Through them the knowledge of God, of the Son of God, and of the Spirit of God has been given to the world.

In Seth's progeny we see Eve's higher conception of man victorious over Adam's concept. In them we see the seed of the woman reigning like kings and priests unto God (Rev.1:6).

Recall that in the fourth chapter of Genesis we read that Eve said of Seth:

God hath appointed me another seed instead of
Abel, whom Cain slew.— Gen.4:25.

And in the fifth chapter of Genesis Adam identified Seth with himself, not with God:

And Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after
his image; and called his name Seth.— Gen.5:3.

Why is this difference significant to us? Because —

Seth, *the God-appointed*, symbolizes the highest concept of man that we have seen in ourselves. Like Seth, we may seem at first to be unaware of our relationship with God, not cognizant that we have been *God-appointed* for a special mission in life. The evidence of the material senses tells us that we are made in the image and likeness of Adam — or of human parents — and that our humanhood is coincident with mortality and has no divine purpose. All we seem to bring forth in our lives is —

Mortality, the nature of a mortal (Enos). But "When we come to those years in which we can discern what is good," we see through the mist of materialism and awaken from the Adam dream. We begin "to esteem God as the Lord of the universe," the only Cause and Creator; the true meaning of goodness and virtue begins to dawn in us; spiritual manhood begins to assert itself; and we glimpse our likeness to the divine. As the goodness of God begins to unfold in our consciousness our *virtue* is made manifest in manly qualities of strength, divine energy, miraculous power, ability to perform, and in accomplishment — qualities of the divine nature expressing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, *Elohim*. The opposites of virtue — impotence, weakness, ineffectiveness, evil, sin, crime — begin to fade away from our consciousness and experience, and we find that we are in —

Possession (Cainan) of our Godlikeness. The qualities of spiritual manhood and womanhood find expression in us; we discover our rela-

tionship with the Christ and disavow any kinship with Adam. Our consciousness becomes the *Dwelling Place* of holiness, typical of the kingdom of heaven within, and in this holy consciousness —

God Shines Forth (Mahalaleel). The power of the divine nature, the light of spirituality, shines through everything we do and swallows up the shadows of mortal material selfhood. When we are in *Possession* of the understanding of our relationship with God and His Christ, when our house, the *Dwelling Place* of godliness, is filled with spiritual light, we must share our blessing, and with tenderness and love, the Christ-spirit, we —

Descend (Jared) into the highways and byways of life — not in the sense of coming down to the level of mortal thought, but of reducing to human apprehension the spiritual understanding of God and of the Son of God, and sharing it with others. This *Descent* does not diminish our spiritual dominion, *Ruling*, for our Christliness embraces the human in the divine, exalts consciousness to behold the kingdom of heaven at hand, and encourages us to rise out of mortality through the expression of the divine nature. The understanding of Christly compassion begets a —

Dedicated, Disciplined, Well-ordered life (Enoch). We walk with God every step of the way. In this consciousness of godliness we ascend above a material sense of life, spiritualize our concept of all that our eye beholds, and walk in the way of holiness — in the understanding that there is but one God whose creation is very good. This scientific vision gives us dominion over all the earth, for such vision enables us to penetrate the mist of materialism and to see God's likeness everywhere. We must be ever ready to defend our precious heritage of godliness and its dominion, for this spiritual concept of life, this ascendancy above mortality and its conditions, is constantly challenged by the arguments and suggestions of the adversary, “that old serpent called the Devil, and Satan, that deceiveth the whole world” (Rev.12:9) — which always seeks to pull human consciousness and experience down to its level. We must take our stand firmly, “with truth as our belt, righteousness as our breastplate, the gospel of peace on our feet, salvation as our helmet, and in our hand the sword of Spirit, which is the Word of God. And above all we must take the great shield of faith, for it can quench every burning missile the enemy hurls at us” (Eph.6:11-17, JBP). Thus armed we will literally be —

The Man with the Sword or Spear (Methuselah). The sword of Spirit, the Word of God, is aflame with the light of Truth, which overcomes the elements of darkness in ourselves and in the world. We must wield this two-edged sword with all our might and trust in the

power of the Word of God to triumph over every argument and aggression of evil, whether its appearance be that of a serpent or a great red dragon. The Word of God begets in us a sense of the irresistible might of divine goodness and make us —

Powerful (Lamech) and strong. It gives us spiritual dominion over the subtle suggestions and aggressive attacks of evil. Using the Word of God as our authority and defense, we are able to rise above the inertia of a material sense of existence and to break the mesmeric drag of earthward gravitation. The Word of God goes forth with power to accomplish God's divine purpose in us and in the world. This irresistible power of the Word is the strength of the Almighty which —

Comforts (Noah) and sustains us, giving us *Rest* from the godless arguments of evil. The word *comfort*, from *cum forte*, means with strength. The *Comfort* of God, or the *Comforter*, reveals to us our spiritual, scientific, unchanging relationship with God. And this spiritual understanding is the ark of salvation within us in which we are safe from the deluge of mortal beliefs which seem to flood our earth. The understanding that the earth is spiritual and that divine good is the substance of creation swallows up all the floods of evil which the dragon could possibly send forth. (See Rev.12:13-16.) Just as light swallows up a shadow and in the place thereof all is light, so spiritual understanding swallows up the suggestions of evil that power and substance are material. *The Comforter* is the Holy Ghost (John 14:26), the Spirit of God, which moves upon the waters, or elements of mortal thought, making of none effect the evidence of the senses which insists that evil is flooding the earth and swallowing up divine goodness. This *Comfort of God* gives to us the scientific understanding that reverses the evidence of the senses and reveals to us the spiritual fact that the knowledge of God is flooding the earth, as the waters cover the sea. *The Comfort of God*, the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, baptizes us with the pure water of the river of Life and washes away the residue of evil, the lingering materialism which has accumulated, consciously and unconsciously, in us and in the world. *The Comfort of God* brings to us the Sabbath *Rest* of holiness and quiets the restlessness of mortal fear, stills the agitation of material theories, stabilizes the fluctuating tides of human hopes, quells the turbulence of conflicting mortal opinions, and changes the fermenting action of anxious thought to the healthful chemicalization, or scientific action, of spiritual thought in which old things pass away and all things are become new.

The generations of Seth prefigure the children of promise in all ages — children in whom Godlikeness, the divine nature, is so radiant, so transcendent, so powerful that they turn involuntarily

from evil and naturally express the goodness of God. In such the wondrous promises of God are fulfilled.

In the unfoldment of the generations of Seth we find a kind of prophecy of various eras in world history. In the meaning of the names of these patriarchs we find the key to specific eras which, in a sense, their lives prefigure. Eras seldom begin or end at a definite time. So with these eras — they overlap, run concurrently, or merge gradually one into another.

The Days of Seth (912 years) point to an era beginning with the Flood and extending to the migration of the children of Israel into Egypt. This era includes the settlement of the sons of Noah — Shem, Japheth, Ham — and their descendants in their lands. This era also includes those who were *God-appointed* to found a nation in which the knowledge of God, of the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit would be exemplified. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph are the patriarchs in whose lives this pattern of unfoldment was exemplified. In them the Covenant which God made with Noah and his sons was established.

The Days of Enos (905 years) point to an era that began before the previous era ended. This era had its birth at the time of the birth of Jacob's sons, later known as the Children of Israel. It continued through the days when they migrated into Egypt at the time of material and spiritual famine in the land of Canaan. Instead of returning to their promised land after the famine, those who were *God-appointed* to fulfill a divine mission literally sold their spiritual birth-right for the corn of Egypt. Here under beneficent Pharaohs they prospered and became satisfied with material prosperity. They thought and acted like *mortals* instead of like the sons and daughters of God they had known themselves to be. They forgot their Covenant with God that would have given them their dominion. Except for a few faithful ones, they worshipped the gods of materialism. Their state of mind soon degenerated into a state of servitude and bondage — conditions which are the outgrowth of *mortality*. This state of mind, not the country of Egypt, bound them to the Old Covenant and its limitations and robbed them of their divine dominion.

The Days of Cainan (910 years) point to an era in which the children of Israel went forth from Egypt to be molded into a great nation. This era also began before the previous era ended. It had its birth at the birth of Moses, under whose leadership the Israelites went forth to *possess* their *dwelling place* in the land of Canaan, the land promised by God to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their seed. However, the people needed spiritual discipline and regenera-

tion — a wilderness experience — before they were ready to go in and possess their promised land. Through Moses' teachings they were led back to the worship of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Through the law of God, Moses taught them commandments, statutes, and self-discipline. Obedience to the law was Moses' theme song. And for many years the Children of Israel were known as the people of law, people governed by the law of God instead of by a centralized government. Under Joshua, whose name means *saviour*, they *possessed* their promised land, spiritually and physically. And under the Judges they were established in this *dwelling place*.

The Days of Mahalaleel (896 years) point to the era of the prophets. This era too began before the previous era ended. It had its birth at the time of the birth of Samuel, who was both judge and prophet. Through the spiritually minded men of the nation God spoke to the people. Beginning with Samuel, this era extended through the prophecy of Malachi and included such spiritual giants as Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Zachariah — a period in which *God did indeed shine forth* in the lives of those righteous individuals, and for a time in the whole nation. The prophets were shepherds never tiring in their holy work. They were fearless in rebuking kings and commoners alike when they strayed from the way of holiness — from the provisions of the Covenant: "Walk before me and be thou perfect" (Gen.17:1). They were keenly alert to the need of righteous government, and they made their presence felt in kings' palaces and in halls of judgment. Further, they hesitated not to rebuke the priests when such rebuke was needed. But when the nation went after other gods, gloried in materiality instead of growing in spirituality, when they claimed the protection of the Covenant without living up to its conditions, they were again led into captivity.

The Days of Jared (962 years) point to the era of the kings and extended into the period in which the people were governed by military leaders and the priesthood. This era runs concurrently with the era of the prophets. At the beginning of this era the nation prospered. But unrighteous kings caused the nation to become idolatrous and to go after foreign gods. The kingdom was divided and weakened. There was a *gradual coming down*, a decline in moral, material, and spiritual prosperity. The downward trend of their thinking led them into Assyrian and Babylonian captivity. Although the children of Judah, who had gone into Babylonian captivity, were permitted to return to their land after seventy years, they never regained ascendancy among the nations. Under various spiritual leaders, military governors, and under the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Levitical priesthood, they attempted to regain their national status. But the majority of the people continued to claim their spiritual status as peo-

ple chosen of God and under the protection of the Covenant without living according to the provisions of the Covenant. They seemed not to realize that they were God's chosen people only so long as they kept intact their Covenant with God. As a nation they ceased to exist at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Rome in 70 A.D. — forty years after the crucifixion of Jesus. Those who went into Assyrian captivity never returned to their home land. They were dispersed to all parts of the then known world and became known as the Lost Tribes of Israel.

The Days of Enoch (365 years) point to the early Christian era, when the prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah was fulfilled. In this era the Covenant of God with man came to its communion in Christ Jesus. The Trinity was individualized in this holy man. In this era there was a rebirth of the Covenant relationship of God with man, an era in which the dominion God gave to man was gloriously exemplified in Jesus and in the lives of the early Christians. Christ Jesus and his teachings were rejected by the vast majority of the people of Judah. But through the teaching and preaching of Jesus' disciples and of the Apostle Paul, the message of Christianity — the Message of the New Covenant — was taken to the people of Asia Minor and Europe and from thence it spread throughout the then known world. And the followers of Christ Jesus, who were first called Christians at Antioch (Acts 11:26), became the people of the New Covenant. However, after about three hundred years there was evidence of less dedication, less spiritual discipline, less Godlikeness, and hence less spiritual dominion. It is not surprising that an era of spiritual darkness followed.

The Days of Methuselah (969 years) point to the era known as The Dark Ages — a period in which materialism seemed to overshadow the minds of men causing them to lose sight of the dominion of the Christ. It was necessary to be fully armed with the *sword* of Spirit in order to survive spiritually. Darkness seemed to be on the face of the deep things of God. There was little spiritual or material progress in the world. But the Spirit of God still moved upon the face of the waters. After a time the elements of thought began to stir. Mighty thunderings were heard. And even before this era ended another era began.

The Days of Lamech (777 years) point to an era in which two great periods emerged from the darkness: Periods known as *The Renaissance* and *The Reformation*. Masters of the arts and sciences rose spontaneously. Mighty spiritual leaders burst upon the scene. Philosophers were heard in almost every land. Great discoverers brought to light discoveries which had long been hidden. New worlds were discovered. And astronomy rose into a new dimension. But far

greater than any of these advances, the Bible was restored to its place in the homes, in the lives of men, and in the pulpits of churches. The Scriptures were translated into English and into other languages. *Powerful* spiritual forces were at work that broke through the mist of the Dark Ages, through the density of mortal thought, and pressed forward into the next and greatest of eras.

The Days of Noah (950 years) point to the great scientific era — science in religion, science in philosophy, science in medicine, science in physics, science in metaphysics — an era which comes to light as the periods of unfoldment of the divine nature in man and the universe near their meridian. In this era countless scientific inventions have made work less laborious, and new scientific discoveries are tending to remove barriers of time and space. Accomplishments which seemed impossible less than one hundred years ago are now regarded as natural. Man's dominion over all the earth is now viewed as a distinct possibility. However, we may expect another flood in this era which Noah's name and nature prophesy. But this flood is the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, cleansing the world of sin and sickness — of all evil — and bringing *comfort and rest* to mankind. Like the great river of Life, this cleansing flood is even now spreading over the earth. As it gains momentum its waters, or influence, will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. And spiritually scientific thinking will prevail over ignorant, traditional, finite, material dark-age thinking. Then will good outshine and prevail over evil as naturally as light outshines and prevails over darkness. In this era the *Comforter*, promised by the Master Christian, will have come — even that *Comfort of Christ* prophesied in the meaning of Noah's name.

We have entered this glorious era! The evidence of the material senses denies this and prophesies darkness, chaos, rebellion, fear, destruction, frustration, death — the end of all good. The dragon does indeed seem to be “going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it” (Job 1:7). But the uprising of evil seen all over the world is not what it appears to be. What we are really seeing is the effect of the power of good as it upheaves and exposes evil in all its forms. Evil is not on the march; it is on the run, fleeing before the spiritual forces of righteousness. Spiritual strength is prevailing, regardless of sense testimony to the contrary! And spiritual vision, prophetic insight, will behold in this uprising a spiritual revolution that will overturn and continue to overturn evil, its adversaries, and its kingdoms, until right prevails. (See Ezek.21:27.)

Christ Jesus foresaw this time in world history and described the conditions that would herald the end of the evil and the ultimate triumph of good — conditions which, he said, would tell us when the “coming of the Son of man” draweth nigh. In the Gospel of St. Matthew (24:3) we read of this time as being “the end of the world.” St. Luke records it differently (21:31): “By these signs ye shall know that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.”

In the twenty-first chapter of Luke there is a vivid word picture of conditions that will prevail at the time of “the coming of the Son of man” — conditions which each one of us may recognize as comparable to world conditions today. The Master said there would be great earthquakes, famines, pestilences, persecutions, nation rising against nation, rebellion of children against parents, perplexity, betrayal by friends and family, the sea and the waves roaring, signs in the sun and moon, men’s hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth:

And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

And when these things began to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig tree, and all the trees;

When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.— Luke 21:27-31,33.

The end of the world? Yes! *The end of a material sense of our world.* This is the end that Jesus’ beloved disciple John saw and recorded in the opening verse of the book of Revelation, the book which he called:

The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.— Rev.1:1.

With prophetic certainty this beloved Apostle wrote:

I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea [no more confusion, no more dangerous currents, shoals, depths].— Rev. 21:1.

St. John saw, and so must all believers of the Christly message see, that the old material concept of all things will, must, give place to the new spiritual concept of everything God has made. Then we will see heaven and earth and all that is therein in a new light — all things become new! Creation will be seen in its spiritual nature, and everything God has made will be seen as God sees it — as *very good*.

The pure water of the river of Life is flowing through all the world, overflowing the hiding places of all evil (Isa.28:17), in fulfillment of the Master's prophecy, "As the days of Noe (Noah) were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt.24:37). But *this flood* is not a destructive one. It is the cleansing baptism of the Holy Spirit, washing away the sins of the world, purifying the thoughts of all mankind, that man's original perfection in the image and likeness of God may appear as the spiritual individuality, the identity, of every child, man, and woman in the world.

Then will the Trinity have fulfilled its holy mission. Then will the knowledge of God and of the Son of God be fully interpreted and individualized in all creation by the Spirit of God, by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. Then will the divine nature characterize every individuality. Then will the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself, be exemplified in every living thing. Then will all mankind turn naturally from the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Then will they joyfully partake of the life-giving fruit of the tree of Life and drink of the ever-refreshing water of the river of Life. Then will the millennial estate prophesied by Isaiah have come upon the earth as it is in heaven (Isa.11:6-9).

The zeal of the Lord of Hosts
will perform this.
(Isa.9:7.)

Are we ready for this appearing of the new heaven and new earth which, with prophetic certainty, will shortly come to pass? Are we ready to abide in the spiritual dimension? Are we ready to

walk in the way of holiness? If we answer *yes*, we will discover that we are covenanted to Spirit, that even *now* we stand on holy ground and possess the dominion of heaven on earth — The Dominion of the New Covenant.

There is little told us in the Bible of the human history of the Generations of Seth. Except for a few verses devoted to Enoch, only Noah's story is told in detail. In the record of both Enoch and Noah we are told that these patriarchs *walked with God* (Gen.5:24; 6:9). No where else in the Bible is this descriptive phrase used — a phrase so short to mean so much. According to *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary* (p.179), "The phrase . . . is to be explained of a prophetic life spent in immediate converse with the spiritual world."

Because the unfolding of the divine nature in the lives of these two Antediluvian patriarchs is vitally important to us in our spiritual journeying, they merit our special consideration. For Enoch's life prefigures the coming of the Christ. Noah's, the coming of the Comforter.

Chapter VIII

ENOCH

By Faith Enoch Was
Translated That He Should Not See Death.
(Heb.11:5.)

Enoch is fifth in the generations of Seth, whom God appointed in Abel's stead, through whom the knowledge of God, of the Son of God, and of the power of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, would be revealed to the world.

Recall that the name *Enoch* means dedicated, disciplined, well ordered. This name also means ascendant, and carries the connotation of teacher. We read of him in Genesis:

And Jared . . . begat Enoch:
And Enoch lived sixty and five years, and begat Methuselah;
And Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters:
And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty and five years:
And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.— Gen.5:18,21-24.

Except for this brief record of Enoch, his name is not mentioned again in the Old Testament and is mentioned only three times in the New Testament: In Luke's Gospel (3:37) in the genealogy of Jesus, in Hebrews (11:5), and in the book of Jude (1:14). However, there were three ancient writings preserved in the name of *Enoch*, possibly four, and it is claimed that many passages in the New Testament are taken from the *First Book of Enoch*. Undoubtedly these books were known and studied and accepted as authentic spiritual guides by the early Christians, for in the book of Hebrews we read:

By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had

translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is [that he exists], and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.— Heb.11:5,6.

Enoch's faith in God was the indestructible spiritual substance of his being, "the evidence of things not seen" (Heb.11:1). His faith made him certain of realities everpresent but unseen and unknown to the material senses. His absolute confidence in knowing what God is, and consequently what man is as God's image and likeness, was a powerful transforming influence in his life — the power of the Holy Ghost. This irresistible force of the Spirit of God translated him into the kingdom of God's dear Son — the spiritual kingdom invisible to the material senses, but present here and now.

Enoch's Godlikeness shone like the lights in the firmament of the heavens, and the divine nature expressed by this holy man day by day *pleased God*, satisfied *Elohim* that Enoch was good — like Himself.

There is no record of Enoch's death. His life was, like the Master's, truly *a walk with God*. He did not walk in the way of mortality. He was ever conscious of living in the presence of God. Enoch walked through the experience of life without yielding to death. He walked in the path of righteousness, in the way of holiness, in the way of divine Life, the way of immortality, in which is no shadow of death.

Enoch walked with God, not for reward, but because it was his nature to do so. He overcame death, not because it was something he deliberately set out to do, but because it was the natural outcome of his daily walk with God, who was his Life. Enoch was a scientist in the truest sense of the word. He saw beyond and above the evidence of the material senses to the unseen spiritual reality. His heart was pure, and therefore he saw God. (See Matt.5:8.)

The meaning of Enoch's name — dedicated, disciplined, well ordered, ascendant — describes his life. He did not retire from the world in solitary seclusion any more than Jesus did. He walked with one hand in God's and the other in humanity's. The very meaning of his name tells us that he dedicated his life to the things of Spirit. He expressed spirituality in his daily walk and conversa-

tion. He disciplined himself. He led a well-ordered life. He was not unaware of the subtlety of sin, nor did he close his eyes to the suggestions of evil. But he knew the authority which a Godlike man has over the godless arguments and presumptions of evil. His record is vitally important to us because in him we see a man who, in his Covenant with all that is good, completely rejected evil in all its guises.

Through the transparency of his own godliness, Enoch saw all evil as godless, hence powerless. His clear vision detected the type of thinking which produced all the evil deeds that were ever perpetrated, but he saw no power in it. He saw the goodness of God completely swallowing up the godlessness of evil and outshining sorcery and sin. He even saw the saints of God convincing the ungodly of their ungodliness.

Jesus' brother Jude used Enoch as his authority when he exhorted the early Christians to keep themselves free from the evil influences of their day by building themselves up "on their most holy faith," keeping themselves safe "in the love of God" (Jude 1:20,21). Jude saw the irresistible power of good, expressed by man, as a sure defense against both the mental and physical aggressions of evil. He described the sinister forms of occultism which threatened to rob his fellow Christians of their spiritual power by undermining their faith and urged them to beware of the subtle influences which had "crept in unawares" and turned "the grace of God into lasciviousness." He warned them particularly of the "filthy dreamers who defile the flesh, and despise dominion" — the dominion of spiritual authority — "who go in the way of Cain, and run greedily after the error of Balaam [sex worship]" (Jude 1:4,8,11). He said further:

And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints,

To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.— Jude 1:14,15.

Enoch saw that the goodness of God expressed by man was a spiritual force, more powerful than all the evil exhibited by all the

ungodly sinners in the world. And all the "hard speeches [defiant words] which ungodly sinners have spoken" are as nothing before the Word of God. All the personifications of evil melt away before the saints of the Lord, before those who fearlessly express godliness. Enoch saw the power of God, good, expressed by man as a relentless, irresistible spiritual force which nothing could turn back. He saw the way in which God destroys what is ungodlike, the way which is described in the first chapter of Genesis: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The Spirit of God, moving upon the waters, is the action of divine good moving upon the elements of mortal thought, overflowing the hiding place of lies, routing the forces of sensuality and ungodliness, destroying evil and its hidden mental influences; thus claiming the minds of mortals in the name or nature of Almighty God, transforming them with the divine influence and so redeeming mankind. How grateful we are to faithful Jude for giving us this vivid description of Enoch's character and activity!

The transforming and transfiguring power of the dynamic action of the Spirit of God which animated Enoch is beautifully described in the words of a poem by Sir Thomas Moore:

When from the lips of Truth
 one mighty breath
 Shall, like a whirlwind, scatter
 in its breeze
 The whole dark pile of human
 mockeries;
 Then shall the reign of Mind
 commence on earth,
 And starting fresh as from a
 second birth,
 Man in the sunshine of the
 world's new spring,
 Shall walk transparent like
 some holy thing.

Enoch's life is a revelation of the power of good to redeem mankind from mortality in all its forms and a holy example for each one of us to follow. As we purify our hearts we too will see, as Enoch saw, the absolute power of godliness and the utter powerlessness of evil and its representatives. Our purified vision

will penetrate the darkness of ungodliness and will illumine earth's scenes with the light of our Christliness.

In the degree that we walk away from a finite material concept of existence that would bind us to mortality, we come into a closer, dearer sense of our oneness with God and with all that is good. And in this bond of union, which is called The Covenant, we too walk with God and are translated into the kingdom of His dear Son, into the kingdom of heaven — here and now.

THE BOOKS OF ENOCH

In *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary* (p.179) we find this reference to *The Book of Enoch*:

The first trace of the existence of The Book of Enoch, is found in the Epistle of Jude. An apocryphal book called Enoch was known at a very early date, but was lost sight of until 1773, when Bruce brought with him on his return from Egypt three MSS, containing the complete Ethiopic translation. In its present shape the book consists of a series of revelations supposed to have been given to Enoch and Noah, which extend to the most varied aspects of nature and life, and are designed to offer a comprehensive vindication of the action of Providence. Notwithstanding the quotation in Jude, and the wide circulation of the book itself, the apocalypse of Enoch was uniformly and distinctly separated from the canonical Scriptures.

Hastings Bible Dictionary records:

In Apocalyptic literature Enoch appears as a preacher of repentance, a prophet of future events, and the recipient of supernatural knowledge of the secrets of heaven and earth.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica (Vol.8, pp.604-605) identifies four *Books of Enoch*: *The First Book of Enoch*, the one called *The Ethiopic Enoch* (Jude 1:14) and various parts of the book of Revelation show the influence of this book; *The Second Book of Enoch*, *The Slavonic Enoch*, also known as *The Book of the Secrets of Enoch*, an apocalyptic work; *The Third Book of Enoch*, known as *The Hebrew Enoch*; and *The Book of Enoch*, referred to in the Epistle ascribed to Barnabas — but it is no longer extant. The existence of these writings is evidence of the extent to which the figure of Enoch must have dominated certain strands of Jewish tradition.

Chapter IX

NOAH

Noah Walked With God.
(Gen.6:9.)

Noah was eighth in the millennial estate of Seth's progeny. We read in the fifth chapter of Genesis:

And Lamech . . . begat a son:
And he called his name Noah, saying, This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed.— Gen.5:28,29.

God, who is infinite Love, could not for an instant curse anyone or anything. "The ground which the Lord had cursed" is not a location in time and space. It is typical of the state of mind in which Adam and Eve lived after they had eaten of the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Having accepted the conflicting knowledge that both good and evil were real and powerful and that evil methods could accomplish a good purpose, conflicting forces seemed to be at work in their experience. Even the ground — their environment — seemed to be at enmity with them and would not yield its natural fruitage. And they believed God had cursed them, their land, their experience, their life-work. Their son Cain dwelt in the same state of mind and fell heir to the same mental and physical environment. They went out from the presence of God and His goodness because of their negative, evil, finite sense of existence that could not comprehend the infinitude and magnitude of God's creation which, at God's command, brings forth all that is needed to feed and clothe and house every living thing. Looking through the keyhole of self at the broad vistas of spiritual creation, they formed conclusions as circumscribed as the hole through which they peered.

The righteousness of Seth and his generations restored the spiritual concept of the earth and heaven and man as revealed in

the first chapter of Genesis. The blessing of God's goodness was abundantly manifested in the lives of these godly men. For seven generations Seth's progeny continued to express the kingdom of heaven on earth; and earth was indeed God's kingdom come.

Now in the eighth generation of Seth's progeny we hear again of the curse on the ground, of unrequited labor, and of land which seemed to be at enmity with those who toiled to cultivate it. What has happened? The record is clear.

The Nephilim

And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,

That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.

And the Lord said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh; yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.

There were giants [Nephilim] in the earth in those days; and also after that when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children unto them, the same became mighty men [gibboria] which were of old, men of renown.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.— Gen.6:1-5.

The men who began to multiply on the face of the earth were the race of Adam, descended through the generations of Cain. The sons of God were the great race of man, the progeny of Seth, regenerated through Eve's vision of her son as *God Appointed* to fulfill Abel's mission — to exemplify the nature of the Son of God. (See Gen.4:25.)

In the story of Cain and Abel we saw an illustration of a direct attack by the serpent through its seed, its willing tool (Cain), on the seed of the woman (Abel), in an attempt to completely destroy the representative of good and its progeny and exalt the representative of evil and its offspring. But God could not be without His representative. We are told that Eve saw in Seth, her third son,

the one who was "God-appointed instead of Abel" to exemplify the goodness of God and, through his progeny, to bring to the world the knowledge of God and of the Son of God. Hence Seth became *the seed of the woman*, the representative of divine good, the exemplar of the Christ idea in human history. The goodness of Seth and his progeny triumphed in the world for more than a thousand years, without interruption. And the righteousness of Seth's progeny continued to triumph over evil for thousands of years, even to this day.

The serpent — typical of the carnal mind forever at enmity against God (Rom.8:7) — having failed to destroy the representatives of good by attack from without, chose another method of destruction, more subtle but just as deadly as direct attack. The serpent sought to merge its seed with the seed of the woman — to combine good and evil — thus to adulterate the goodness of Seth's progeny with the evil of Cain's offspring and so undermine the spiritual strength of the sons of God. The righteous young manhood of Seth's progeny became mesmerized by the sensuous womanhood of Cain's generations:

The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.— Gen.6:2.

When this amalgamation of good and evil began, we do not know. But when the representatives of good (the seed of the woman) and the representatives of evil (the seed of the serpent) merged, there was an eruption of such a catastrophic nature that it precipitated the disaster called *the flood*. From this union of good and evil there sprang a race of "violent and insolent g**i**bboria (mighty men), giants called the Nephilim, whose wickedness was great." For a time it seemed there was merged in one body, as by the transmutation of a magician, great physical prowess, cunning craftiness, superhuman ability and strength, combined with wickedness, which is defined as lewdness and moral depravity. These beings seemed immune to destruction. They overran the land and became kings and leaders. The people thought they were half gods and half men, and through fear, began to worship them. (See Num.13:33, RV; Deut.2:10,11; 3:11-13; *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary*, p.218; *Companion Bible*, Appendix 25, *The Nephilim*.)

And so it came to pass that many great spiritually minded men of the seventh generation of Seth's progeny gradually yielded to the serpent's influence. They partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And this knowledge seemed to be very pleasant to the eyes; it made them wise — cunning and crafty. And they did seem to become as gods, as the serpent promised. (See Gen.3:5.) But their exaltation did not last. As evil became more powerful than good in their lives, they turned away from what had made them great, namely, their virtue and goodness. They thus forfeited their birthright of spiritual dominion. This divided allegiance became a kingdom divided against itself. They turned from God and sought to rule through their great physical strength and cunning craftiness.

And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.

And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.—

Gen.6:6,7.

Much confusion, even, consternation, has ensued from a literal interpretation of these words, which attribute to the Lord, Jehovah, such ungodlike characteristics as repentance, changeableness, and grief. *Dummelow* (p.15), has a simple explanation for the wording in these passages: "The writer, as in chapter 3 [the story of Adam, Eve, and the serpent], interprets God's acts from man's point of view and explains them on the analogy of human motives."

This merger of good and evil, of the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, of the progeny of Seth and the descendants of Cain, was destined to fall for it had no principle on which to build. After a temporary show of power, the offspring of this unholy union sank to their level in the mire of their own making, and the waters overran their hiding places.

It were well for mankind to heed the warning which blazes through this allegory, for it is given to teach men in all ages to reject all the tempting suggestions of the serpent that a merger of good and evil will give them power and make them as gods. A mixture of conflicting forces results in self-destruction.

The Flood of Wickedness

Let us read again the Biblical description of the immoral conditions in the days preceding and following the birth of Noah — conditions typical of a coalition of good and evil which precipitated a destructive deluge. In much the same way do conflicting forces under the earth's surface produce earthquakes, tidal waves, and other disasters.

And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.—

Gen.6:5.

The prophet Habakkuk declares:

God is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity.— Hab.1:13.

Yet in Genesis we read: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great." How do we reconcile this apparent contradiction in the holy record? While we may say that the recorder interpreted God's acts from man's point of view, yet there is another explanation. The original record states that it was Jehovah who saw and condemned wickedness. But Jehovah is not another deity. Jehovah is simply a name for God which embodies a finite, anthropomorphic, human concept of deity. Who or what then saw and condemned evil? It was a human concept of divine justice "which interpreted God's acts from man's point of view." Man's highest concept of the law of justice often declares that the Lord sees evil and will punish it. The truth is that evil punishes itself. Evil includes within itself the seed of destruction — even self-destruction.

Let us read again another passage which needs clarification. The Lord said:

My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.— Gen.6:3.

It is as though the Lord, Jehovah, were saying: "The wickedness of man — the uprising of the fleshly nature in mortals — is mortal

and temporal. It will not always strive with Spirit. My Spirit is not to be immortal in mortals. The fleshly nature of man shall not be prolonged; it will be overcome by the spiritual nature of man, which is immortal. And man's immortality will be found, not in the flesh, not in length of days, but in his godliness."

The Bible verse is a prophecy that evil, though apparently gaining power throughout the earth, shall not prevail — B.C. or A.D. The divine nature shall triumph in man, for good is immortal and omnipotent. Evil is mortal — *mortis*, destructive to life — a name which embodies within itself the elements of death.

This period in human history is reminiscent of an earlier period when evil attempted to eclipse the appearing of the divine nature in man and the universe by overlaying its phenomena upon the unfolding scene. But this attempt was neutralized: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters" — upon the elements of human consciousness — and light appeared! Divine Light, spiritual enlightenment, outshone, or mastered, the darkness — the ignorance and chaos of mortal thought. (See Gen.1:2.)

Now when it would appear that the generations of Seth are being swallowed up in a flood of wickedness, sensuality, and corruption, when evil is attempting to discredit the millennial estate of Seth, to obscure the divine nature expressed by Seth's progeny, and to nullify their holy mission — that of letting their lives manifest dominion, majesty, and glory of the divine nature in man — the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, again moves upon the waters, and light appears in the form of Noah, Lamech's son.

Lamech (seventh in the millennial estate of Seth), whose name means *powerful*, indicating the Omnipotence of God expressed in man, brought forth one who was to comfort and strengthen the righteous concerning the work of their hands — work which had become toilsome and unrequiting because of the curse of materialism which had settled in the minds of men.

The name *Noah*, from the Hebrew *Noach*, or *Nowach*. means *rest*. The word *comfort* is also associated with Noah's name — "This same shall comfort us" (Gen.5:29). The Hebrew *nacham*, translated *comfort* (*cum-forte* — with strength), means to breathe strongly, to animate with strength. That which truly comforts strengthens us from within, revealing inner strength so powerful that it casts out sin and neutralizes adulterating or

weakening influences, thus giving us absolute confidence in the presence and power of good and rest from conflicting elements of the carnal mind. Christ Jesus said that the Comforter was the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send in His name, in the nature of the Christ, to save mankind in all generations by convincing them of what sin is and setting them right with a force and clearness that cannot be evaded. (See John 16:7-11.)

Noah came to the world in the nature of the Comforter to reprove the world of sin, to bless the righteous, and to give rest to the weary and heavy laden, rest from whatever disturbs or troubles one — the Sabbath Rest of holiness and spiritual tranquility in which we find the natural, effortless development of all that is good.

In the record of spiritual creation in Genesis we are told that when God saw everything that He had made was very good, He rested (Gen.1:31; 2:1-3). The *rest* indicated in Noah's name, or nature, prophesies a renewal of the spiritual concept of the universe revealed in the New Covenant — a concept lost in the debauchery of sensuality and materialism which followed the merging of the seed of the woman with the seed of the serpent — typical of the *wedding* of good and evil.

In Noah we have the first exemplification of the saving nature of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, the Comforter. It was through Noah's pure consciousness of divine goodness — his expression of the divine nature, his humility, his unquestioned obedience — that the record of God's spiritual creation and the knowledge of God and of the Son of God was preserved.

The first character reference the Bible gives us of Noah, which qualified him for the great mission before him, is indicated in the following verse:

Noah Found Grace in the Eyes of the Lord.

(Gen.6:8.)

This is the first time the word *grace* appears in the Bible. It is noteworthy that the quality of grace — one of the most precious, vital, and powerful of all the Christly virtues — is first associated with Noah. A semblance of the might of this gentle virtue may be found in God's words to St. Paul at a time when the Apostle had

prayed for deliverance from a problem he called “a thorn in the flesh.” God said to him: “My grace is sufficient for thee” (II Cor.12:7-9). And it was! The grace of God enabled Paul to see that his frustrating problem was really a catalyst that forced him to turn to God, the divine Mind, to find the answers to the many problems which confronted him every day — problems which, at times, seemed to have no answers, problems which never could have been solved by the human mind alone. The divine grace kept him in the straight and narrow path of holiness, no matter what assailed.

What is grace? Webster defines it in part as: “A divine impetus and influence emanating from God and operating in the heart, restraining from sin and reflected in the life.” This definition agrees completely with the meaning of the Hebrew: “The divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in the life.” The primary sense of grace is: virtue; efficacy; favour; beauty.

The expression of grace brings into action another Christly virtue — humility — a quality which Noah expressed in abundant measure. Humility is not to be confused with weakness. Humility is spiritual meekness. One who is humble before God is mighty before men. Thus we see that the grace which Noah expressed was far greater than a mere social virtue. The divine impetus and influence emanating from God and operating in his heart more than qualified him for the gigantic task that God required of him.

But Noah had other credentials for the holy work before him:

Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.— Gen.6:9.

This verse has been variously translated:

Noah was upright, righteous, a good man, perfect, the one blameless man of his time. And Noah walked close to God, lived in God's presence.

“Noah was a just man.” The Hebrew word *tsadiyq*, translated *just*, means lawful, righteous: It comes from a primitive root, *tsadaq*, meaning: to be right (in a moral or forensic sense). A just man's worth is above rubies. One who is just is lawful, righteous, rights wrong, conforms to spiritual law, and does what is equitable and right. One who is just administers justice in all things and at all times. And Noah was such a one.

“Noah was . . . perfect in his generations.” To be perfect means: to be complete, whole, entire; to be full of integrity and truth; without blemish; to be safe. But perfection is not static. To be perfect also means: to do, to act, to perform, to finish. The word *perfect* has a compound meaning: to be complete; to be active; hence, *to be completely operative*.

Noah’s perfection did not blind him or make him insensitive to the imperfection all around him, nor did he excuse it. The Christliness of his character impels the inference that he must have endeavored to convince the people of the error of their ways. In fact, the Apostle Peter declared that Noah was “a preacher of righteousness” (II Pet.2:5). Noah was 600 years old when the flood came, and it is not logical to suppose that he sat idly in his perfection during all that time. To be perfect means not only to be blameless and full of integrity, but also to act, to perform. Noah saw the wickedness that it was great, and he did something about it. But it is obvious that his voice was not heard. Failing to make any impression on the populace, Noah turned to the saving of his house.

To be perfect, without blemish, in the midst of gross materialism and lustful sensuality that swirled around him, Noah had to lift his thought above it and see creation as God saw it. Looking at the universe through the window of his own spiritual perfection instead of through the keyhole of personal sense, Noah saw the spiritual nature of everything his eye beheld. This consciousness of spiritual perfection excluded evil and lifted him above evil’s evidence of its own wickedness, out of reach of its influence. In this consciousness of the spiritual nature of God’s perfect universe, Noah and his house were safe.

“And Noah walked with God.” This Godlike man literally and figuratively walked with God, with good, even though he walked alone in the way of holiness. He was ever conscious of God’s presence. Consequently he was not drawn into the degrading currents of materialism, sensuality, and mortality. To walk in the way of holiness is the only way to avoid the pitfalls of evil — pitfalls which, sooner or later, engulf one in degradation. For all evil, regardless of its name, carries within itself the seeds of self-annihilation.

Little has been said of Noah’s courage. But what great moral strength he must have had to maintain his spiritual integrity and

balance in the midst of a wicked and perverse generation. His courageous stand for righteousness in the midst of wickedness and corruption, which were ripe for destruction, should be an example for all mankind today.

Noah had a most illustrious ancestor who also “walked with God:” Enoch — dedicated, disciplined, well ordered, ascendant (Gen.5:24). Enoch’s mission had been to demonstrate the immortality of man and to prove that a consecrated life, dedicated to doing God’s will — having no will but the divine — is not subject to material conditions. Noah’s task was to comfort the righteous in all generations and to show them that within their own consciousness, in their Godlikeness, was and is the ark of safety, that would lift them above the floods of evil and their self-destroying elements.

Noah walked with God every day, not just occasionally. He knew God’s voice, so it was not difficult for him to distinguish the voice of God, the inner voice of Truth, from the siren voice of materialism. He heard the voice of God above the voice of the serpent, above the voice of the waters, or elements of self-destroying wickedness. Why did not the people hear the voice of God warning them of some impending cataclysm? Through the ages history teaches us that warnings have been given to those who have ears to hear messages that would enable individuals and nations to save themselves from disaster. But for the most part, these warnings have gone unheeded.

God was telling everybody how to be saved, but *only Noah was listening*. He not only foresaw the crisis. He did something about it! Today God is telling everybody how to be saved. *Who is listening?* With all these things in mind, let us go on with Noah’s story.

Make Thee An Ark

And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth.

Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.

And this is the fashion which thou shalt make of it: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits,

the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits.

A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it.— Gen.6:13-16.

The *gopher wood* Noah used in building the ark was probably from the pine or cypress family, tough wood capable of withstanding the rigors of a flood.

The command, "Pitch it (the ark) within and without with pitch," has great metaphysical significance. The Hebrew word *kapher*, translated *pitch*, is the same word which is translated *atonement* elsewhere in the Old Testament. Only in Gen.6:14 is this word translated *pitch*. *Kapher* is a primitive Hebrew root meaning: figuratively, to placate or cancel; make atonement, cleanse, disannul, forgive, to be merciful, to pitch, purge (away), reconcile. The English word *atonement* is from *atone*, *ME at one*; i.e., to be, or cause to be, at one; to harmonize; to join in one; to form by uniting. According to Webster, atonement is: a setting at one; the state of, or act of bringing into concord.

The ark was to be completely covered, within and without, with atonement. Noah's ark of safety must be completely protected by his own consciousness of his oneness with God; he must be *joined in one* with the Infinite. There must be no sense of separation from God, and consequently no sense of separation of any *seams* in the ark; they were to be covered, within and without, with atonement.

A note in the *Scofield Reference Bible* (p.14) states: "It is atonement that keeps out the waters of judgment." It were well for us to keep in mind the need to have our abode pitched within and without with atonement — with a conscious sense of being at one with God, in complete harmony with Spirit. If one keeps his abode pitched within and without with atonement, it becomes an ark of safety for him when the stormy floods of evil beset him.

The dimensions of the ark were 300 by 50 by 30 cubits — about 450 by 75 by 45 feet — a cubit being about 18 inches. There was to be but one window in the top of the ark, where only an unobstructed view of the heavens could be obtained — a window of spiritual observation. No window was provided through which

to view the evidence of the flood. *Dummelow* suggests that there was probably an open space for light and air left all around the ark just under the roof, which was supported at intervals by posts. The door through which all would enter into the ark is symbolic of the Christ. The Christ is today saying to all who are seeking safety from the floods of evil:

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved.— John 10:9.

The three stories in the ark are typical of three degrees of human consciousness seeking safety in the ark of salvation, exemplified by Noah's three sons and are typical of their modes of thought. Through their human history the story of the regeneration of mankind after the flood is told. However, in their more metaphysical significance, the three stories in the ark are symbolic of the Trinity, the threefold nature of the Infinite, which constitutes our individual ark of safety and spiritualizes our human concept of what our ark should be.

There is no indication in the Bible that Noah had been a carpenter. Yet, with scientific precision, he built an ark that withstood the rigors of a flood and supported the tremendous weight of an unusual passenger list. His humility enabled him — nay, compelled him — to listen to God, to the divine Principle of the universe, and to hear specific directions from the Infinite, from supernal intelligence, telling him what to do and how to do it. And he did it!

Well has it been said: *Wisdom* is knowing what to do. *Skill* is knowing how to do it. *Virtue* is doing it. Noah excelled in wisdom, skill, and virtue.

Noah had already built an ark of safety in his own consciousness; the kingdom of heaven was within him. He had kept intact his birthright of spiritual dominion. Right in the midst of the flood of wickedness which preceded the flood of water, Noah walked with God in perfect safety, true to his concept of God's all-good creation. Did it not take good scientific thinking to be able to see through the mist of materialism that swirled all around him and to maintain a consciousness of spiritual reality in spite of the dominant evidence of the material senses?

The record continues:

And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.— Gen.6:17.

The compilers of the ancient records drew heavily upon other accounts of the flood, and some of their superstitions have crept into the holy record. To suppose that the Supreme Being is a vengeful God is preposterous. As in other places in the old Scriptures, "The writer interprets God's acts from man's point of view and explains them on the analogy of human motives." The destruction of all flesh was part of the inevitable annihilation of wickedness. And those who refused to forsake their evil doings were swallowed up in the very deluge which the forces of evil had precipitated.

The ark of wood, built with scientific precision, in which Noah and his family and all forms of life found safety, was completed before the flood of waters began to rain upon the earth. However, the ark of wood was but the symbol of the spiritual ark which this Godlike man had built in his heart. In confirmation of this spiritual building, sealed within and without with *kapher* — atonement — with his understanding of his oneness with God and with all that is good, God said to Noah:

With Thee Will I Establish My Covenant.

(Gen.6:18.)

This is the first time the word *covenant* has appeared in the Bible — a fact which reveals to us that this is the first time man has been cognizant of his Covenant with God and responsive to its demands. The Covenant of Godlikeness revealed in the first chapter of Genesis in which God gave to man, His likeness, dominion over all the earth, is the same Covenant which Noah discerned as the Covenant of Righteousness, the Covenant of Justice, the Covenant of Perfection, in which man is required to see what needs to be done to preserve Godlikeness in himself and in the world and to do something about it. This is the same Covenant which, centuries later, God made with Abraham. And the conditions of the Covenant remain the same throughout all generations:

Walk before me, and be thou perfect.— Gen.17:1.

Let's review Noah's spiritual qualifications which caused God to say to him: "With thee will I establish my covenant." He was filled with the grace of God; he was a just man; he was perfect; he was righteous; he knew the blessing of God's goodness; he was humble and obedient before God; he was courageous and steadfast; he walked with God instead of wandering in the maze of materialism; he was not tempted to be like-minded with the populace, nor did he conform to their customs; the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost — the nature of the Comforter — was exemplified in him. Yes! Noah was worthy to have a covenant with God, for he had covenanted himself to Godlikeness.

The understanding of his Covenant with God confirmed to Noah, and indicates to us, that the scientific relationship between God and man and man's harmonious relationship with all creation was *established* in him — in his consciousness and experience. God's words, "With thee will I establish my covenant," was a declaration of law, a statement of the divine will which could never be abrogated. This statement was a divine mandate proclaiming that Noah would never be without divine power, strength, wisdom, integrity, grace, justice, righteousness — that he would never lack any good thing, for God had covenanted him to all good.

The nature of the Comforter, which Noah embodied and which he came to express, demanded not only that he be righteous, but also that he convince mankind of the meaning of sin and its destructive nature. Further, he must show mankind the meaning of divine judgment and justice with a force and clarity that could not be evaded. The nature of the Comforter in him demanded that he save the righteous and have the moral courage and spiritual strength to let evil destroy itself.

The ark and the Covenant are closely related. Each is mentioned for the first time in the sixth chapter of Genesis: "Make thee an ark of gopher wood," and "With thee will I establish my covenant" (Gen.6:14,18). The ark is symbolic of the Covenant understanding of salvation — the saving power of the Trinity, through which the threefold nature of the Infinite is revealed.:

The understanding of God as the only Creator of man and the universe.

The understanding of the Son of God, in whom the relationship of God and man is exemplified and in whom the Trinity is individualized.

The understanding of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, which interprets the relationship of God and man to human consciousness and reveals the spiritual nature of the universe in which all elements of creation are at peace with each other, and man is at peace with his fellow man and with his environment.

The nature of the Comforter, individualized in Noah, reveals the presence and power of God in man — Immanuel, God-with-us. The nature of the Comforter, the Spirit of God, reveals to each one of us the sovereignty of our Godlikeness — sovereignty over the ungodly influences of evil, sovereignty over a mortal nature which so often seems to dominate us. Safe in our understanding of the Ark of the Covenant — typical of the saving power of the Trinity — we find our dominion over all the earth, just as Noah found his dominion over the floods of evil and the deluge of water that flooded the earth.

Well might each one ask himself: Have I built the Ark of the Covenant in my heart? Am I ever mindful of the Spirit of God with me — the saving presence and power of the Comforter? If so, then we will always be able to find or to build a symbol of the Ark of the Covenant that will withstand the winds and waves, the pressures and forces of self-destroying evil.

Noah's Ark of the Covenant and its sturdy symbol were ready, and Noah listened for further instructions from God. Immediately he heard and obeyed the divine order:

Thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shall thou bring into the ark, to keep them alive with thee; they shall be male and female.—

Gen.6:18,19.

It was Noah's task to preserve the spiritual identity of all that God had made: "Two of every sort . . . They shall be male and female." This is *Elohim* speaking, the Father and Mother of the universe, demanding that the compound divine nature, the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, be preserved in Noah's consciousness; and that the male and female of every living thing, expressing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, be brought into the ark, "to keep them alive with thee" — their immortal spiritual identity to be preserved within his own consciousness.

In addition to the two of every sort, God commanded Noah:

Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee by sevens, the male and his female: and of the beasts that are not clean by two, the male and his female.

Of fowls also of the air by sevens, the male and the female; to keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth.— Gen.7:2,3.

The clean beasts by sevens — those acceptable for food and sacrifice; *the two of every sort* — those preserved for future increase.

God further commanded Noah to gather sufficient food for all that were in the ark to sustain them during the period when the flood waters were on the earth.

Thus did Noah: according to all that God commanded him, so did he.

And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.— Gen.6:22; 7:1.

The Flood Of Waters

As soon as all were safely within the ark,

... the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.

And the flood was forty days upon the earth; and the waters increased, and bare up the ark, and it was lift up above the earth.

And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth.— Gen.7:11,17,18.

The Ark Went Upon The Face Of The Waters

(Gen.7:18.)

Like the Spirit of God which moved upon the face of the waters (Gen.1:2), so the Ark of the Covenant went upon the face of the waters, taking its useful symbol with it. And those within the ark were borne safely above the destructive forces of evil that

threatened to destroy the seed of the woman. Note this: The very waters that destroyed all flesh under heaven upon the earth, *bore up the ark safely*. Then and now the very waters, or destructive elements of the carnal mind, that seem to overwhelm those who refuse to come into the presence of God — those same waters bear up and strengthen those in whose consciousness is established the Ark of the Covenant, the saving power of the Comforter.

It has been truly said that all the water in the ocean cannot sink a ship unless the water gets into the ship. The floods of wickedness had not gotten into Noah's thinking; consequently, the floods of water did not get into his ark.

We read that the waters prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days. And in the seventh month the ark rested upon the top of the mountains of Ararat. In the tenth month the tops of the mountains were seen. But Noah waited forty days after that before opening the window of the ark (Gen.8:3-6).

In Bible literature, the figure *forty* is often used symbolically to indicate that an experience has accomplished its divine purpose — it has come to its communion. So the space of forty days that Noah waited after the waters had receded indicates the completeness of his communion with God. The understanding of God's divine purpose for him had grown to spiritual maturity in his consciousness.

After opening the window of the ark,

Noah sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from the earth.

Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground.— Gen.8:7,8.

The raven did not return; it flew to and fro in the earth. But the dove returned, for she "found no rest for the sole of her foot." After seven days — metaphorically, when the right time had come — Noah sent the dove out again; and this time she returned with an olive leaf in her mouth, by which he knew that the waters had abated. After another seven days, when Noah sent the dove forth a third time, "she returned not again unto him any more" (Gen.8:9-12).

There is a vitally important lesson to be learned from the raven and the dove. Our *raven* thoughts, going out to explore a new venture, world conditions, or to discuss the high cost of living, chatter about many things, accept material evidences as reality, and do much exclaiming over what appear to be discordant material conditions. These thoughts accomplish nothing and bring us no report.

But when our thoughts are wise, peaceful, discerning, they go out and view conditions and bring back an intelligent report. Our more spiritual thoughts, typified by the *dove*, do not jump to conclusions, but view all things with scientific logic. Our wise, peaceful, unassuming thoughts quietly explore every situation and are not impressed with surface effects or superficial views. These thoughts look beyond the evidence of the material senses to scientific evidence, which is not always apparent at first sight. When the atmosphere and the elements continue to be turbulent, our *dove* thoughts come back frequently into our ark of divine consciousness to find spiritual refreshment and to gain clearer views before going forth again to evaluate events.

There is another duty of our *dove* thoughts: When we have a new idea, something fresh and startling, to present to the world, the wisdom of the *dove* sends it forth gently, and patiently waits for the new idea to find a footing in human consciousness. If the idea finds no receptive thought, it will return to us again and wait patiently in the ark of spiritual understanding of our Covenant with God until the turbulent waters of mortal thought subside and God makes for it a place of habitation. If our idea seems far in advance of the time of human acceptance and if it is actively opposed or passively resisted, we must be satisfied for a time with a token of acceptance — an olive leaf. For if our idea is from God, it has the vitality of divine Life, and in fullness of time it will go forth spontaneously and find receptive hearts.

Although those within the ark must have been eager to venture forth, Noah wisely waited until he had a positive sign that the waters were dried up from the face of the earth. Not until the dove “found rest for the sole of her foot” did he remove the covering of the ark,

And he looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry.— Gen.8:13.

Chapter X

AN OLD ERA ENDS A NEW ERA BEGINS

As in the first chapter of Genesis, *The waters were gathered together unto one place and the dry land appeared.* The time for further unfoldment of God's plan was at hand. Even so, Noah waited until God directed him to leave the ark.

Go Forth From The Ark

And God spake unto Noah, saying,
Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee, of all flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark.—Gen.8:15-19.

Noah's going forth from the ark marked the end of an old era and the beginning of a new era in the unfolding of the knowledge of God and of the Son of God; an era in which the Covenant of God with man would be exemplified; an era in which the foundation of a new nation would be laid — a nation in which would be written the progressive unfoldment, understanding, and demonstration of the power of men imbued with the Holy Spirit and with the divine nature — the power of God with men!

The first thing Noah did upon leaving the ark was to build an altar unto the Lord, an altar of thanksgiving. In primitive fashion, he offered a burnt sacrifice unto the Lord, thus symbolically offering himself, his very life, to his God. The Word of God then came to him declaring that,

While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.— Gen.8:22.

Herein is God's promise of the continuing of the periods of spiritual unfoldment, of ever-appearing creation, and of never-ending supply. The orderly unfoldment of good is governed by divine law, the law of infinite progression, in which the visible comes forth from the invisible without interruption — a continuing unfoldment. Mortals may see this unfoldment as recurring seasons, as different cycles, as fluctuation — all things subject to chance, change, and delay. But the fact remains that the periods of unfoldment never cease bringing to light the goodness of God's creation.

God Blessed Noah And His Sons

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.— Gen.9:1-3.

Noah then heard the voice from on High declaring that he, Noah, was forever under divine protection; that whether man or beast shed his blood, "I will demand a reckoning, for in the image of God made he man" (Gen.9:5,6,RSV). An offense against man, God's own image and likeness, is an offense against God!

Every word that the Lord had spoken to Noah since he went forth from the ark is a re-statement of the sixth period of unfoldment in the first chapter of Genesis, in which God gave man dominion over all the earth. Note the similarity of the words themselves. Do they not follow the same pattern of unfoldment indicated in God's words to Noah?

And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over

the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so.

And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.— Gen.1:26-31.

Everything in Noah's life was a confirmation of the original Covenant of Godlikeness, as stated in the first chapter of Genesis. Even his name, meaning *comfort and rest*, is a confirmation of the seventh day, or Sabbath Rest:

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.— Gen.2:1-3.

Note particularly the repetition of God's blessing. In Gen.1:28 we read:

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion.

And in Gen.9:1 we read:

And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

Further, God said to Noah that everything that liveth on the earth "is delivered into your hand" (Gen.9:2). How like the first record: "Let them have dominion" (Gen.1:26).

What is this *blessing* which gives man dominion over all the earth? The Hebrew verb translated *to bless* carries the sense of going forward, of prospering, and of being divinely favored. In the Biblical passages in which we read that *God blessed man*, the idea of fruitfulness, increase, multiplication, replenishment, and prosperity accompanies the idea of God's blessing. The law of blessedness causes the invisible spiritual realities of creation to become visible — to manifest themselves in whatever form they are needed to those who are consecrated to doing God's will. Throughout the Bible the idea of fruitfulness, spiritual and material prosperity, and well being is repeated again and again as an integral part of God's blessing — the continual unfoldment of good, with never any depletion or lack.

In the degree that we love and obey God and know no will but His, the divine blessing is at work in our consciousness and experience, causing us to increase and be fruitful — to continually manifest God's power and never be in want of any good thing. When we, like Noah, walk with God, embody and express righteousness, justice, humility, love, and grace, when we consecrate our lives to expressing godliness, we feel the divine favor of God's blessing, and we are successful in everything we do. Even in the midst of famine, depression, disaster, and the like, God's blessing will be with us, causing the unseen spiritual realities of God's creation to appear abundantly as daily supplies. Consciousness of God's blessing enables us to behold the wondrous good of heaven manifested on earth. Further, God's blessing gives us spiritual authority — dominion — wherever we are.

The divine blessing bestowed on Noah is the same blessing bestowed on man, God's image and likeness, in the sixth period of unfoldment of the divine nature in the Covenant of Godlikeness. (See *The Sixth Day*, p. 76.)

And God blessed them — male and female — with divine favor and consecrated them in His own likeness, to express the divine nature, to image forth

the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

The outcome of this divine blessing is that man be *fruitful* in good works.

And that he *multiply* — increase in spiritual power and in the understanding of the periods of spiritual unfoldment, that the earth may be replenished with this knowledge of God and His glorious creation.

And that he *subdue* the earth — overcome every suggestion that God's creation is material and subject to mortality, to dust, deterioration, and decay. Identify earth with heaven and its harmonies.

And *have dominion* — dominion over all — in every sphere, in every dimension, on every level, in all periods of unfoldment. Man is not subservient to anything on earth. His Godlikeness is *head over all*.

God Confirmed His Covenant With Noah

And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you;

And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth.

And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.—Gen.9:9-11.

In His Covenant with Noah God both confirmed and established His Covenant with man, with every living thing, and with the earth itself. All creation is covenanted with God and is not related to evil and matter at any point. And neither a flood of waters nor a flood of material, sensuous, ungodlike propaganda can destroy the spiritual nature of the earth and of all that is therein. This spiritual concept of all that God has made stands forever as the only true concept of creation. The mists of material sense, the ignorance of mortals, and the floods of evil may seem to hide this spiritual concept for a time, but it cannot destroy it. It will rise again in the minds of men!

When the floods of gross materialism seem to sweep over the earth, flooding our thoughts through every means of suggestion, communication, and propaganda, threatening to swallow up the minds of men and turn them from the worship of the one God, we need to read aright the signs of the times. Human reasoning tells us that the hordes of evil are spreading over all the earth, and that by various methods they are penetrating into all the nations to weaken and thus to overthrow them. The hosts of goodness appear to be hard pressed to hold back the floods of aggression.

But the very reverse of this is true. The knowledge of God and of the Son of God is flowing majestically and relentlessly through the earth like a mighty river. The Spirit of God is moving victoriously on; and, like the floodtides of spring, gaining momentum as it approaches its peak, it is overflowing the hiding places of evil and will fill every consciousness with the knowledge of the goodness of God, as the waters cover the sea. Regardless of evidence to the contrary, God's Word of might is penetrating the minds of men and is informing all mankind of the noble heritage of man as the child of God. God's Word of might is influencing those who are seeking to learn the true nature of the universe, and these dedicated scientific explorers are sending out reports that confirm the spiritual nature of the universe and of all that is therein.

We have God's promise:

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this [shall bring all things to pass].— Isa.9:7.

The Rainbow

And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations:

I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth.

And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud:

And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh.

And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.— Gen.9:12-16.

Note the emphasis by repetition that God places on His promise that He set His bow in the cloud as a token, a perpetual reminder, of the everlasting Covenant between God and the earth and every living thing. Are we mindful of this promise when clouds of fear, hate, greed, injustice, frustration, and aggression seem to overshadow our mental horizon? Do we lift our thought to behold the rainbow of hope in the cloud, this token of the Covenant God made with Noah and with every living thing *forever*?

If we look long and faithfully enough, we will see in the cloud not only the rainbow of hope, but also the mighty angel of Revelation which St. John saw in the cloud, “with the rainbow upon his head, his face as the sun,” radiating the light of spiritual, scientific enlightenment, “and his feet as pillars of fire,” with spiritual understanding purified of false knowledge (Rev.10:1). And in this vision the rainbow will be to us, as it was to Noah and to John, a token of the Covenant of God with man and a perpetual reminder that our universe is spiritual and therefore contains not a single destructive element.

When thinking of Noah remember the meaning of his name — *comfort and rest* — a name which reveals his divine purpose in the unfolding of God’s Covenant with man and with the earth and with all that is therein. Noah came in the nature of the Comforter — *cum forte* — with strength, with divine power, to comfort mankind by destroying the evils that would weaken them and to give them rest from the contending elements of sin. The Sabbath Rest of holiness, the natural fulfillment of righteousness, justice, perfection, and grace, is written in his name and revealed in his character.

In a letter to the Hebrew Christians of the first century A.D., the inspired writer of the Book of Hebrews confirms Noah’s divine purpose:

It was through his faith that Noah, on receiving God’s warning of impending disaster reverently constructed an ark to save his household. This action of faith condemned the unbelief of the rest of the world,

and won for Noah the righteousness before God which follows such a faith.— Heb.11:7 (JBP).

The glory of creation revealed in the generations of Seth came to a magnificent climax in the dominion which Noah expressed over all the earth. Today when the floods of evil seem to be spreading over the earth, we have an unprecedented opportunity to express the qualities Noah expressed. We have the capacity and the ability — do we have the willingness? — to build an ark of salvation in the minds of men by helping them discover their own godliness and their Covenant with God. In this Covenant of Godlikeness each one may find his unity with God, his oneness with the Infinite. In this Covenant each one is always safe.

When God said to Noah, “I will make my covenant with thee” (Gen.6:18), this is the first time the word *covenant* appears in the Bible. This is also the first time God has identified Himself to man as “I” — the divine *Ego* — a name which brings Deity very close to man. In this name we discern the inseparable Covenant relationship of God and man — One in being. When in the Scriptures we read that God says “I” or “I am” or “I will” to an individual, this is confirmation that the voice of the divine *Ego* has been heard, and that there is a conscious or an unconscious response within the individual to God’s will. And so it was with Noah. His was a conscious response. The divine *Ego* became the “I” of his being, in perfect accord with the Mind that is God.

In the same chapter we hear another ego, speaking in the name of God, and declaring, “I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh” (Gen.6:17). This is the abortive ego of the serpent, claiming it could undo what God has done. This negative mind is so subtle and clever it can, at times, find a response in everyone and deceive, if possible, the very elect (Matt.24:24). It would cause one to believe that both an evil ego and a divine *Ego* exist in the same Godhead. This lie is as old as Adam and Eve and the serpent. It is the attempt of the carnal mind, the adversary, to have us believe that both good and evil are merged in God and man, and thus to produce a constant conflict between good and evil in our lives.

It should be self-evident that the divine *Esse*, which said to Noah, “I will make with thee my Covenant,” could not possibly say, “I will destroy man and beast and every creeping thing from

the earth" (Gen.6:7,18). A divine and an abortive ego could not exist in the same mind. They would destroy each other — their opposing forces would cause spontaneous combustion.

Each one has to learn to draw a distinct line of demarcation between good and evil, between what the divine *Ego* declares and what the abortive ego suggests. And each one must learn how to identify with the divine *Ego* and to discount what the abortive ego would have one believe. This is the lesson that we learn throughout the pages of Scripture. We have seen how Noah *let* the divine *Ego* become the motivating force in his life. As we walk with other characters in our Bible we will see how they made this distinction and learn with them this invaluable lesson.

Verification Of The Flood

Some commentaries declare that the Scriptural account of the flood is not true, that it is based on a myth. However, Christ Jesus, our Exemplar and Wayshower, gave authenticity to the Biblical record. When warning the people of his day of dangerous times to come, he said that in the time of Noe (Noah),

They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.— Luke 17:27.

This verification of the flood by the Master Christian is sufficient to authenticate the Biblical record for all Christians.

For those who demand other proofs that the flood of Noah's time actually occurred, we have the record of a noted archaeologist which substantiates the Biblical account. Dr. C. Leonard Woolley, in his excavations at Ur in Chaldea, (modern Iraq) discovered evidence of a cataclysmic flood dated about the time of the Biblical record of the flood. In his book, *Ur of the Chaldees*, Dr. Woolley told of excavations made in the area of old Ur of the Chaldees during the seasons of 1927-1929. In the spring of 1929 they began sinking shafts much deeper than their previous diggings when, to their amazement, the character of the soil changed. Suddenly, instead of the rubbish through which they had been digging, they discovered perfectly clean clay, the texture of

which showed that it had been laid there by water. At a depth of eight feet, the clay, which had evidently been brought down from upper reaches of the river, stopped as suddenly as it had begun. Under the clay a wholly different civilization emerged. A brick of burnt clay was discovered, different from any they had seen before. It belonged to a period older than any before discovered, giving proof that the homes of Noah's day were not mud huts, but buildings solidly constructed in a city of civilized people. Dr. Woolley concluded:

Taking into consideration all the facts, there could be no doubt that the flood of which we had thus found the only possible evidence was the flood of Sumerian history and legend, the Flood on which is based the story of Noah. (Dr. C. Leonard Woolley, , *Ur of the Chaldees*, pp.21-31.)

How much of the earth's surface was actually covered by the flood is not known. There are legends of catalysmic floods in many parts of the world. Traditions of the flood are to be found not only in the middle east, but also in China, southern Asia, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, New Guinea, Australia, Melansia, Polynesia, and the American continents from Alaska to Cape Horn, as well as folklore of certain European countries — Wales, Lithuania, and Rumania, in eastern Russia, and in Greece.

In the story of the flood recorded in the Bible, two, three, and even four ancient documents were combined in an effort to include all information available concerning the event which marked the end of one great era and the beginning of another. Hence some apparent contradictions. A notable indication that the record in its present form is from more than one source is the use of the names for Deity: *Elohim*, translated *God*, and *Jehovah*, translated *Lord God*, a combination of the two. When one considers how ancient are these records, it is remarkable that the real story continues to shine through: the continuing unfolding of God's purpose and plan for those who love good and walk in His way.

PART III

THE POSTDILUVIAN PATRIARCHS

Chapter XI

NOAH AND HIS SONS

Shem, Ham, and Japheth

These are the three sons of
Noah: and of them the whole
earth was overspread.
(Gen.9:19)

When Noah and his sons went forth from the ark a new era in human history began. A new era in the unfolding of the Covenant of God with man also began.

We first hear of the three sons of Noah before the flood. Noah was five hundred years old when he begat them (Gen.5:32). We hear nothing more of them for a hundred years. Then came the flood and the history of the generations of Noah started to unfold. On the day the deluge began we read:

Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons
of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his
sons with them, entered into the ark.— Gen.7:13.

Note the order in which their names are listed — Noah's sons having precedence over his wife. But when they went out from the ark, God commanded:

Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy
sons, and thy son's wives with thee.— Gen.8:16.

Since everything in Noah's story is both metaphorical and historical, let us see the message which this change in the sequence of names has for us.

The first order, in which Noah's sons are placed before his wife, indicates adherence to the custom of the times. A man's sons outranked his wife and his daughters. But after the flood a new era began. And it was God, *Elohim* who inaugurated the new

order. Noah's wife is placed before his sons. There is a profound lesson to be learned from this new order. In the unfolding of the divine nature this departure from tradition indicates a significant change in Noah's thinking. The Spirit of God, which had moved upon the face of the waters, had also moved on the elements of Noah's consciousness.

It is abundantly evident that Noah's concept of God, *Elohim*, had grown during the ark experience and that his understanding of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God had matured. The elevation of his wife above his sons reveals that some understanding of the Motherhood of God, which womanhood reflects, had matured in his consciousness. He had expressed a wondrous balance between the masculine and feminine qualities of *Elohim* — meekness and might, humility and nobility, gentleness and strength, zeal and consistency, and the marvelous compound quality of virtue — knowing what to do and doing it. But now the realization had dawned in him that this compound divine nature embraced his wife also and elevated her to co-equal status with him. It is true that *Elohim* had ordered the change in family status; but Noah responded naturally and quickly. There was no hesitancy in him when God commanded him to break with tradition.

When Noah and his family entered the ark the implication is that the men entered the ark first, leaving the women to bring up the rear. Upon leaving the ark the men preceded the women. But this order has a different significance and is not in conflict with God's command in which Noah's wife was given precedence over his sons. The men stepping forth first into a strange experience, not knowing what they might find, was a manly act, going out first to explore the new land and to insure safety for the women. Truly, a new era had begun.

God Makes His Covenant with Noah and His Sons

Before the flood God had made His Covenant with Noah alone (Gen.6:18). After the flood, but before going out from the ark, Noah and his three sons were made partners in establishing the Covenant:

And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying.

And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you.— Gen.9:8,9.

Thus Noah and his sons were made jointly responsible for maintaining the requirements of the Covenant. The divine *Ego*, or “I,” inscribed the demands of the Covenant in their minds: Walk ever conscious of the divine presence. In a word: Be Godlike!

Two Sons Were Faithful One Was Not

Two of Noah’s sons kept the Covenant of Godlikeness; one did not. Two of them kept intact the spiritual agreement between God and man; one covenanted himself to evil, sensuality, and lust. The Bible gives us a clear picture of the individual natures of these three men and tells a graphic story. We do not know how long after the flood the following incident took place. Noah’s sons had families of their own, and Noah had become an husbandman. We read:

And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard:

And he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent.

And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without.

And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and they saw not their father’s nakedness.

And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.— Gen.9:20-24.

“Noah began to be an husbandman.” The word *husbandman* is very precious to readers of the Bible. One of the most beloved passages in the Scriptures lifts this word above common usage into its original meaning and elevates our thought to discern the spiritual interpretation thereof. We read in the Gospel of John the words of Christ Jesus:

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.— John 15:1.

The Word of God put into the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah concerning the people of God was:

I was an husband unto them.—Jer.31:32.

The nature of God which husbands us, cares for us, directs all our affairs, manages our household, is reflected in the word husbandman, and was reflected in the nature of Noah.

“Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard; And he drank of the wine.” The use of wine in the Bible days was much the same as our use of grape juice. The first miracle which Christ Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee was turning the water into wine (John 2:1-11). In many instances the Hebrew and Greek words translated *wine* mean *new wine*, fresh or unfermented juice of the grape. That Noah drank of the wine was no sin. It is not in keeping with Noah’s character to presume that he deliberately drank too much fermented wine.

But someone may say: “The record declared plainly that *he drank of the wine, and was drunken*. How do you explain that?” The Hebrew word translated *drunken* in this passage is *shakkaroun*, from the primitive root *shaker*, to satiate with a stimulant, drink, or influence; superlative of *shaqah*, to cause to drink. Was Noah drunken with wine or under some evil hypnotic influence? Noah’s whole record speaks for him on the positive side of goodness, righteousness, virtue, integrity. He was not a drunkard. He was not guilty of deliberate or ignorant sin. The Bible tells us: “Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.” He abode in God’s presence. Circumstantial evidence cannot convict him of sin.

The fact that Ham called his brothers to look upon their father in what appeared to be a drunken stupor — bereft of power — and to gloat over it, indicates that this was no ordinary occurrence. In fact, it was something quite out of the ordinary. We have here an insight into the character of Ham which shows him to be an unloving son, sensuous and evil-minded, with no respect for his father. He and his son Canaan have become prototypes of grossness, sensuality, deceit, and filial impiety.

By contrast we see the gentleness, compassion, and deep love of

the other two sons, Shem and Japheth. Refusing to look upon their father's nakedness, with their faces turned away, they covered him with a garment — the garment of charity. Their love wiped out the reproach against him. To them he remained a Godlike man, perfect in his generations. And they in turn were embraced in the Covenant of Godlikeness — of righteousness and divine justice.

There are many who will insist: "The Bible says that Noah *did* become drunken, and he *was* uncovered within his tent, and Ham, the father of Canaan, *saw* his nakedness, and brought his two brothers into their father's tent to witness his shame."

By way of explanation, let us look forward in the story several hundred years. Many of the descendants of Canaan settled in the land which bears his name — the land of Canaan. When the children of Israel — the descendants of Shem — were returning to the land of Canaan after their Egyptian sojourn, Moses warned them against "the abominable practices of those nations," the mental depravities in which they were skilled. We read in the Book of Deuteronomy (18:9-14) that these people were gross and infamous for their occult practices and sex worship. They were diviners, soothsayers, enchanters, witches, wizards, charmers, consultants with familiar spirits, necromancers and the like. Ham and Canaan and their descendants were skilled in the use of all forms of occultism. Canaan used his dominant mental influence, or highly developed human will-power, to subjugate Noah's mind. And Ham, his father, was proud of his son's occult powers. He was gleeful that his righteous father had been put in a bad light. He called his two brothers to witness their father's indecent exposure and to see what appeared to be a drunken stupor, but which was really a hypnotic spell.

But this is not all of the story. In the original Hebrew Scriptures there is a verse which is omitted from all English translations, probably because of delicacy. This verse records an account of an indecent attack on Noah by Canaan, and reflects the recoil of the Israelites in later years from drunkenness, sexual perversion, and filial impiety. (See *The Interpreter's Bible*, Vol.I, p.556, Exeg. Par.2.)

Denunciation Of The Unfaithful

And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger son had done unto him.

And he said, Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.— Gen.9:24,25.

When Noah awoke, or came out from under the spell which had been cast on him, he “knew what his younger son had done unto him.” Further, he knew the purpose of the attack was to belittle righteousness and to glorify unrighteousness. Ham and Canaan were wicked. They refused to be obedient to the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness. Hence they were excluded from its blessings. Because they could not rise to the spiritual heights Noah had attained, they strove to stain his character. The serpent had found another *seed* through which it hoped to discredit *the seed of the woman* and nullify Noah’s holy mission.

Noah saw through the scheme of Ham and Canaan and denounced them and everything they stood for. And he proclaimed the law which made such gross evil subordinate to righteousness: “A servant of servants shall he be to his brethren.”

Noah’s condemnation of Ham and Canaan is a condemnation of sensuality in all its forms — yesterday, today, and forever. It was and is a complete denunciation of necromancers, diviners, mesmerists, of wizards and witches. It denounces all sensual evil influences and practices which attempt to pervert the virtuous, subvert the righteous, and discredit those individuals who have risen above the floods of evil and are active in God’s service.

Whence came this evil? Right out of the mouth of the serpent! It was the same evil influence that tempted Adam and Eve. It is the same evil influence that tempts mankind in all ages to think and act wickedly. It is the same evil influence which subtly suggests that by eating of the forbidden fruit men shall become as gods. It is the same evil influence the Apostle Paul called the carnal mind, forever at enmity against God (Rom.8:7).

Noah shared the Master’s portion of being called a glutton and a wine-bidder (Matt.11:19). But such false accusations did not deter the Saviour’s mission, nor could they discredit Noah’s mission. Ham and Canaan and their cult are remembered only for their evil ways. But when we remember Noah, we hear the echo of his Biblical character references:

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.
 . . . Noah was just a man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God.

... thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.— Gen.6:8,9; 7:1.

The Faithful Receive the Blessing of the New Covenant

Noah bestowed the Covenant blessing upon Shem and Japheth; or, rather, he confirmed the blessing God bestows on the righteous:

And he [Noah] said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem [the living God bless Shem]; and Canaan shall be his servant.

God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.— Gen.9:26,27.

The blessing which Noah invoked upon Shem and Japheth was not a gift or blessing from a human father to his sons. Nor was it an arbitrary blessing which became true because he said it. Rather, *he said it because it was true*. Noah saw in Shem and Japheth the righteousness which embodies its own blessing. Truly, the Covenant blessing was established in them — the divine blessing of fruitfulness, increase, multiplication, prosperity, spiritual well-being — the blessing of the ever-appearing goodness of God. These beloved sons had been faithful. It was natural that they should reap the reward — the Covenant blessing of dominion.

The Covenant blessing bestowed on the righteous and the pronouncement of doom which the unrighteous bring upon themselves are recorded in a song of the Psalmist:

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away [like chaff driven by the wind].

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish.— Ps.1:1-6.

That Canaan, Ham's son, should be servant to both Shem and Japheth may have been a definite relegation of Canaan to servant status. But in the larger meaning, Noah's stern condemnation of Canaan was a declaration of law — a divine proclamation to Shem and Japheth and a warning to Ham and Canaan that righteousness would always triumph over unrighteousness, that evil would always be subservient to good. When the hordes of evil press upon us and seem to be ascendant, it were well for us to remember Noah's declaration and invoke this law, namely, that *evil is subservient to good, now and forever!*

Noah Fulfilled His Mission On Earth

Noah's human life span extended over a period of nearly a thousand years — a millennium. When one walks with God, he not only walks over the turbulent waters of materialism, but he also walks serenely through the element of time with the immortal realities of being. Each day of Noah's life was a period of spiritual ascension, a natural rising above the materialism of the age in which he lived. In so doing he ushered a new era into the world. Noah was an husbandman. He fathered a new nation through whom the knowledge of God, of the Son of God, and of the Spirit of God — the Holy Ghost, or Comforter — would be revealed to the world.

In Noah's life we find the first record of God making a Covenant with man. Or rather, the first record of man being conscious of his Covenant relationship with God. His ark — his whole structure or body of consciousness — was pitched within and without with atonement — with his awareness of his at-one-ment with God. The Covenant of Righteousness was to Noah a Covenant of Oneness with the Infinite, his unity with all that is good. It was a Covenant of safety and hope to his humanhood. In this Covenant the

threefold nature of the Infinite was revealed to Noah. In fact, *Elohim* individualized the Trinity in this great and good man:

Noah knew God as *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe.

He knew himself as the expression of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God — as the Son of God.

He brought to the world an exemplification of the nature of the Comforter, the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost; and his divine nature was written in his name — *comfort* and *rest*.

Yes —

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations.

And Noah walked with God.

Chapter XII

THE GENERATIONS OF THE SONS OF NOAH

These are the families of the sons of Noah,
after their generations, in their nations:
and by these were the nations divided
in the earth after the flood.
(Gen.10:32.)

The genealogies of Noah's sons are listed in the following order: Japheth, Ham, and Shem. However we will follow another order that we may see more clearly the unfolding of the divine nature: first in Shem's generations, second in Japheth's, and third, the opposition to this unfoldment in Ham's descendants.

Shem

And Noah said, Blessed be the Lord God of Shem.— Gen.9:26.

This passage is more accurately translated:

Blessed by the Lord my God be Shem.—
Gen.9:26 (RSV)).

The name *Shem* means renown. And certainly the descendants of Shem have won renown; for it is through Shem that the genealogy of Jesus is traced. And it is through Shem and his descendants that the knowledge of the one God has been given to the world in the written record of the Old Testament of our Bible. And the Lord God of Shem has been glorified! But the generations of Shem did not comprehend the message of the Son of God.

In the metaphor of the Bible, Shem represents the type of individual who stays in the general vicinity of the homeland and makes a name for himself in familiar surroundings, never going very far away from the traditions of the family. The descendants

of Shem settled in the general area of the Jordan, the Euphrates, and the Tigris Rivers.

The children of Shem; Elam, and Asshur, and Arphaxad, and Lud, and Aram.— Gen.10:22.

According to information now available —

Elam settled in what is now called Iran, Old Persia.

Asshur settled in Assyria.

Arphaxad settled in Akkad, and later his descendants migrated to Ur in Chaldea, in the region now know as Iraq.

Lud settled in Lydia, where the cities of Sardis, Thyatira, and Philadelphia sprang up — cities associated with the early Christian Church. Modern Turkey occupies the region of which Lydia was a part.

Aram settled in Syria.

These are the sons of Shem, after their families, after their tongues, in their lands, after their nations.— Gen.10:31.

Japheth

And Noah said, God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem.— Gen.9:27.

The name *Japheth* means enlargement, unfoldment, beauty, wide-spread. The prophecy concerning Japheth is that his people shall spread far and wide before they find the fulfillment of the blessing of righteousness. “And they shall dwell in the tents of Shem” — they shall enjoy the same blessing which Shem received, and enlarge upon it; they shall live together with Shem’s people in the understanding of God which the Shemites, or Semites, gave to the world.

“God shall enlarge Japheth.” It is *God, Elohim*, who shall enlarge Japheth. The name *Elohim, The Triune God Himself*, indicates that Japheth has risen to some understanding of the all-inclusive nature of God as the Father and Mother of the universe, the nature of the Son of God, and the nature of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, or Comforter. The use of this name for Deity tells

us that Japheth's blessing is a more universal and all-inclusive one than Shem's and that those who know the God of Japheth will find a richer, larger blessing than those who know Deity as Lord God, Jehovah, the God of Shem.

Japheth represents the type of individual who ventures beyond the borders of the immediate vicinity of his homeland, not in the sense of wandering, but in the sense of exploring the infinitude of God's creation.

The sons of Japheth; Gomer, and Magog, and Madai, and Javan, and Tubal, and Mashech, and Tiras.

And the sons of Gomer; Ashkenaz, and Riphath, and Togarmah.

And the sons of Javan; Elisha, and Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim.

By these were the isles of the Gentiles divided in their lands; every one after his tongue, after their families, in their nations.— Gen.10:2-5.

The descendants of Japhath migrated north, west, and east, settling much of what is now known as Europe bordering the Mediterranean Sea and parts of Asia Minor bordering the Black and Caspian Seas. They represent today the Indo-European language culture, as archaeologists have traced their migrations.

Unlike the generations of Shem, whose genealogy is traced throughout the Old Testament, all of the generations of Japheth have not been specifically identified. Of the sons of Japheth, only the offspring of Gomer and Javan are listed in the Bible.

Gomer migrated north of the Black Sea. Gomer is the progenitor of the early Cimmerians, who settled in the vicinity of Ararat in the northern provinces of Asia Minor and Armenia and the upper regions of the Euphrates.

Javan migrated westward and settled in Greece. Javan's name has been synonymous with the Greeks.

In the New Testament we learn that a few of the Shemites followed the teachings of Christ Jesus, but only a very few. However, when some of the descendants of Japheth, the Greeks, heard of Jesus' marvelous works, they came to Israel, the land of the Shemites, who were known as the Jews, in search of the

Messiah, to be taught of him. (See John 12:20-23.) Other descendants of Japheth in Asia Minor also accepted the message of the Son of God. Through the teachings of the Apostle Paul, of the Shem line, Christian churches were established in the lands occupied by the descendants of Japheth. Through St. Paul the complete message of the Trinity — of God, the Son of God, and the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost — was given to the Gentile world. And so, in the first century A.D. the descendants of Japheth became the people of the New Covenant.

The record of the Son of God in the New Testament of our Bible was written by Jesus' immediate followers, most of whom were descendants of Shem. But the message was written in Greek, the language of the descendants of Javan, Japheth's son, through which the message of Christianity has come to all peoples of the world.

The prophecy concerning Noah's second son — "God shall enlarge Japheth, and they shall dwell in the tents of Shem" — has come to pass. In a sense, Christianity today dwells in the tents, or heritage, of Shem. Through the descendants of Japheth the knowledge of God has been enlarged and expanded and glorified, so that it has been understood to include the knowledge of the Son of God and of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter.

Ham

Like the progeny of Japheth, the descendants of Ham apparently separated. One group spread to southern Arabia, others to Ethiopia and Egypt, and still others to a part of the northern coast of Africa, to the Island of Crete, and to the land bordering the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, which has since been called the land of Canaan. Still another group went southward along the Euphrates River and settled in Ur of Chaldea. They were a dark-haired, dark-skinned people, in appearance not unlike the modern Arab.

The name *Ham* means black, or sunburned from the heat of the sun. Ham represents the type of individual whose thought is darkened by a sensuous concept of existence. The light of spirituality does not easily penetrate this type of thought. In the words of St. Paul, the things of the Spirit "are foolishness unto

him, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Cor.2:14). The gross materialism of Ham’s thinking could not comprehend spiritual truth. This is not to imply that all of Ham’s descendants were gross, but that they did not accept the God of Noah nor did they walk with God, as did their illustrious ancestor, in the way of holiness.

Ham had four sons: Cush, Mizraim, Phut, and Canaan (Gen.10:6).

The sons of Cush: Seba, and Havilah, and Sabtah,
and Raamah, and Sabtechah: and the sons of
Raamah: Seba, and Dedan.

And Cush begat Nimrod.— Gen.10:7,8.

The descendants of Cush settled in Arabia with the exception of Seba and Nimrod.

Seba is probably to be sought on the neighboring African coast, but has also been identified on the extreme southwest Arabian coast.

Nimrod migrated to the territory between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, an area later called Babylonia.

Mizraim’s sons settled in various parts of Egypt. In fact the name Mizraim is synonymous with Egypt.

Phut has been identified with Lybia and with Punt, on the coast of the Red Sea.

Ham’s Son Canaan

The sons of Canaan settled in the land later called the land of Canaan and in adjoining lands — Lebanon and Syria. Their names are perpetuated in the cities and areas in which each lived. They still abode in the same general areas at the time of Abraham and even to the time of Moses and Joshua,

The descendants of Canaan’s second son Heth, who were known as the Hittites, were the only tribe of the Canaanites who attained any semblance of greatness. Inscriptions have been found at Carchamish which tell of the Hittites becoming a great Oriental empire which flourished in Asia Minor between 1900 and 1200 B.C. The names of the sons of Canaan appear in many places in the Old Testament, and their activities may be traced through the use of Bible concordances and dictionaries.

The Canaanites never seemed to unite under a central government or state but remained as a rather loose confederation of tribes who apparently lived in peace with each other. But they exhibited many traits of character reminiscent of their progenitor Canaan.

These are the sons of Ham, after their families, after their tongues, in their countries, and in their nations.— Gen.10:20.

And Noah said of Canaan, Ham's son:

Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren.— Gen.9:25.

The curse of servitude pronounced on Canaan is supposed to have been placed on all of Ham's descendants. The type of mentality exemplified by Ham and Canaan shall serve, not dominate, the righteousness exemplified by Shem and Japheth. *Canaan's* name means low, humiliated. Let us remember this when the Canaans of this world attempt to dominate us. The divine promise is that Canaan shall serve the purposes of good, shall be humbled before righteousness.

To both Shem and Japheth, Noah said, "And Canaan shall be his servant." In later centuries the land of Canaan was given to the descendants of Shem: "Because of their abominations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee" (Deut.18:12). And the land of Canaan, not the mortal son Canaan, served the purposes of good. For it was here that Abraham came at God's direction and brought the knowledge of the one God. It was here that Isaac was born. It was here that Jacob learned to demonstrate the power of his new name Israel, a prince ruling as God commands. It was here that Moses led the children of Israel after their Egyptian sojourn. It was here that David, the sweet Psalmist and shepherd king of Israel, tended his flocks and ruled a great nation. And it was here that Christ Jesus was born. Truly the land of Canaan has been the servant of the people of God. And because the prophecy in the Bible is true — because the Word of God hath spoken: "They shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord" (Jer.31:34; Heb.8:11-13) — Canaan shall still serve the divine purpose, and Canaan shall serve, not people, but God, and be the servant of God.

Ham's Grandson Nimrod

Ham had a descendant who gained dubious fame — the offspring of his son Cush, of whom we read:

And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth.

He was a mighty hunter before the Lord;
And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar.— Gen.10:8-10.

The passage, "He began to be a mighty one in the earth," is more properly translated: "He was the first on earth to be a mighty man," or an aggressor. "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord," was recorded by a subsequent hand, indicating that this statement was not a part of the original record. We do not know its source; but from what we know of Nimrod, he knew nothing of the Lord. The expression, "the beginning of his kingdom," means, "the beginning of his aggressions." Nimrod overran the region settled by Ashur and Arphaxad, the sons of Shem.

The name *Nimrod* means rebellious; while the words *mighty one*, describing him, mean literally despot and tyrant. Historically, he was an aggressor, an invader, and evidently desired to be a world conqueror. The beginning of his kingdom, or conquered empire, was Babel, or Babylon. This land between the Euphrates and the Tigris Rivers had been settled by Shem's third son Arphaxad. Many of his people remained there after Nimrod's invasion. It was here that Abraham, a descendant of Shem through his son Arphaxad, was born ten generations after the flood. But the descendants of Nimrod continued to dominate the land through both hypnotic and physical aggressions, and, at God's command, Abraham left that land.

The Tower Of Babel

In Nimrod's time we hear of the famous — or infamous — tower of Babel:

And they said, Go to [come], Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and

let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.— Gen.11:4.

Although the people of Nimrod's time piously proclaimed that they wanted to build a tower that would reach unto heaven, this was not a desire to get closer to God. "Let us make us a name!" Human pride, not so cleverly disguised, thought it could reach the pinnacle of coveted importance and sit triumphantly on top of the world.

The record states that the Lord came down to see the city and the tower and was not pleased with what He saw (Gen.11:5).

And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.— Gen.11:6,7.

Dummelow's Commentary (p.19) on these Bible verses is enlightening:

These words are meant to teach that God is concerned in man's doings. "But it is not thought from such modes of expression that human characteristics are intended to be ascribed to the Creator. In any age it is necessary to describe the unknown by the help of the known; and as the mysterious personality of God must ever be incomprehensible to men, there is no means in which we can represent His relations to us, except by using words borrowed from our own faculties, emotions, and modes of action" (Geikie). God is here represented as dreading lest men make themselves so powerful as to become His opponents. Gen:11:6,7, — a good example of the anthropomorphism characteristic of the Primitive document.

The conclusion to be drawn from this comprehensive comment is that the Mind which is God refused to permit the building up, or exaltation, of mortally mental powers, dominant physical strength, and arrogant human pride in which there was and is no restraint. And although the record states that God confused the language, this was an interpretation of God's actions from a

human point of view. Rebellion, pride, self-glorification, human will — these antagonistic qualities that went into the building of Babel and the tower — contained the elements of confusion. It is little wonder that misunderstanding and strife became so great that —

They left off to build the city.
Therefore is the name of it called Babel.—
Gen.11:8,9.

The original meaning of the name *Babel* was, “The gate of god.” But the name became synonymous with confusion and came to mean babble, a confused, incomprehensible murmur.

There are many who doubt that the tower of Babel ever existed, who believe that the story of the tower is wholly allegorical. But there is ample evidence that there was in Babylon an ancient ziggurat, which is generally believed to be Nimrod’s tower. In *Peloubet’s Bible Dictionary* (1947) p.68, there is a picture of the excavations of the temple at Nippur, Babylonia, showing an ancient Babylonian temple such as that described as the Tower of Babel. For many years it was believed that another ziggurat, the *Birs-Nimrud*, the temple of Belus, was Babel, but this has been disproved.

After his failure to establish himself in Babel, Nimrod and his descendants began to invade the lands settled by the descendants of Shem and Japheth:

And out of the land [Shiner] he [Nimrod] migrated
to Asshur [Assyria] and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-Ir,
Calah, and Resen, a great city between Nineveh and
Calah.— Gen.10:11,12 (NEB).

Asshur, the second son of Shem, had settled in Assyria, which bore his name. But Nimrod invaded this land, built his own cities there, and claimed it as his own. Nimrod was in truth “a mighty hunter” — an aggressor. His descendants in the land of Shiner, lower Babylonia, continued to be aggressors. Wielding the power of the serpent — dominating the minds of men and thus weakening them physically — Nimrod’s descendants continued to invade and conquer other lands. The land of Shinar, later called Chaldea, became the center of organized occultism, the highly developed

powers of the carnal mind. The name *Chaldean* came to mean a *wise man*. While many of these people were truly wise men — they were astronomers, mathematicians, architects, builders, agriculturalists, and excelled in literature — yet for the most part the Chaldeans were like those in the land of Canaan against whom Moses warned his people in generations to come. They were necromancers, soothsayers, spiritualists, witches and wizards, astrologers, and the like (Deut.18:10-14). They reached the pinnacle of their power in the time of Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, but they degenerated into mere fortune-tellers. (See *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary*, p.113, 'Chaldeans.')

Some Lessons To Be Learned From Nimrod And The Tower Of Babel

There is a vitally important lesson to be learned from Nimrod and the tower of Babel. And sooner or later all mankind will learn the lesson written in this historical and metaphorical allegory.

When we undertake the building of anything — a home, a business, a career, a project of any kind — let's be sure that God is directing both our motives and our actions. Let's not deceive ourselves by proclaiming that we are building a tower that will reach unto heaven, when all we are doing is attempting to build something to glorify ourselves, to make for ourselves a name. Nimrod, the rebellious one, sought to establish a great kingdom, but he patterned it after his own nature, and it was therefore doomed to failure.

Are we building to glorify ourselves, to make ourselves look bigger than we really are? If so we will find that our building blocks are made of the same stuff that constitutes our nature. Are we attempting to build a tower into which we can climb and glory in our success or from which we can dominate others? Or are we building character, growing to spiritual maturity, and thereby reaching that pinnacle of praise which is higher than mortal man could ever build? No matter what we build, it will always be after the pattern of our own character.

In the first and last analysis of our motives and aims, let us ask ourselves: Are we building a tower of Babel, as Nimrod attempted to do, or are we building an ark to the saving of our house, as Noah

successfully did? Are we building in an attempt to reach a pinnacle to which we have not grown, or are we building to glorify God and to help the human race?

Before embarking on any building, we should pray fervently to God, as did the Psalmist:

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and
know my thoughts:
And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead
me in the way everlasting.— Ps.139:23,24.

As we build our lives, our careers, our relationships — all our endeavors — under divine directions, as did Noah, we will pitch our ark within and without with pitch — with *atonement* — with a conscious sense of being *at one* with God, with the divine Mind, with infinite wisdom and intelligence. (See p. 178; Gen.6:14.)

When we, like Noah, walk with God, we will find grace in God's sight. Then will the Holy Spirit give impetus, direction, and energy to all our endeavors and will bless, or prosper, our work.

Chapter XIII

SHEM'S PROGENY

Shem was blessed of God because of his loving, compassionate, Godlike nature, and because, like his father Noah, he walked with God: he was a just man, he was righteous — he did that which was right. His descendants won renown because through them the knowledge of the one God and of His omnipotent power and goodness was given to the world. Through their human history we have in our Bible the record of the unfolding in human consciousness of the knowledge of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself.

The symbolic significance of the names given to Shem's progeny reveals both their character and their spiritual journeying. A study of their history for ten generations brings to light not only the unfolding of the knowledge of God and the demonstration of the power of God in man, but also the resistance to this unfolding and demonstration by the carnal mind with its human will, its sensuousness, grossness, and cunning craftiness, its witchcraft, necromancy, and other highly developed powers of the occult mentality.

As we look prayerfully into the history of these individuals, we discover the attempt of this serpentine influence to blot out of human consciousness the understanding of the holy relationship of God and man, to completely obliterate the divine nature in man, to neutralize the power of the Spirit of God in man, and to destroy the spiritual concept of the goodness of God in man and the universe. In this research we also discover the nature of the cunning persuasion of the serpent by examining the dominant influence which the descendants of Ham exerted on the generations of Shem. But what is far more important, we discover the power of God to bring forth its own Godlike witnesses through whom the periods of spiritual unfoldment of God's Covenant with man are exemplified.

These are the generations of Shem to the tenth generation after the flood (Gen.11:10-26):

Arphaxad

Shem, whose name means renown, begat *Arphaxad*, whose name means one who heals. The Hebrew word *raphah*, translated *heal*, is a primitive root meaning to mend; figuratively, to make whole, sound, entire. The nature of the Comforter, which Noah exemplified, was reflected in Arphaxad's nature. He gave his people a sense of vitality, soundness, and confidence in the power of God which heals, or makes whole. He strengthened them spiritually and physically; and this strength kept them from being dominated by the sinister influence of Ham's progeny, who had begun to invade the lands occupied by their more peaceful relatives.

Salah

Arphaxad begat *Salah*. This name means a shoot or branch, in the sense of a weapon of defense. In the metaphorical meaning of *Salah's* name we see that the Covenant of Godlikeness had a strong defender in this good man. About this time Ham's grandson, Nimrod, the tyrant and aggressor, was making his bid for power and fame (Gen.10:8-12). It is evident that *Salah* defended his people against the physical and mental attacks of this enemy, who sought to conquer his kingdom and to obliterate the knowledge of God in the minds of men.

Eber

Salah begat *Eber*, or Heber, from which comes our word Hebrew. *Eber's* name means the region beyond, the opposite side. Some of *Eber's* people began leaving their homeland, going to the region beyond their original settlement, probably to the other side of the Euphrates, which bordered their homeland. However, in its metaphorical sense, the region beyond, the opposite side, indicates that in *Eber's* reign some of his people began to go over to the side of materialism and occultism. There were those who began to use the gross mental powers of human will and other methods of occultism to accomplish their desires and aims — methods associated with Ham, Canaan, and Nimrod. But there is evidence that many of *Eber's* generation resisted the devilish influences of

occultism and were not overwhelmed or overcome by Nimrod's aggressions. Their clear thinking was not clouded. They continued to worship God aright, and they remained obedient to the provisions of the Covenant of Righteousness which God had made with Noah and his sons to all generations— forever.

Joktan And Peleg

Eber begat two sons: the name of the one was *Joktan*. This name means small. We do not know whether this meaning refers to his size or to the fact that he was the second son of Eber. Archaeological research indicates that the Joktan group went from Akkad, their home area, when Nimrod overran that land. Joktan became the father of thirteen Arabian tribes (Gen.10:26-29). Some of them swept across the desert, invaded Egypt, defeated the Hamite-Egyptians, and became the colorful Hyksos kings of that land, who later befriended Abraham, Joseph, and their descendants for many generations. The other son was *Peleg*, whose name means division. This division indicates not only a division in the family of nations — “in his days the earth was divided” (Gen.10:25) — but also a breaking of the Covenant with God. Apparently Peleg left Akkad, as did Joktan. He and his people invaded Ur of the Chaldees and captured the stronghold of the Hamites. They overran this land by physical strength, but many of them were soon absorbed — mentally and morally — by the aggressive occult mental influences of the Hamites. They became worshippers of the moon god *Sin*, whose *Chaldean* name was *Nannar* and the moon goddess, whose name was *Ningal*. This merger of the Hamites and Semites produced a generation of confusion. Scientific thinking, which reveals, was obscured by occult thinking, which deceives. Their spiritual individuality was swallowed up in mass thinking, and the individual fell to the level of the masses. Two distinct classes emerged from this merger — an upper and lower class — no middle class. The shrewd ones subdued the less clever ones. Soon mental and physical slavery was flagrant in that land. There were those who excelled in the material sciences. But this class also excelled in occultism — the highly developed powers of the carnal mind to subdue others through mortally mental means. Necromancy, esoteric magic, witchcraft, sorcery, and the

like flourished. Excavations at Ur revealed a highly developed material culture. Discoveries there by Dr. C. Leonard Woolley, noted British archaeologist, prove that education in astronomy, architecture, mathematics, building, and various arts was commonplace. Huge libraries with their contents intact have been unearthed. The people lived in stone and brick houses. But these excavations also reveal that idolatry dominated the land and that a large proportion of the population were slaves — mental and physical bond men and women.

Reu

Peleg begat *Reu*, whose name means friend, one who exercises oversight, a shepherd. When, under Peleg, the people turned to the worship of idols and began to develop the power of human will instead of seeking the divine will, Reu, as his name indicates, remained faithful to the worship of the God of Noah. Reu was a righteous man. In him we find a Christlike quality, like that of Noah's — one who shepherds the flock, one who exercises spiritual oversight, a friend of God and man. Reu's name and nature reveal a wonderful sense of husbanding; he guarded the knowledge of God and shepherded the faithful — an apparently small flock — thus helping to preserve the knowledge of God and of man's relationship with God, who is Spirit.

Serug

Reu begat *Serug*. The name *Serug* has two meanings: a tendril, that which binds itself about something, restricting and constricting. But tendril also means strength and firmness. This dual meaning suggests that while there were some in Serug's day who remained strong and firm in their knowledge and worship of God, there was a subtle, senuous, hypnotic tendril-like influence attempting to wind itself about the strong and firm ones, like a serpent coiled about the tree of knowledge of good and evil, continually tempting everyone to forsake good and turn to evil. The only way this subtle serpent-like enemy of good could influence those who were inherently righteous was to persuade them to admit that both good and evil were real and powerful and necessary

to one's well-being — something that would make them wise, something to make them as gods. This is the carnal mind's so-called hidden, or secret, weapon. Remember the serpent in the garden of Eden. When one is tempted to follow the serpent's suggestions, the immediate effect is the deadening of the spiritual sensibilities of men. Its purpose is to becloud mankind's vision and rob them of their scientific senses. When men yield to the tempter's suggestions, they can no longer discern the line of demarcation between good and evil, between the spiritual and material, between the real and the unreal. Even a tacit acknowledgment that two such opposites as good and evil can be real and powerful produces duality of thought, a state of mind which temporizes with evil and ultimately yields, as did Eve, to all the serpent's temptations. This state of mind soon becomes the proving ground for the serpent to use for its own purposes — of completely degrading and degenerating mankind, individually and collectively.

Nahor

Serug begat Nahor. Nahor's name has a meaning which draws a vivid picture, illustrative of what was going on about this time in Chaldea. The name *Nahor* means breathing hard, snoring, snorting. Let's consider each of these meanings separately: (1) When one is breathing hard, it is usually because of exertion or exhaustion. A great weight of dominant carnal mind power, materialism, and idolatry was crushing out the divine energy that had permeated the lives of Noah and Shem. It was probably very difficult to maintain one's spiritual equilibrium when the very atmosphere was permeated with sensuality and grossness. Certainly it was difficult to express Godlikeness in the midst of godlessness, and breathing, or spiritual inspiration, was labored instead of being joyous and free. (2) Snoring! Somebody was asleep — the deep sleep of the Adam dream, a mesmerized state. The people were asleep to the grand spiritual realities all around them, mesmerized by a wholly material concept of God and man, of heaven and earth, and of all that is therein. In the eighth generation after the flood, righteousness, spirituality, and other Godlike virtues seemed to have been overshadowed by the gross materialism and overpower-

ing mesmerism of that age. (3) Snorting! There are several kinds of snorts: the snort of the righteous thinker and doer in indignation that others could be so unaware of the grand spiritual realities in their midst; the snort of desperation at being unable to awaken the sleeper or to rouse the mesmerized ones; and then there is the snort of the one who is snoring in a deep sleep, indignantly resisting anything that would interfere with his inertia. Those who had any knowledge of God were in a minority and were not having an easy time. The occult influences of the carnal mind, developed and perpetuated by the descendants of Ham, Canaan, and Nimrod, flooded the thoughts of men and overcame their natural spiritual instincts, producing in the descendants of Shem a mesmeric inertia, which made them apparently willing captives of unholy thinking.

Terah

Nahor begat *Terah*. The name *Terah* means stationary, delayed, a stopping. Joshua writes of Terah:

Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, . . . and they served other gods.— Josh.24:2.

The reference to the other side of the flood has nothing to do with the flood of Noah's time. It means east of the Euphrates. The highly developed powers of the carnal mind seemed to have reached a peak in the land east of the great river in Terah's time. Necromancy, soothsaying, spiritualism, witchcraft, hypnotism, sorcery, and other forms of occultism flourished. The unfolding of the knowledge of God had apparently stopped in that land, had become stationary, and there is no record that Terah did anything about it.

Let's pause momentarily and look forward in the history of the generations of Shem. Throughout the Bible the most dangerous enemy which these people encountered at every turn was not a human, a physical, or a material enemy. It was the deadly influence of sensuous, gross, occult, mesmeric self-will, which enslaved their minds — the enemy that the Apostle Paul called "The carnal mind," which he said, "is enmity against God." He

also said: "To be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Rom.8:6,7).

Several hundred years after Terah's day, Moses spoke emphatically to the descendants of Terah on the subject of the carnal mind, of its occultism and abominable practices. He forbade them to "learn to do after the abominations" of the Canaanites, declaring that all who use the highly developed practices of the carnal mind "are an abomination unto the Lord" (Deut. 18:10-14). Again and again the children of Israel, as the generations of Shem were called, were warned against this evil mind and its abominable practices, which warred against the knowledge of God. In the degree that they were attracted to and captivated by this devilish influence, their power and spiritual influence diminished. But when the knowledge of God, good, permeated their actions, they were spiritually strong and prospered, and they were undefeated in their forward march of establishing a great nation. In the degree that these people sought God's will instead of seeking their own will, they were victorious over all their enemies.

In Terah's time the descendants of Shem permitted themselves to be robbed of their clear thinking and of their understanding of the power of the Spirit of God in them by the necromancy of their day, by the deceptive elements of the carnal mind, which are as dangerous as an infectious disease that spreads its virus through mind and body "as doth a canker" (11 Tim.2:16,17). The influence of occultism enslaved the minds of the Shemites by first turning them from the worship of God, thus dulling their consciousness of their oneness with God and robbing them of the divine element which had made them mighty. Without spiritual strength their identity was swallowed up by the crafty occultism of the people they had conquered physically. In the language of our day: they won the war but they lost the peace — they lost their knowledge of God, the power of the Spirit of God within them, and their dominion on earth.

Chapter XIV

THE NEW MESSENGER OF THE COVENANT

But the knowledge of God was not to be forever silenced or swallowed up. *God raised up His own representative.* In words which challenge the imagination and draw a compelling picture, the Hebrew historian *Josephus* describes this dynamic representative of God whose sense of virtue and goodness was so mighty that it revolutionized mortal thought, regenerated human consciousness, and inaugurated a new era in the world — an era of scientific discernment which ultimately lifted the thoughts of mankind above the degrading influence of occultism to the mountain top of spiritual observation. *Josephus* wrote:

In the tenth generation after the flood, there was among the Chaldeans a man righteous and great, and skilled in the celestial sciences. He was a person of great sagacity, both for understanding all things and persuading his hearers, and not mistaken in his opinions, for which reason he began to have higher notions of virtue than had others, and he determined to change the opinions all men happened then to have concerning God, for he was the first to publish the notion that there was but one God, the Creator of the universe. (*Josephus* Book I, Chapter VII.)

This man was *Abraham*, the son of *Terah*. Abraham's name means exalted father. He exemplified the nature of the Fatherhood of God. This great but humble man was known as "the Friend of God" (Jas.2:23). And God talked with him as a man talks with his friend. Like Noah, Abraham learned to know God and to commune with the Almighty. His name became synonymous with faith, because he was faithful to God in all that he said and did.

This remarkable man lived in the most remarkable city of ancient times — Ur of the Chaldees. Recent excavations in Ur have revealed that it was a city advanced in the arts and sciences. Buildings have been unearthed containing a wealth of written material that gives insight into the knowledge of mathematics and

astronomy which these people possessed. The architecture of their city was far in advance of any city excavated thus far. Dr. Woolley writes:

In Abraham's time men lived in houses built with walls of burnt brick below, rising in mud brick above, plaster and whitewash hiding the change in material, two storeys high, and containing as many as thirteen or fourteen rooms round a central paved court which supplied light and air to the house. . . . We must revise considerably our ideas of the Hebrew patriarch [Abraham] when we learn that his earlier years were spent in such sophisticated surroundings; he was the citizen of a great city and inherited the traditions of an ancient organized civilization. The houses themselves bespoke comfort and even luxury. . . . One or two stores of tablets bear witness to their intellectual interests. We found copies of the hymns which were used in the services in the temples, and with them mathematical tables ranging from plain sums in addition to formulae for the extraction of square and cube roots, and other texts in which the writers had copied out the old building inscriptions extant in the city and had compiled in this way an abbreviated history of the principal temples. . . . It is all very practical and curiously modern, and again we see how very different from what we might have thought were the antecedents of the Hebrew people. (Dr. C. Leonard Woolley, *Ur of the Chaldees*, pp. 164-172.)

But living in the greatest material city in his world was not enough for Abraham. The physical beauty of Ur, the high standard of education, culture, and obvious wealth did not hide from this scientific thinker the grossness of materialism and idolatry which dominated everything within the city.

According to *Josephus*, Abraham was an astronomer, a scientist. And like any good scientist, he had learned to discount the unreliable testimony of the material senses. Right in the midst of paganism, idolatry, carnality, necromancy, witchcraft, sensuality, and other agencies of the carnal mind, Abraham boldly proclaimed his God to be the Lord of the whole universe, a proclamation which incensed the people of his city.

Abraham was relentless in denouncing the worship of the moon-god Sin. In his zeal to halt the rising tide of occultism, paganism, and idolatry — the working of the carnal mind which is enmity against God — he took drastic steps to destroy the books and im-

ages of idolatry in his homeland, Chaldea. *The Jewish Book of Jubilee* declares that Abraham's brother, Haran, was inadvertently killed when attempting to save some of the images of the gods when Abraham burnt the house in which they were. (See *Dum-melow*, p.191.)

Under the moving influence of Abraham, Terah left Chaldea, taking with him Abraham and his wife Sarah and Haran's son Lot, whom Abraham adopted. Following the old caravan route of the Great Fertile Crescent, they settled for a time in Mesopotamia (modern Syria), a region between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, which had been settled by Shem's grandson Eber. Here Abraham's life style changed. He who had been a sophisticated city dweller became a shepherd. And during the years he dwelt in Mesopotamia he accumulated great herds of cattle, sheep, camels, and other live stock. He became a wealthy man and provided luxuriously for his family and retinue of servants and herdsmen. We do not know how many years he remained in this land. But we do know that he was being prepared for the work God had planned for him — that of being a great shepherd of mankind.

When his stay in Mesopotamia had served the divine purpose, God commanded Abraham to move on. And this faithful friend of God "went out not knowing whither he went" (Heb.11:8). The record states:

He looked for a city which hath foundations,
whose builder and maker is God.— Heb.11:10.

Thus began a journey — a divine adventure — in which Abraham learned that as he walked with God, ever conscious of God's presence, ever obedient to God's Word, and was ever mindful of the needs of his people, he was covenanted to God and to all that is good.

A new era had begun! The generations of Shem had a new leader — a scientific thinker, a spiritually minded man who refused to become likeminded with the materialistic, idolatrous multitudes. This great and noble man was an individual, a rugged individual, who dared to be Godlike in the midst of godless materialism. His journeying continued to be a divine adventure, in which he won this honorable distinction: He was beloved of God and man. Everywhere he went his nobility was recognized. And he became known as a mighty prince among men. (See Gen.23:6.)

The question might well be asked: What has all this to do with us? We might begin by asking ourselves: Am I like Abraham or am I like his brother Haran? Am I striving to be Godlike or am I yearning to be as a god? Am I brave enough to be spiritually minded in the midst of materially minded friends and neighbors or do I desire to be popular with and like the materially minded people with whom I associate? Am I willing to stand faithfully and fearlessly for what is divinely right or do I find it easier and pleasanter to drift with the common consent of the populace?

There may be many battles with one's self before the yearning to be as gods yields to the desire to be Godlike, before the attraction for the glitter of materialism yields to the love of spirituality. But this battle must be won, for we are engaged in a conflict to win the minds of men. Even the greatest military victories will mean nothing unless we win the war with the carnal mind, which was, is, and continues to be enmity against God.

Today various forms of occultism — witchcraft, thought transference, mental telepathy, black and white magic, mental manipulation, sorcery, necromancy, and the like — are gaining acceptance as a part of the educational processes of our times. These are dangerous practices. They invade the individual rights of men and rob them of their clear thinking.

It is high time to rise out of the apathetic attitude toward this evil carnal force which is attempting to swallow up the knowledge of God in the world today and to belittle the power of divine Mind in man. The Apostle Paul had a clear understanding of the secret workings of the deceptive, devastating, mesmeric, occult, carnal mind. He knew its apparent power to deaden the senses, to change the basis of thought and reason. He knew its claim to produce confusion, prevent good judgment, and to rob mankind of the ability to discern right from wrong, good from evil. But he also knew that this insidious, aggressive influence had no power to stand against the omnipotent power of God and His almighty Word, which gives us dominion over the suggestions and influences of the carnal mind in all its forms. Hear his admonition to the people of his day and to all mankind today:

Avoid empty and worldly chatter; those who indulge in it will stray further and further into godless courses, and the infection of their teaching will spread like a gangrene.— Tim.2:17 (NEB).

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou has learned them;

... The holy scriptures are able to make thee wise [open the mind] unto salvation ...

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works [efficient and equipped for good work of every kind].— 11 Tim.3:14-17.

The Apostle's words sound a warning to all who would be free to think clearly and to be efficient in good works.

As we follow Abraham's footsteps in his divine adventure, we may learn with him how vitally important it is to listen for God's voice instead of the siren voice of the serpent, and to follow implicitly divine directions. In so doing we will not be overtaken by the serpent in its relentless pursuit of the righteous and its determination to bite the heel of the woman — to attack our Achilles' heel, or weak point — and to captivate and thus capture our minds, make us servants, and lead us in its unholy way. As we walk with God we will walk in the way of holiness, in spiritual dimensions, which cannot be invaded by any power or presence unlike God, good. And our life journey will be a divine adventure.

PART IV

ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB

Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel,
The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac,
and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you.
(Ex.3:15.)

Chapter XV

ABRAHAM

THE MAN OF FAITH

He looked for a city which
hath foundations, whose builder
and maker is God.
(Heb. 11:10.)

Abraham! The mention of his name evokes an image of nobility, courage, loving-kindness, spiritual authority, and faithfulness. *Josephus* draws a compelling picture of Abraham as he dwelt among the Chaldeans. Such qualities as righteousness, greatness, sagacity, spiritual persuasiveness, virtue, and unbounded enthusiasm in publishing his conviction that there is but one God, the Creator of the universe, made of Abraham a dynamic figure. Add to these qualities the fact that Abraham was skilled in the celestial sciences, and you have a man who would be a leader in any age, in any land. (See *Josephus*, Book I, Chapter VII.)

The Chaldeans were a pagan people. They worshipped Sin — the moon-god and goddess, *Ninar* and *Ningal*. They were given wholly to idolatry. Their sensuous practices were notorious. Ur, the principal city of Chaldea, was the center of organized occultism — the highly developed powers of the carnal mind. Even though Abraham lived among these people, his faith in his God was so complete, his divine nature so dominant, his mind so spiritually logical, that he was not influenced by their pagan beliefs and practices. Instead, he sought to change their concepts of the Supreme Being. And even though he was not successful in this effort, he remained steadfast in his allegiance to his God. The thinker and doer of the twentieth century A.D. might do well to take a close look at the record of this twentieth century B.C. thinker and doer.

We first know him as Abram, the son of Terah. Perhaps fearing that some harm might come to his son because of his outspoken

opposition to the carnal-mindedness and paganism of his countrymen, Terah gathered together his whole family and all their possessions and left Ur of the Chaldees. In the Bible we read:

And Terah took Abram his son, and Lot the son of Haran his son's son, and Sarai his daughter-in-law, his son Abram's wife; and they went forth with them from Ur of the Chaldees, to go into the land of Canaan; and they came unto Haran, and dwelt there.— Gen.11:31.

Although the determination to leave Chaldea appeared to be Terah's, this move was implemented by a power beyond Terah's comprehension. The move was the irresistible movement of Abram's spiritual unfoldment, impelled by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, within him, which, like the current of a mighty river, took with it all that was in its path.

Terah and his family paused in their journeying at Haran in Mesopotamia in the region of Padan-aram. Contrary to popular belief, the city of Haran was not named for Abram's brother Haran. These names are different in the Hebrew: *Haran*, the man; *Charon*, the place. The city of Haran (*Charon*) was no isolated hamlet. It was located at the head of the great trade route of the Fertile Crescent, which extends in an arc northwest from Chaldea, through Babylon, paralleling the Euphrates River, up through Mesopotamia, thence westward toward the Mediterranean Sea, and down through the land of Canaan to Egypt. Other trade routes from the east, from the north, and from the west passed through this ancient metropolis.

No reason is given for this pause in their journey to the land of Canaan. Probably they felt at home there, since Abram's brother Nahor and his wife Milcar lived in Haran. They must have migrated to this area before Terah took Abram and his family from Chaldea, since there is no record that they accompanied Terah and Abram. At a later date Abram spoke of Haran as the land of his kindred, the home of Nahor and his family. (Gen.22:20;24:4,10).

In Haran Abram's mode of living changed drastically. In Ur, probably the most sophisticated city of the time, Abram had been an integral part of the cultural life of the community. He was an astronomer and was highly educated in the sciences. Today he

would be classified as an intellectual. But we are told that in Haran Abram accumulated much wealth in cattle, or miqueh (a Hebrew word meaning live stock of any kind), in men-servants and women-servants, and in other substance, which was great. In modern times we might say that Abram went into the cattle business. This change led to the development of a latent talent — that of shepherding the flock — of leading instead of pushing, of persuading instead of challenging. There is no indication that Abram actually went into the fields to shepherd his flocks. But from this time the nature of the tender shepherd was manifested throughout his experience.

Terah died in Haran (Gen.11:32). We do not know how long Abram remained in that land after his father's death. But we do know that after a time the divine hand prodded him to move on. The forces of the Spirit of God swept him forward in his spiritual unfoldment. Under divine orders Abram embarked on a divine adventure, though he knew it not — an adventure in which he was to rise to unprecedented heights in spiritual understanding of the nature of the Supreme Being. He was to be taught the spiritual nature of the universe and the scientific relation of God to man. The Covenant of God with man, revealed in the first chapter of Genesis, was to come alive in his unfoldment. And his human life was to become a part of the divine allegory written in the Holy Scriptures, in which the divine nature in man and the universe was to be revealed to the world. We read:

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee:

And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.— Gen.12:1-3.

When the Biblical record declares that God says "I" or "I will" to an individual, this is proof positive that there is a response within the individual to the divine purpose. Abram did not at first comprehend that his response to the divine *Ego* was the divine Mind Itself speaking as his own mind or ego. But from the beginning of his divine adventure, the divine *Ego* established Itself as the "I" of his being and revealed in him a dynamic individuality

that felt rather than heard the will of God. Thus the divine decrees were inscribed indelibly in his nature so that he responded spontaneously to the divine will.

When the divine *Ego* said to Abram: "*I will bless thee; I will make of thee a great nation; I will make thy name great; Thou shalt be a blessing; In thee shall all families of the earth be blessed*" — Abram naturally believed and was in accord with God's promises. As a reward for his obedience in responding to the divine demand that he be God's representative on earth, the divine blessing began at once to work its power in him. But let us not underestimate God's requirement of Abram. First, under divine directions, this great man had given up a prestigious position in Ur, a city of wealth, material progress, intellectuality, but also a city of idolatry, of gross materialism, and sensuality. At God's command Abram had left this city, or consciousness of what constitutes life, and had gone to Haran in Mesopotamia, where he literally began life all over again. We might say he took on a new job in a new country and changed his whole life pattern. And he was a success. Now, at the age of seventy-five, he has been commanded by God to again pull up stakes and begin a new life in a strange country, away from all his kindred. And so in tune was he with his God that he obeyed without question, "and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Heb.11:8).

What was this divine blessing which caused Abram to be great and made him a blessing to present and future generations? Recall the Hebrew word translated *blessing* comes from a primitive root meaning prosperity. The word *bless* has many different meanings, chief among which is: to be divinely favored, to make successful in spiritual happiness and temporal concerns; to magnify and increase. The sense is to go forward, to take off material limits, to make holy, to consecrate. Throughout the Bible the idea of fruitfulness, spiritual and material prosperity, and well being is repeated again and again as an integral part of God's blessing — the continual unfoldment of good, with never any depletion or lack. In the degree that we love and obey God and know no will but His, the divine blessing is at work in our consciousness and experience, causing us to increase and be fruitful — to continually manifest God's power and never be in want of any good thing. (See pp.63-64.)

In Chaldea Abram had come to know God as the creative Principle of the universe. Although he called the Supreme Being by the name of *Jehovah, or yawah* — translated *Lord* in the *King James Version of the Bible* — it is evident that his understanding of *Yawah* transcended the earlier and later concepts of *Jehovah* as a manlike God, capable of both good and evil, blessing and cursing. When the Jews adopted the name *Jehovah, or Yawah*, as their national Deity, this name took on their own limited, circumscribed, and anthropomorphic sense. It came to mean: The Supreme Being, Self-existent, all-powerful, knowing good and evil, and proclaiming both blessing and cursing of His people. But Abram's sense of God took on the original meaning of the Hebrew word *Yawah, or Yaweh*, the Creator of the universe; to cause to be. And with every period of spiritual unfoldment in his life, his understanding of the nature of Deity rose higher and higher.

The Bible represents Abram as a towering figure, a great and noble man. His nobility was perfectly balanced with humility — a subjective sense of self so complete that his communion with God was uninterrupted by human will and human opinions. He heard and obeyed without question the Word of God which came to him. Whether this Word came as an audible voice or whether it came as the silent voice of his own divine Mind, or intelligence, we know not. But we do know that he heard or felt an impelling spiritual directive and followed it. His faith in his God was absolute. In the *New Testament, or New Covenant*, of our Bible we find this testimonial of Abram:

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise:

For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.— Heb.11:8-10.

The city for which Abram was seeking was not a material city. This unusual man was searching for an unusual city — a citadel or consciousness which had foundations, an understanding founded in principle and law, not on material observation and human reason. He was pursuing knowledge of the very substance of crea-

tion. And this was to be a grand adventure of spiritual discovery.

God chose Abram as His representative to reveal to the world the understanding of the nature of Spirit, to manifest this divine nature, or express the qualities of Spirit, and through his example, to help humanity understand the holy, spiritual nature of the earth and heaven and man and the divine authority which goes with this understanding. God chose Abram for this holy work because He found in him the qualities essential to accomplish such an unprecedented mission — qualities of humility, spirituality, teachableness, faith, strength, grace, wisdom, patience, virtue, obedience — qualities which make for true greatness. Further, Abram had proved that he had courage to stand in the face of overwhelming opposition to his convictions. He was a scientific thinker; hence he could not be shaken from logical conclusions, reached through scientific observation and unfoldment.

Abram's spiritual journeying is of vital interest to us in our own unfoldment. As we trace his holy pilgrimage we will learn with him that the city for which each one searches is the citadel of spirituality, a scientific consciousness of God, man, and of all creation — the dominion of Spirit which Christ Jesus declared is the kingdom of God within each one of us (Luke 17:20,21).

St. John, from the Mount of Revelation, discovered this Holy City, this Kingdom of God, this citadel of spirituality — a new concept of heaven and earth — which he described particularly as *the city which lieth foursquare*, in the fourth dimension of scientific thought, the only place it may be found (Rev.21:2,3,16).

The discovery of the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, is awaiting each one of us. As we walk with Abram in the way of holiness, we will discover it with him.

Faith gives substance to our
hopes, and makes us certain of
realities we do not see.
(Heb.11:1, NEB)

Chapter XVI

SPIRITUAL EXPLORER, SURVEYOR, AND HOMESTEADER OF THE 20TH CENTURY B.C.

Haran

And Abram took Sarai his wife, and
Lot his brother's son, and all their substance
that they had gathered, and the
souls that they had gotten in Haran; and
they went forth to go into the Land of Canaan;
and into the land of Canaan they came.
(Gen.12:5.)

It should not be difficult to picture the colorful caravan which accompanied Abram and Sarai in their journey from Haran to the land of Canaan. The following account vividly describes the entourage:

This couple's caravan was impressive in the beginning; and Abraham increased his wealth as he travelled. Their long entourage consisted of menservants and maidservants as well as sheep, oxen, asses, and other herds and flocks. The extent of their household later may be imagined by the fact that, at Abraham's word, no less than 318 servants, born in his house and trained to arms, accompanied him to the rescue of his nephew Lot. Those left to attend flocks and herds, which he possessed in great numbers, must have been in equal proportions. . . . We can picture their long caravan with its riding animals brilliantly attired with wool and head trappings, as were their riders, forming a cavalcade of color as it moved. (Edith Deen, *All the Women of the Bible*, p.10.)

We may also picture the scene as the caravan stopped each night for food and rest. When Abram spread his tents beside the great trade route and gathered his flocks together for safety, the assembly must have resembled a small village. Few people today realize what a tremendous undertaking was involved in this migration.

Damascus

En route to the land of Canaan, Abram and his large caravan sojourned for a time at Damascus. *Josephus* writes thus of Abram in quoting *Nicolaus of Damascus* in the fourth book of his *History*:

Abram reigned at Damascus, being a foreigner, who came with an army out of the land above Babylon, called the land of the Chaldean: but, after a long time, he got him up, and removed from that country also, with his people, and went into the land then called the land of Canaan, but now the land of Judea. . . . Now the name of Abram is even still famous in the country of Damascus, and there is shown there a village named for him, *The Habitation of Abram*. (*Josephus, Book I, Chapter VII.*)

At the time Abram came into the land of Canaan it was inhabited by many different tribes. Some of their names are identified with the sons of Canaan. The Hittites, Amorites, Phoenicians, Jebusites, Girgasites, and Hivites are only a few who called Canaan their homeland. The Nephilim, Anakim, or Rephaim — giants believed by many to be descendants of “the sons of God and the daughters of men” (Gen.6:2), who escaped the flood — were also in the land. (See Num.13:33; Deut.2:10; Josh.11:21,22; 14:12.)

Canaan probably took its name from the Canaanites, so named because they were descendants of Canaan, Ham’s son. But there are many who believe that the Canaanites took their name from the land of Canaan. There are still others who believe that the land of Canaan was so named because for many years the descendants of Ham — the Hamites, or ancient Egyptians — dominated the area and the land was thought of, metaphorically, as Egypt’s, or Ham’s son.

Although the land of Canaan was a kind of melting pot, the people apparently lived together in the land without enmity. There was no central government — only a loose coalition of tribes. Probably they were held together by a kind of religious bond, for, so far as can be determined, most of them worshipped the pagan god Baal.

Baal worship, or Baalism, was paganism of the grossest sort. It was infamous for perverted sex practices and sacred prostitution. It was notorious for child sacrifices and barbaric rites. Further,

these people used divination; they were enchanters, necromancers, charmers, wizards and witches, and consultants with familiar spirits (Deut.18:9-12). This land was as pagan and idolatrous as the land which Abram had left. And while the culture of Canaan was primitive compared with the advanced civilization of Chaldea, the people were as grossly material as the sophisticated inhabitants of Chaldea. What made the land of Canaan more desirable than Chaldea for Abram's spiritual journeying?

Even though the Canaanites were as pagan, idolatrous, sensuous, and grossly material as were the Chaldeans, their Baal worship was not as highly organized as was the moon-god worship in Chaldea. The Canaanites appeared to be unconcerned about the religious beliefs of others. However, in Chaldea it was dangerous for anyone to disagree with the hierarchy of the priest-craft of the moon-god and goddess, as Abram had learned.

In Canaan Abram was received kindly. His large herds and flocks were allowed to wander far and wide in search of pasturage without interference. There is no record that his shepherds were resented or opposed. He was free to build his own altars and worship his God in his own way, even though it was a way completely at variance with the idolatrous Baal worship. There was no apparent opposition to his great faith in God as the Creator of the universe, even though the Canaanites believed that Baal was lord of heaven and earth, that he owned the land, and that his kingdom was eternal.

Shechem

However, Abram's spiritual journeying ran into a kind of opposition he had not before encountered — opposition like an invisible wall. What was it? The answer lies in the following verse — a verse so simple its profundity is lost to the casual reader:

And Abram passed through the land unto the place
of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Ca-
naanite was then in the land— Gen.12:6.

Figuratively, *Sichem*, or *Shechem*, meaning shoulder-burden, and *Moreh*, meaning soothsayer, are typical of the state of mind through which Abram was passing at this time. He was burdened

and depressed — mentally and physically. His clear thinking, his sense of dominion, seemed to be blocked by an unseen influence. It was as though a soothsayer had taken possession of his mind. His thinking was not his own. As though to emphasize what had happened, the statement is made: "And the Canaanite was then in the land."

Abram was walking in the mental atmosphere of the Canaanites, in a powerful, penetrating, sensual climate of carnal mindedness which seemed to permeate his thinking and to produce a kind of mental miasma — confusion, mesmerism, and apathy. Abram had been in other lands where the mental atmosphere had been far more dangerous to his peace of mind, but it had not affected him in this way. Why was the mental atmosphere of the Canaanites more disturbing to Abram than that of the Chaldeans? Why did the recorder of Abram's story feel it was important to stress the fact that the Canaanite was then in the land? Why not call attention to the fact that there were others in the land whose thinking was unspiritual? Who were the Canaanites?

Canaan was Noah's grandson, the son of Ham. Recall that these two had endeavored to discredit Noah's great mission by presenting circumstantial evidence that Noah had disgraced himself by drinking too much wine. Whereas the drunken stupor in which Noah appeared to be was a mesmeric trance produced by Canaan before making an indecent attack on Noah. (See pp. 200-204.) But Noah knew what Canaan had done, and declared:

Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he
be unto his brethren.— Gen.9:25.

Noah did not cause a curse to fall upon Canaan. His pronouncement was a statement of the inevitable result which Canaanite thinking and acting bring upon their perpetrators. We do not know the kind of service or servitude Canaan was forced to give to his brothers. But succeeding years have confirmed that the land of Canaan was made to serve the progeny of Shem and Japheth. And the land of Canaan was made to serve Abram — to provide for him a peaceful home and plentiful pasturage for his great flocks — during his spiritual journeying.

The mentality associated with Canaan appears to have been transmitted to his descendants from generation to generation.

Moses certainly knew of the devastating influence of the Canaanite mentality on the people of God, for more than 400 years after Abram's entrance into that land he warned the children of Israel of the kind of thinking they would encounter when they went into the land of Canaan. We quote again the great lawgiver's words as he prepared his people for their return to the land God had promised to Abram and his seed:

When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations.

There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch,

Or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer,

For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord: and the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God.

For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners: but as for thee, the Lord thy God hath not suffered thee so to do.— Deut. 18:9-14.

Moses' words project a picture of Canaanite mentality which explains the dense mental atmosphere Abram encountered when he came into the land of Canaan. The grossness of the Canaanites (typical of the seed of the serpent) and the spiritual ascendancy of Abram (typical of the seed of the woman) met head on! The nature of Canaan, antagonistic to the nature of Shem, is manifested in the enmity of the unrighteousness of the Canaanites toward the righteousness of Abram. But the people of Canaan were never at enmity with Abram, never antagonistic toward him. That is why it was so difficult for Abram, and for us, to understand the chemicalization their unholiness produced in Abram. It was as though two powerful counteractive chemicals had been assimilated in one body. Truly, *the Canaanite was then in the land*. The gross, sensual, hypnotic influence of the Canaanitish mentality, like a deadly poison in the atmosphere of thought, had seeped into Abram's subconscious mind, and, acting like a drug in his body and a drag on his mental and physical footsteps, had

neutralized, for the moment, the clear scientific thinking typical of his nature.

The first evidence we have that a destructive influence was at work in his mind was that he became depressed and felt he was carrying a shoulder-burden (Sichem). Humanly he had every reason to be disappointed in the land of Canaan. Certainly it was not typical of the Kingdom of Heaven. And the cities of Canaan bore no resemblance to "the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." He went down unto the plain of Moreh — soothsayer — completely dejected and mesmerized. The serpent must have thought it had Abram in its power. But at that moment —

The Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him.—
Gen.12:7.

"The Lord appeared unto Abram!" The divine Mind spoke to him as his own mind or intelligence, and the voice of the land was silenced, the hypnotic influence of the Canaanite was broken. Then Abram heard again the divine promise of dominion in the land for himself and his seed. And for a moment he glimpsed the truth that the land belonged to God — not to the Canaanites, not to the carnal mind, not to paganism, idolatry, witchcraft, necromancy, and the like. It was God's land to give to whom He would. The land belonged to the divine Mind, which is Spirit. And He had given it to Abram!

Wherever he settled, even for a short time, Abram built an altar at which to worship God. It is true he communed with God without an altar at which to kneel. But the building of altars was in response to an inner demand that he put God first in any settlement. The building of altars was also a way in which Abram took possession of the land in the name of his God. And like an explorer, surveyor, and homesteader going into a new country, he staked out his claim to the land with altars of worship to the one God.

When Abram built an altar at Sichem, he thereby took possession of that land in the name of his God. But he did not remain in the land of Moreh where he built his first altar. According to the record he moved on to higher ground — mentally and physically.

Bethel

He removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east; and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord.— Gen.12:8.

Abram moved to a mountain (an exalted state of consciousness) and pitched his tent (established his thinking on this high plane), having Bethel on the west. Now *Bethel* means the abode of God, and is typical of the consciousness which feels God's presence and declares with confidence, "The Lord is in this place" (Gen.28:16). But the record also tells us that east of the place where Abram pitched his tent was Hai. *Hai* means ruin, as if overturned. Abram had pitched his tent, made his mental abode, between two opposite states of mind: the acknowledgment that God was present where he was but that the land around him was outside of God's presence. It was as though he saw on the one hand the spiritual universe of God's creating, typified by Bethel, and on the other he saw an inverted picture of God's universe, as if overturned, typified by Hai. In this mental state of duality, Abram stood, figuratively, between the first and second chapters of Genesis — between the scientific record of creation, which declares the goodness of God and man's oneness with that infinite good, and the material concept of creation, which declares evil to be as real as good and more powerful.

How often have we stood in the same place. On the one hand good appears to be real and powerful, and we feel we are standing in the presence of God. At the same time we see evil to be equally real and powerful in places all around us.

Abram attempted to correct this sense of duality. He built an altar unto the Lord between Bethel and Hai, thereby taking possession of the place where he had pitched his tent in the name of his God. And he called on the name of the Lord — he prayed for the divine nature to be established in him. But he must have feared what he saw in Hai — an overturning or reversal of his new-found state of mind. Possibly he did not feel strong enough spiritually to remain true to the vision of the spiritual nature of the universe — typified by Bethel, the abode of God, Spirit — when the evidence of materialism appeared to be so strong. And in this

unsettled state of mind, he hurried on, without waiting for divine directions.

Egypt

And Abram journeyed, going on still toward the south.

And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land.— Gen.12:9,10.

It is not surprising that Abram found a famine in the land, for at this time his consciousness appeared to be barren of spiritual refreshment. And he went down into Egypt. Throughout Bible literature Egypt stands for the material world, for great material wealth and spiritual darkness. Abram was very rich in material goods, but for the moment his spiritual riches seemed to be at low ebb. His thinking was not scientific. He was still wandering mentally, looking for his city, forgetting that the dominion which God had given him was within himself, not in or because of any particular location in time and space. He had indeed gone down into Egypt, into a material concept of his world. But he did not remain long in that place. God routed him out of that state of mind and out of that country in a very unique way.

To understand the events which transpired in Egypt, it is needful to reach backward into the record for a moment. Before leaving Haran Abram had made an agreement with his wife that when they traveled she would say that she was his sister. This was true, for Sarai was his half-sister, the daughter of his father though not of his mother. His words describing this agreement are repeated as they journeyed toward Egypt:

And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon:

Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive.

Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee.— Gen.12:11-13.

Sarai was very beautiful and Abram was wealthy. In those days it was not unusual for a rich husband to be murdered and his wife and all his possessions taken by a powerful chieftain or ruler. Abram and Sarai were traveling in countries where they were strangers, and this arrangement was a safeguard, even though a sense of fear impelled it. The plan had evidently been successful, but in Egypt it was not.

Obviously Abram and Sarai moved naturally in the highest social circles. Association with the royal family of Egypt was accepted by the historian who recorded their story as a matter of fact. Further, the Pharaoh gave Abram permission to confer with his most learned wise men of Egypt. "from which conversations his virtue and his reputation became more conspicuous than they had been before." (*Josephus*, Book I, Chapter VIII.)

But the thing Abram greatly feared came upon him. The record tells us that the princes of Pharaoh, greatly impressed by Sarai's beauty and nobility, praised her to the Pharaoh. And the king sent and took and brought her into his house (Gen.12:14,15).

We have evidence that Abram made his presence felt, for we are told that the Pharaoh offered Abram sheep and oxen and asses, menservants and maidservants and camels, and entreated him well for Sarai's sake (Gen.12:16). We do not know how long the Pharaoh kept Sarai in his house, but something happened which made him realize that all was not well:

And the Lord plagued Pharaoh and his house with
great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife.—

Gen.12:17.

In the Bible there are many references to some plague or curse or famine which the Lord sent. Then as now, the Lord is blamed for events whose causes are not understood. We know not the exact nature of the plagues which tormented Pharaoh and his house. But whatever they were, they caused Pharaoh to know that he was being plagued because of Sarai. He must have sensed that Sarai was not Abram's sister, for he called Abram and demanded:

What is this that thou hast done unto me? Why
didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?

Why saidst thou, she is my sister? So I might have
taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy
wife, take her, and go thy way.

And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had.— Gen.12:18-20.

Abram's experience in Egypt awakened his spiritual senses. He learned a lesson which influenced his whole life. From this time on he trusted God's disposal of events.

And Abram went up out of Egypt, he, and his wife, and all that he had, and Lot with him, into the south.

And Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold.

And he went on his journeys from the south even to Bethel, unto the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai;

Unto the place of the altar, which he had made there at the first: and there Abram called on the name of the Lord.— Gen.13:1-4.

Return to Bethel

Once again Abram found himself between Bethel and Hai, halting between the consciousness of the omnipresence of God (indicated in the meaning of Bethel) and the fear of ruin, the overturning or reversal of his great mission (indicated in the meaning of Hai). But Abram had come *up* out of Egypt, and this upward trend of thought was more receptive to spiritual truth than the previous downward trend had been. In humility he returned to the place of the altar he had built before going down into Egypt, and there claimed the land anew in the name of his God.

Writing of Abram's experience at Bethel before and after his Egyptian sojourn, a commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible* records a powerful Lesson-sermon which each one of us should hear and heed:

What was symbolized here in the case of Abraham can be a saving fact in every life. Suppose at the beginning of each chapter of a new experience a man sets up the altar of a new consciousness of God, his own Bethel where he perceives and acknowledges his need of heavenly light and guidance. It is well for him that he has that first altar to which he can go back in humility and penitence for renewal of his dedication. (*IB*, Vol.1, Expos. p.584.)

On his return to Bethel we read that "Abram again called on the name of the Lord." What does it mean to call upon the name of the Lord? At times it means simply the cry of "Lord, Lord, Have mercy on me." But in its higher sense, calling on the name of the Lord is prayer, a humble desire to see God's name or nature glorified in one's self and in all the earth. It is literally laying down a mortal, personal sense of one's self and praying, as did the Master Christian in centuries to come, "Not my will, but Thine be done" (Luke 2:42). Calling on the name of the Lord is a kind of atonement, an all-encompassing desire to be at-one with God and a willingness to sacrifice everything that would separate one from God or prevent one from expressing the divine nature.

Abram And Lot

When Abram called upon the name of the Lord at this time he waited for an answer. The answer was forthcoming, but it was not in words. It was in action! *God separated Abram from his nephew Lot.*

In the Hebrew the name *Lot* means a veil or covering, that which conceals. (And this is also a definition of *occultism*.) In Abram's spiritual unfoldment, the presence of Lot indicated some veil or covering, some occult influence, which, like the mist in the second chapter of Genesis, obscured the clearer, higher view of God's creation.

Lot was a materialist whose unholy influence in Abram's life was so completely hidden or concealed that Abram did not detect it. Abram's love for his nephew blinded him to Lot's gross nature. He did not realize that Lot's influence was a deterrent, a hidden restraint in his spiritual unfoldment.

Lot's presence with Abram explains the reason Abram had not been able to throw off or rise above the subtle, occult, mesmeric influences of the Canaanite mentality, which hung like a veil around him. Unlike Abram, Lot had not left the occultism of Chaldea behind; he had brought it with him. He was like-minded with the Canaanites and was receptive to their mode of thinking. His psychic senses were the medium, or agency, through which the mesmeric impressions of the occultism of the land of Canaan had impressed themselves upon Abram's sensibilities. Lot's presence

with Abram was not a part of the divine plan. The command God had given to Abram was:

Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred,
and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will
shew thee.— Gen.12:1.

Abram had been obedient to all but one of these commands; he had not gotten away from all his kindred. It is significant that four times the record stresses the fact that Lot was with Abram (Gen.12:4,5; 13:1,5). And Lot was still with him. In the metaphor of Abram's unfoldment, Lot stood for Chaldean influences which were concealed and latent in Abram's own consciousness — influences from which he must separate himself. The separation from Lot and his disassociation from all Chaldean influences was accomplished in God's own unique way.

The record tells us that both Abram and Lot had great flocks and herds and tents and their substance was very great (Gen.13:5).

And the land was not able to bear them, that they
might dwell together: for their substance was great,
so that they could not dwell together.

And there was a strife between the herdmen of
Abram's cattle and the herdmen of Lot's cattle: and
the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the
land.— Gen.13:6,7.

The strife was really the conflict between Spirit and the flesh, between Abram's spirituality and Lot's materialism and is typical of the carnal mind always at enmity with the divine Mind. "Their substance was great." But Lot's concept of his substance was material while Abram's concept of his substance was spiritual. Lot's dominant materialism was overshadowing Abram's more loving, quiet spiritual nature. This God would not permit.

It was not necessary for Abram to take action. The herdsmen of Abram and Lot precipitated the incident which separated the two. And as though to explain some of the difficulty we are told that "the Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land," indicating that the mesmeric influences of the land had penetrated their midst. Abram's handling of this difficult situation established a pattern of righteous action for all time. To Lot he said:

Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen; for we be brethren.

Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me: if thou wilt take the left hand, then, I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go the the left.—
Gen.13:8,9.

There was no arguing, no bickering, no accusation in Abram's consciousness and attitude. His greatness shines forth. When he said to Lot, "Is not the whole land before thee," it was as though Abram saw a concept of infinitude at that moment, for the words whole and holy are alike. Could Abram have been saying to Lot, and to us, "Is not the holy land before you? Is not the comprehension of the wholeness or infinitude of God's creation within your grasp? Can you not see that each one has his own holy land, his own complete sphere of activity, which does not intrude upon or interfere with another's dominion?"

But Abram and Lot lived in different worlds. They were not marching to the beat of the same drummer. And it was right that they should go their separate ways. Abram was seeking the city, or consciousness, which has spiritual foundations, whose architect and builder is God, Spirit, while Lot was seeking something which looked like the land of Egypt and the Garden of Eden — locations compatible with his mentality.

And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest into Zoar.

Then Lot chose him all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.

Abram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom.

But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before [against] the Lord exceedingly.—

Gen.3:10-13.

Lot deliberately chose the way of life typical of Sodom and Gomorrah; it was attractive to him; he felt at home there, for it

evidenced his carnal concept of life. He was greedy, selfish, sensuous, and weak. Lot was a true son of Adam, while Abram had glimpsed the spiritual fact that he was the son of God.

Abram Discovers His Holy Land

There is no record that the Word of God had come to Abram from the time he had started wandering toward Egypt with Lot until after Lot was separated from him, although his godliness had shown forth in all his human relationships. But now, with Lot's influence gone, he heard the divine voice loud and clear:

And the Lord said unto Abram after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward:

For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.

Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.—

Gen.13:14,15,17.

The confusion which had seemed to take hold of Abram after he entered the land of Canaan, causing him to wander down into Egypt, was completely dispelled, "after that Lot was separated from him." He had regained his stature of spiritual manhood. And from this higher vantage point, he could see and understand more clearly the unfolding of God's divine purpose for him. Returning to the place where he had originally pitched his tents and from which he had seen only the Canaanites in the land, he now saw the same scene through a different lens. The physical view which met his human eyes was discounted. His scientific senses beheld the spiritual concept of creation. He saw everything in a new light. He glimpsed the *foursquare* nature of God's creation, extending *northward, southward, eastward, westward*, as far as the eye could see — as far as his comprehension of spiritual infinity would permit him to see. He saw, as did the Revelator, a new concept of heaven and earth (Rev.21:1).

It was as though God said to him: "Lift up your spiritual vision. Lift it above the evidence of the material senses. *Look from the place where thou art*, from the place where you now are in spiritual

understanding; and from this exalted vantage point, comprehend the scientific sense of what your eye beholds. All that you see and understand scientifically of the infinitude of spiritual creation is yours; you have dominion over it. And this understanding will make a place for you wherever you spread your tents. Further, your seed, they which are of faith (Gal.3:7), will inherit the same spiritual concept of the universe which has come to you and will have dominion on earth.”

This was the place, or spiritual vantage point, to which God had brought Abram when he first came into the land of Canaan. But then he appeared to be searching for a material city that would be “beautiful for situation” (Ps.48:2) — a city that would be symbolic of “the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” But now, the mist of materialism, the evil of occultism, typified by Lot, had been removed. He saw clearly a new concept of creation and the wholly spiritual nature of his city. And he heard the voice of God distinctly, commanding:

Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and
in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto
thee.— Gen.13:17.

It was as though God commanded: “Explore the spiritual infinitude of this holy land you have discovered. Let your thought expand to take in the glory of this consciousness of the spiritual nature of heaven and earth and man. Be active in this understanding of holiness — of wholeness — for only what you see or comprehend spiritually of this infinitude do you possess. What you comprehend and claim scientifically of this wholeness or holiness is yours — your dominion!”

Abram Finds His City Hebron

Then Abram removed his tent, and came and dwelt
in the plain of Mamre, which is in Hebron, and built
there an altar unto the Lord.— Gen.13:18.

Abram moved his tent from between Bethel and Hai. In his spiritual journeying his abode between these two cities, typical of the two records of creation — the two covenants — was symbolic

of Abram's state of mind when he first pitched his tent there. But after his communion with God in which God revealed to him the spiritual nature of his inheritance and his dominion therein, he removed his tent — changed both his mental and physical abode — and dwelt in Hebron by the oaks of Mamre. Here he built an altar unto the Lord, thus taking possession of the land in the name and nature of the Creator. Of great significance is the fact that after building *this* altar and pitching his tents at Hebron in the plain of Mamre, Abram began to feel the power and authority of the divine *Ego* within himself — the same Mind that was also in Christ Jesus (Phil.2:5).

The meaning of the names *Mamre* and *Hebron* have great spiritual significance in Abram's divine adventure. *Mamre* means strength. *Hebron* means spiritual alliance. These places are typical of Abram's new state of mind, his new spiritual outlook. Here, fortified with divine strength and the knowledge of his spiritual alliance, or oneness with God, the divine *Ego*, Abram found his citadel of spirituality, his scientific understanding of creation, *his holy city*. Ever after, and even to this day, *Hebron is known as Abraham's city*.

Abram became established in his city, in Hebron, both mentally and physically, and gained the enviable reputation of being known as a friend of God and man. His divine strength (*Mamre*) and his spiritual alliance with God (*Hebron*) caused him to be at peace with everyone and everything. His city evidenced his state of mind. And this divine state of Mind acted as a passport to happy relationships with one and all and gave him freedom to walk undisturbed through all the land, in accordance with God's promise: "All the land that thou seest, to thee will I give it" (Gen.13:15). You have dominion there!

The people of the land recognized Abram's dominion, and he became known as a mighty prince among men.

Chapter XVII

A SOLDIER OF GOD

How long Abram dwelt at Hebron before the following event took place we do not know. Some records indicate a period of about five years elapsed. The event was no ordinary happening. Four kings from the land east of the Euphrates River invaded the greater part of the land west of the Arabian Desert, plundered the cities, and took captive many of the inhabitants.

Abram's city was not touched. In fact Abram and his large retinue knew nothing of the invasion until word was brought them of the tragic event. His instant response to the news reveals an aspect of this great man's character not yet apparent to us. The Biblical account of the invasion, confirmed by historical records, is recorded in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis:

And it came to pass in the days of Amraphel king of Shinar, Arloch king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer king of Elam, and Tidal king of nations;

That these made war with Bera king of Sodom, and Birsha king of Gomorrah, Shinab king of Admah, and Shemeber king of Zeboiim, and the king of Bela, which in in Zoar.

All these were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea.

Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

And in the fourteenth year came Chedorlaomer, and the kings that were with him, and smote the Rephaims [a race of giants] in Ashteroth Karnaim, and the Zumims in Ham, and the Emims in Shaveh Kiriathaim.

And the Horites in their mount Seir, unto Elparan, which is by the wilderness.

And they returned, and came to the Enmishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites, and also the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazerontamar.

And there went out the king of Sodom, and the king of Gomorrah, and the king of Admah, and the king of

Zebolim, and the king of Bela (the same is Zoar;) and they joined battle with them in the vail of Siddim;

With Chedorlaomer the king of Elam, and with Tidal king of nations, and Amraphel king of Shinar, and Arioch king of Ellasar; four kings with five.

And the vale of Siddim was full of slime-pits; and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, and fell there; and they that remained fled to the mountain.

And they took all the goods of Sodom and Gomorrah, and all their victuals, and went their way.

And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed.—

Gen.14:1-12.

Overthrow Of The Kings Of The East

And there came one that had escaped, and told Abram the Hebrew; for he dwelt in the plain of Mamre, the Amorite, brother of Eshcol, the brother of Aner: and these were confederate with Abram.

And when Abram heard that his brother was taken captive, he armed his trained servants, born in his own house, three hundred and eighteen, and pursued them unto Dan.

And he divided himself against them, he and his servants, by night, and smote them, and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus.

And he brought back all the goods, and also brought again his brother Lot, and his goods, and the women also, and the people.— Gen.14:13-16.

There is historical evidence to substantiate the invasion of the lands west of the Euphrates River by the four kings, who have been identified as rulers in the days of Abraham. The most famous of these kings, Amraphel, has been indentified with Hammurabi. Their conquest extended over vast territories which later became the Babylonian and Assyrian empires, and included Syria and Canaan.

It is not surprising that there was war in the land in which Lot dwelled. Conflict of some sort accompanied him wherever he went. Although he was in no way responsible for the battle between the kings, there was no spiritual mindedness in him, no intuition to warn him of the danger. When Abram heard that Lot

and his family and all his possessions had been taken captive, he armed his servants, three hundred and eighteen men, and together with three trusted friends, Aner, Eschol, and Mamre, pursued and completely routed the invaders and brought back all the captives and the goods which had been taken away.

Abram's ability to overcome trained armies when he himself was not a soldier is significant. It gives us further insight into his character. This soldier of God was equal to any emergency. His righteousness (his right relationship with God) and his virtue (his capacity or power adequate to the production or performance of a given effect) equipped him to outwit and defeat the larger and physically stronger armies of his opponents.

This was a practical demonstration of Abram's God-given dominion. It illustrates the fact that one spiritually minded man, thinking and acting scientifically, can lead a small company of men to victory against numerically stronger forces of carnally minded men who depend on material armaments alone for their strength.

Lot did not see the significance of this victory, this overcoming of material aggression by spiritual strength. He continued to make his dwelling place in Sodom. The city of wickedness housed his thinking and was a fitting framework for his activity.

In Abram's victory over the kings of the East we discover a far greater victory than the mere overcoming of physical forces. The pursuit and overcoming of invading forces was a test of his ability to utilize the power of his Godlikeness, the dominion of the Spirit of God within him. He rose majestically to meet this challenge and was triumphant.

Chapter XVIII

ABRAM MEETS MELCHIZEDEK

The Man Made Like Unto the Son of God.
(Heb.7:3.)

Abram's spiritual victory, in which he demonstrated his God-given dominion over the aggressive forces of the kings of the East, brought him face to face with one of the most extraordinary figures in all history. This man, a great king who was also a priest, went forth to meet Abram on his return from battle and blessed him. Who was this royal priest? He was the precursor of the royal priesthood of Christ Jesus, the exemplification of the human and divine coincidence. His name — *Melchizedek!*

In three short verses the Bible presents the human history of this royal priest of whom it was said in centuries to come that the Lord, Christ, was "a priest forever after the order of, or after the similitude, of Melchizedek" (See Ps.110:4; Heb.5:5-10, 7:1-21).

And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine: and he was the priest of the most high God.

And he blessed him, and said, Blessed be Abram of the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth; And blessed be the most high God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand. And he gave him tithes of all.— Gen.14:18-20.

The title *Priest and King* is used in the Bible to denote complete dominion, or spiritual authority. In the Book of Revelation (1:6; 5:10), St. John declares that the Christ has made us all kings and priests unto God, to reign on earth.

We read of Melchizedek in the book of Hebrews:

For this Melchizedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him;

To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of Salem, which is, King of peace;

Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually.— Heb.7:1-3.

The seventh chapter of the book of Hebrews is devoted entirely to the establishment of the fact that the royal priesthood of the Christ is after the order of Melchizedek, not after the similitude of the Levitical priesthood, and that this priesthood abides forever and supersedes all other priesthood.

There is ample historical evidence to convince even the skeptic that before Abram migrated to the land of Canaan there was in Salem (later Jerusalem) a Hebrew settlement whose inhabitants originated in some other branch of the Hebrew race. And that a king lived there who was also a priest of the Most High God. From *Dummelow's Bible Commentary, The Companion Bible*, and other sources, the following information is gleaned:

Melchizedek was king of Salem, the chief town of the Jebusites, known to us as Jerusalem. The armana letters, 1400 BC, written in cuneiform characters on clay tablets, show that Palestine was at this time in possession of Egypt and the Tablets are letters to the Pharaohs Amenophis III and IV. One is from Ebed-Tob the successor of Melchizedek. Three times he says, "not my father; not my mother installed me in this place, but the *Mighty King*" (cp Heb.7:1-4); i.e., he did not inherit it by succession but by the gift of "the arm of the *Mighty King*." (Note is made that Melchizedek made no sacrifices or burnt offerings.) The priests of Jerusalem, when David "took the city," were not of the tribe of Levi, but were acknowledged by David to be priests of the Most High God, and he paid tithes to them. Some commentators say that David was aware that they were of the priesthood of Melchizedek, or that their priesthood emanated from the time of Melchizedek or earlier.

Ps. 110:4 confirms David's awareness that Melchizedek was a royal priest and that the priesthood of Melchizedek superseded the Levitical priesthood.

Reference made by the writer of the Book of Hebrews (7:3), that Melchizedek was "without father, without mother, without de-

scent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God, abideth continually," does not imply that Melchizedek was a mythical figure. He had his place in history. Melchizedek appeared on earth by the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God. He was the figure of him (Christ Jesus) who was to come.

Melchizedek's understanding of the nature of the Supreme Being is revealed in the fact that he was priest of The Most High God — *El Elyon* — a Hebrew name meaning The Superior One, possessor of heaven and earth, source of all supply, and dispenser of divine blessings on the earth.

The presence of Melchizedek in Abram's unfoldment confirmed to Abram and indicates to us that Abram's understanding of the nature of the Supreme Being had expanded to embrace the concept of Divinity not only as the Creator and possessor of heaven and earth, but also as the source of all supply and the dispenser of divine blessings on the earth. The presence of Melchizedek in Abram's unfoldment also reveals the fact that some understanding of the royal priesthood of the Christ had touched Abram's consciousness. He knew that he must, in some degree, emulate this royal priesthood.

Melchizedek was not only priest of the Most High God. He was also king of Salem. Salem is Jeru-salem, "city or foundation of peace." Throughout the Bible the name *Jerusalem* is used symbolically to describe the new heaven and new earth — heaven and earth seen in a new light — which St. John called the *New Jerusalem*, "the holy city, the city which lieth foursquare" (Rev.21:1,2,16). Symbolically, Abram's meeting with Melchizedek, king of Salem, of the New Jerusalem, confirms the truth already stated, that Abram had seen heaven and earth in a new light and that a new concept of the city which hath foundations — the consciousness of the spiritual nature of God's creation — was unfolding in him.

The understanding of God and of man's relationship with God which came to Abram through his association with Melchizedek revealed to Abram the transcendent fact that he too was a priest unto God — a spiritual leader able to commune with God — and a king, or ruler of his human experience; thus having complete dominion or spiritual sovereignty on earth.

The First Communion Service

“Melchizedek brought forth bread and wine to Abram.” This is the first Biblical record of a communion service. In the metaphor of Abram’s story, this holy communion reveals the fact that Abram had indeed partaken of the body and blood of Christ — imbibed the substance and essence of Christliness. In this communion service there is no burnt offering. The sacrifice demanded of Abram, and of us, is: *Present your body, your very selves, as a living sacrifice*. That this is the sacrifice which is acceptable to God is clearly stated by the Apostle Paul in his Epistle to the Christian Jews living in Rome:

Therefore, my brothers, I implore you by God’s mercy to offer your very selves to him: a living sacrifice, dedicated and fit for his acceptance, the worship offered by mind and heart.

Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world, but let your minds be remade and your whole nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the will of God, and to know what is good, acceptable, and perfect.— Rom.12:1,2 (NEB).

In recognition of Abram’s understanding of the nature of the Supreme Being as *El Elyon* — the Most High God, possessor of heaven and earth, source of all supply, and dispenser of divine blessings on earth — and in recognition of the dominion of heaven on earth which this understanding had given him, Melchizedek invoked the divine blessing upon him:

Blessed be Abram of [by] the most high God, possessor of heaven and earth.— Gen.14:19.

Melchizedek did not bless Abram. He acknowledged what he saw to be true, namely, that God had blessed Abram. As with Noah and Shem, God’s blessing was upon Abram because of his expression of the divine nature and because of his willingness to go forward in a higher understanding of God. This divine blessing accompanied Abram during his entire sojourn on earth. He was ever conscious of a sense of well-being, of increase, prosperity, and progress. And — now fast, now slow — he continued to go forward in his understanding of God, in his demonstration of the

power of the divine nature, and in consecration of his holy mission on earth.

Abram Discovers the Law of Tithing

We also read in this brief account that "Abram gave Melchizedek tithes of all." In this action Abram acknowledged Melchizedek worthy to receive his tithes. He thus established a pattern of active gratitude for us in acknowledging God as possessor of heaven and earth, source of all supply, and dispenser of divine blessings on earth. This active gratitude opens the very windows of heaven and pours out for us blessings infinite — makes us conscious of spiritual realities ever present, available to meet our every need. This outpouring of blessings is invisible to a selfish, limited, materialistic sense, but it is abundantly visible to the selfless, infinite, spiritual senses of man.

The Hebrew word *ma'aser*, translated *tithe*, and used here for the first time in the Bible, challenges the imagination. *Ma'aser* comes from *'aser*, meaning ten, but used only in combinations: i.e., teen (fourteen, fifteen, etc.). This word, in turn, comes from *'eser*, the masculine form of *'asarah*, which means: an accumulation to the extent of the digits by tens or teens, as 5 is extended to 15, to 25, to 35, etc. The primitive root from which all of these words come is *'asar*, identical with *'ashar*, meaning: to accumulate, to grow, to make rich. In tracing *ma'aser* to its original meaning, we find that the *tithe* is that which extends or increases each digit by tens and teens, *ad infinitum*. (*James Strong, S.T.D., LL.D.*)

The giving of a tenth part of our income or supply for any good purpose or cause is a token of spiritual tithing which expands our supply in much the same way that a pebble dropped in water expands in ripples or waves. The pebble drop, governed by the law of concentric action, determines all wave expansion, from the smallest wave at the center to the largest at the continually expanding circumference. As each new wave forms it does not take from but gives impetus to the larger waves already moving out from the center. The giving of a tenth part of what we have sets in motion in our consciousness and in our experience the law of tithing which governs the infinite expansion of every item of our supply. In fact, the action of tithing is that of unfoldment, which increases our lives by every spiritual touch.

The prophet Malachi exhorts us to prove the law of tithing:

Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows [sluices] of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.— Mal.3:10.

As we identify everything in its spiritual nature, we bring all the tithes, the whole idea of tithing, into the storehouse of Spirit — not only tithes of money or supply, but also tithes of love, joy, mercy, justice, patience, faith, loyalty, grace, duty, consecration. Everything concerning us, our whole substance, when thus identified with Spirit, is enlarged, increased, or multiplied by our former measurements instead of being limited or divided by them.

When Christ Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes he was tithing in a magnificent way. At one time the Master Christian fed five thousand men, besides women and children, with only five loaves and two fishes. At another time he fed four thousand men, besides women and children, with seven loaves and a few fishes. Jesus looked away from the material evidence. He looked up to heaven and gave thanks. He then blessed the apparently meager supply, invoking the law of blessedness, the law of increase. The supply was more than enough to prove the infinitude of spiritual substance, for more was left over after feeding the multitudes than the disciples had seen as the entire supply. The Master saw the infinite, spiritual nature of God's supply, of which the few loaves and fishes were but the symbol. Further, his scientific acknowledgment of God as the source of all supply and his spiritual understanding of the infinite nature of every item of supply, acted as a law of sufficiency that brought into view the manifestation of abundant provision. The visible came forth from the invisible. Thus did the Master prove the law of tithing, stated by Malachi, to be a law of sufficiency. (See John 6:5-13; Matt.14:14-21; 15:32-38.)

Through Melchizedek Abram discovered the law of tithing, and at every spiritual touch his substance increased. When he was offered a great reward by the king of Sodom after routing the kings of the East, Abram refused. Such action was unprecedented. Abram does not leave us in doubt as to his reason for refusing the bounty offered by the king:

And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.

And Abram said to the king of Sodom, I have lift up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth,

That I will not take from a thread even to a shoelatchet, and that I will not take any thing that is thine, lest thou shouldest say, I have made Abram rich:

Save only that which the young men have eaten, and the portion of the men which went with me, Aner, Eschol, and Mamre; let them take their portion.—

Gen.14:21-24.

Through his understanding of the true meaning of tithing, Abram knew that thereby he had access to the whole of spiritual substance. Therefore, he could not take anything from the king of Sodom which might give the king or anyone a reason for saying that someone besides God had made Abram rich. The king of Sodom, recognizing Abram's majesty and power, greatly desired to have Abram recognize and acknowledge him as his benefactor. But Abram was obedient to God's command that he take nothing from materialism that would adulterate his spiritual sense of substance and his understanding of God as possessor of heaven and earth, source of all supply, and dispenser of divine blessings on the earth.

The nature of Deity as *El Elyon, the Most High God*, Abram's new concept of the Supreme Being, revealed to him a higher, more spiritual concept of his relationship with God. The meaning of this holy name — The superior One, possessor of heaven and earth, source of all supply, and dispenser of divine blessings on earth — turns thought instinctively to the record of spiritual creation in Genesis, where we learned that God blessed everything He had made and gave man dominion over it. Let's see how this new understanding of God relates the infinitude of good to Abram's humanhood and to our own:

When we think of God as *The Superior One*, we have no difficulty in relating this name to the Supreme Being, to *Elohim*, the name which defines *The Triune God Himself* — the highest concept of Deity revealed in our Bible. Abram has yet to even glimpse this concept of God, nor has he found his place in the Trinity. But he will.

When we think of God as *possessor of heaven and earth*, we are reminded that in the beginning, or of first importance for us to

understand, God revealed His nature as the *Creator of heaven and earth*. This was Abram's first concept of the Supreme Being. Now, through the revelation of His holy name as *El Elyon, possessor of heaven and earth*, God reminds Abram, and us, that He possesses what He creates. God holds His creation in the palm of His hand — in his power — safe in Spirit. Abram certainly comprehended the nature of God as Both *Creator and possessor of the earth*, for when God gave him "all the land which thou seest," he must have realized God possessed, the land, or He could not have given it to him.

When we think of God as the *dispenser of divine blessings on the earth*, we see the Creator dispensing, or distributing to mankind, blessings infinite, where and as needed. This divine dispensation is not administered on a personal basis, but acts through law — the law of blessedness, the law of well-being, the law of progress. The nature of God as the *dispenser* is one which Abram must have grasped, for no matter where he was, whatever he needed was there also — a place to spread his great tents, food for his large retinue, pasturage for his cattle, money to pay for needed things, loyal friends, kindly neighbors who had great respect for him. The law of blessedness through which God dispenses good to mankind is a law of sufficiency, meting out according to one's receptivity. Abram's absolute faith in his God opened all the channels of receptivity in his consciousness so that he was the recipient of an abundant measure of divine blessings. Consequently his days were literally "days of heaven upon the earth" (Deut.11:21).

There is little doubt that Abram was led to the land of Canaan because Melchizedek was there. So far as we know Melchizedek was the only individual in the whole world who had any comprehension of the Supreme Being as *El Elyon, The Most High God* — The superior One, possessor of heaven and earth, source of all supply, dispenser of divine blessings on earth — and of man as the beneficiary of that divine nature. Certainly Melchizedek was the only individual in the world who exemplified the royal priesthood of the Christ, typical of the human and divine coincidence in which his Christliness embraced his whole human experience and gave him spiritual authority on earth.

When Melchizedek acknowledged that Abram was blessed by *El Elyon, the Most High God*, he literally crowned Abram with the dual title, *Priest and King*, thus acknowledging that Abram was a priest, a spiritual leader, and a king, or ruler, having divine authority over his human experience. The compound title, *Priest and King*, is one each one of us must strive to earn, to be worthy of; for it is symbolic of the human and divine coincidence — a coin-

vidence in which we discover the divinity of our own Christliness having divine authority in our human experiences, the Son of God having complete oversight of the son of man.

Abram's search for a city which hath foundations had led him to Hebron, where God revealed to him the spiritual nature of the universe and of his dominion therein. But his understanding had not yet reached the exalted state of Melchizedek's city, or holy consciousness, typical of the New Jerusalem. His mental grasp, or comprehension, of spiritual reality must expand yet more. The marvelous revelation which had come to him at Hebron of his alliance, or oneness, with God and with all that is good must develop and grow in him. There was still much to overcome and much to learn before Abram could fully comprehend the nature of "the city which lieth foursquare." But he had seen the city! He had glimpsed the spiritual realities of heaven on earth. And they would mature in him.

Abram's search for "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," might well be likened to that of an explorer setting out to discover and to settle a new world. The universe Abram was exploring was unknown to mankind. His venture into an unknown world, "not knowing whither he went," was as thrilling and challenging as must be the experiments undertaken by a great natural scientist who has glimpsed a hitherto unknown principle which startles his imagination and sets him at work to prove his theories to be facts — facts that will change the whole world's thinking.

Although Enoch and Noah had discovered the spiritual nature of the universe, this understanding had been lost sight of, buried in material mindedness of idolatrous generations. This precious and priceless spiritual understanding had to be rediscovered. And because of his spiritual mindedness, Abram had been chosen by God to be the discoverer.

Until his meeting with Melchizedek, Abram, the spiritual explorer, had been alone in his divine adventure. Now he had a friend who understood his high calling and fostered it. He knew that God had sent him on a holy mission, and he was faithful to his trust. But the higher and holier concept of Deity and of his relationship with God, which had been revealed to him in his association with the royal priest, increased his faith. What before had been a simple trust in God became a deep toned spiritual convic-

tion which transcends blind faith. So great was Abram's faith in God and in God's promises that his name has become synonymous with faith.

What is faith? The great writer of the book of Hebrews defined it thus:

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.— Heb.11:1.

Only faith can guarantee the blessings that we hope for, or prove the existence of the realities that at present remain unseen.— Heb.11:1 (JM).

Faith is the substance of all the things we ever hoped for. It was this spiritual faith that enabled Abram to be obedient to all God's commands — some of which must have seemed strange, even to him. Through faith he walked with God, expressing dignity and spiritual authority — the dominion of heaven on earth. And even among the idolatrous people of the land of Canaan, he was known as a mighty prince among men (Gen.23:6).

Chapter XIX

CONFLICT BETWEEN THE TWO COVENANTS

Individuals often reach a cross-road in their development, and questions arise within themselves as to which way to turn. Abram had reached, not a cross-road, but an apparent impasse. He was confused. When he first glimpsed the spiritual nature of God's creation, he heard the divine promise:

All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it,
and to thy seed for ever.— Gen.13:15.

It was natural that Abram accepted God's promise that he would father a great nation and that his seed would inherit the land. But there was no seed of Abram! His bewildered senses cried out: "To me thou hast given no seed" (Gen.15:3). In answer to his anguished cry, the Lord came to him in a vision, saying:

Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward.— Gen.15:1.

Once before the divine *Ego* had identified Itself to Abram as his own mind or ego (See pp. 234-235). But now for the first time we hear the enunciation of the name of the Supreme Being that is to echo and re-echo through-out the Bible. Here God identified Himself to Abram and to us, as *I AM, The Divine Esse, The One Who Is!* The name *I AM* embodies our divine Father's tender assurance: "*I am* with thee; *I am* your shield; *I am* your protector; *I am* your strength; *I am* your ability; *I am your very being; I am your I am.* This is my name, my divine nature in man. The power of my Fatherhood will father the child of promise through whom thy seed shall spring forth and bless the whole earth."

But Abram appeared not to have heard the enunciation of God's holy name. He did not glimpse the meaning or the power of the divine message. Consequently the idea of divine Sonship that God

was waiting to reveal to him did not unfold or develop in his consciousness. His fearful, mesmerized senses continued to question:

What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus?
And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir.— Gen.15:2,3.

In the ancient Orient if a man died and had no male heir, his estate was inherited by his chief steward or by the oldest male slave born in his house. Abram's concern for the posterity God had promised him was not without cause. So God renewed His promise to Abram, leaving no doubt that Abram's own seed would be his heir and inherit the land. God said to him:

This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir.— Gen.15:4.

God then spoke to Abram's scientific senses, skilled in the celestial sciences:

Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be.

And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness [faithfulness].— Gen.15:5,6.

God then reminded Abram that He was the same God who had directed him to leave his homeland and had given him a new home in a new land:

And he said unto him, I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it.— Gen.15:7.

Again we hear the *I AM*'s loving assurance: *I was with thee, I am with thee, I will be with thee*. But again, mesmerized by fear that his mission might not be accomplished, Abram did not really hear what the *I AM* was declaring to him and in him. He seemed to be totally unaware that God — Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omniactive Being itself — was saying: *I AM* your I am; *I AM* the Actor, you are the action; *I* perform the thing that is appointed for you.

The idea of God as The Great *I AM* and of himself as the individual idea through which the *I AM* expresses its mighty power seemed to be beyond Abram's comprehension. A note in *The Interpreter's Bible* is of utmost importance to us, for it tells something of what God was really saying to Abram — a wondrous *something* that we, like Abram, fail to comprehend:

If the name of the God I worship is *I AM*, it seems to follow that only through what *I am* can I worship Him aright.

(*IB*, Vol. I Expos. p. 875.)

Abram missed this point completely. Immediately after God's mighty enunciation of the divine nature expressed in man, we hear the little "i" of personal sense begging God for further assurance that he and his seed would inherit the land:

And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?— Gen.15:8.

Lord God! Where did we first hear of this anthropomorphic, manlike concept of the Supreme Being? In the second chapter of Genesis, where we found creation depicted in the likeness of a finite Deity — a manlike concept of God who created all things out of the dust of the ground, a God who loves and hates, who blesses and curses, whose creation is at enmity with the Creator and with itself. (See. p. 98.) The dual name *Lord God, or Jehovah God*, reveals a confused concept of Creator and creation, a concept which tends to belittle the Infinite and to finitize man. A prayer with such a concept of Deity in mind would attempt to bring God down to man instead of lifting man up to God.

Abram made his prayer to this primitive manlike concept of Deity instead of to *El Elyon*, the God he had learned to know and love. He seemed to have lost sight of the nature of the Most High God, The Superior One — the Creator, possessor of heaven and earth, dispenser of divine blessings on earth — the advanced understanding of Deity revealed to him through his association with Melchizedek. And he failed to comprehend the *I AM*, the new name and divine nature God had revealed to him.

Mesmerized by fear, Abram appealed to a man-like God and so failed to think of himself as a Godlike man. Too often a sense of fear causes one to humanize one's concept of Deity and to

materialize and limit one's concept of one's self. And so it was with Abram at this time. Instead of standing still and waiting for the divine promises to be fulfilled in God's own way, he fearfully asked for a material sign as a confirmation of God's promises.

A material sign was forthcoming. But God, who is Spirit, could never have devised anything so grossly material as the suggestion which came to Abram. It was the voice of the land, not the voice of God, which Abram heard. And this voice directed Abram to prepare for the signing of a covenant with God after the manner of the Oriental practice of sealing a compact between two individuals. (See Gen.15:9-11.)

According to the custom of the land, a sacrifice would be prepared by slaying animals, dividing them into two parts to symbolize the two parts of the contract, and placing them on an altar. The persons making the contract met between the two parts of the sacrifice, their presence symbolical of making the two parts one, thus making sure of the conditions of their agreement and sealing the compact.

Abram prepared the sacrifice and then waited for a sign whereby he would know that the Lord God had ratified the covenant, making it sure. But no answer from the Lord God was forthcoming. The sacrifice became stale, and when the vultures descended upon it Abram drove them away and waited patiently for a sign from the Lord God. But there was no divine presence to sanctify the sacrifice or ratify this covenant. The Covenant of God with man is not in two parts; it is *one*, and God makes all the conditions. Man's part in this holy Covenant is to be in conformity with and obedient to the terms of the agreement.

And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep
fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness
fell upon him.— Gen.15:12.

Abram had been asking for a material sign, and a material sign was what he got. The evidence which came to him in the deep sleep was indeed an horror of great darkness, for he foresaw the material history of his descendants — history which included four centuries of mental and physical bondage in Egypt. He saw his children's children coming up out of Egypt with great material substance, but he saw no spiritual light. (See Gen.15:13-16.) When this vision had passed he saw:

... a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.— Gen.15:17.

The burning lamp symbolized to Abram the presence of the Lord God. In a primitive sort of way this indicated to Abram that the Lord God had confirmed and sealed the covenant which he had made with him. But what does this experience reveal to us?

The *deep sleep* which fell upon Abram was the same deep sleep which fell upon Adam — the mesmeric sense which descends upon us in times of confusion and fear. The words *deep sleep*, in the Hebrew, mean literally *a trance*. What Abram saw while in this hypnotic trance is comparable to what a necromancer or a consultant with familiar spirits might have told him of the future. A voice of doom predicted that his seed would be strangers in a land that was not theirs. Horrible slavery was pictured, and the dark prophecy showed four centuries of unremitting affliction. He was shown his own death, not his life. He saw his descendants coming up out of Egypt under the cloud of occultism: "For," said the voice, "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Gen.15:16), not fully understood and not fully destroyed! He saw the iniquity of the Amorites — the use of hidden mental means of accomplishing evil — menacing the free thoughts of his descendants. In his deep sleep Abram saw this iniquity to be as real and powerful four hundred years hence as it appeared to his mesmerized senses at that moment. He saw the "smoking furnace" of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen.16:17; 19:28). Slavery, death, destruction! Truly, "an horror of great darkness [had fallen] upon him."

But it was only a dream! Had the Word of God been heard by Abram at that time, it would have awakened him and told him of the glory of these people who left Egypt at God's command, whose great leader, Moses, overcame the occultism of the magicians and soothsayers of Pharaoh's court with the knowledge and power of God, and who led his people — Abram's seed — through the Red Sea on dry ground. The Word of God would have told him of the great nation whose law was the Ten Commandments and who, in the midst of deceit, occultism, necromancy, spiritualism, witchcraft, and the like, kept its thoughts fixed on the God of Abraham; a people who, even when their leaders became weak and vain and their greatness as a nation began to wane, guarded the knowledge of God; and even in captivity in Assyria and in Babylon wrought

miracles, converted pagan kings, and found safety in the fiery furnace and in the lions' den! The Word of God, which is perfect in knowledge, would have told him of that greatest of all his "seed" — the man Jesus — who healed the sick, reformed the sinner, walked on the water, and raised the dead; who proved the invincible power of the God of Abraham, and brought forth his own body from a sepulcher. The divine Word would have told him that this precious son proved what Abram was even then being asked to prove: namely, that God is the only Father of man, and that man is the Son of God. The Word of God would have told him of Paul, and of the early Christians who were Abraham's seed by adoption. And the Word of God would have told him of that great army of Christians who, today, are going forth armed with the knowledge of God and of the Son of God to rout the forces of evil, to silence the lies of a sensuous philosophy, to outshine the dark sayings of necromancy and its mesmeric influences, and to neutralize the power of occultism, that the knowledge of the God of Abraham might fill the minds of men and cover the earth as the waters cover the sea.

But Abram was asleep! And there was none to answer, for there was none to hear. God does not reveal spiritual facts to His people through a spiritualistic seance or hypnotic trance. But after the darkness had passed and it was *day*, spiritual enlightenment returned to Abram. Then *he heard the Word of God*.

The Covenant of the Land

In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates:

The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites,

And the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims,

And the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.— Gen.15:18-21.

When he was awake, Abram heard what God was really saying to him. And he saw that God had given him and his seed complete spiritual authority over all the elements of wickedness

represented by the people whose tribal names are synonymous with necromancy, sensuality, witchcraft, and the gods of mythology, "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." Between these two rivers was the greatest concentration of occult powers in the world. And Abram and his seed were given dominion over them! Not domination over the people of these lands, but dominion over the dominant carnal mental powers and the abominations that have become synonymous with their names. This promise was fulfilled. Abram expressed dominion, spiritual authority, wherever he went. And in centuries to come his seed were respected by neighboring nations because they knew that these people were protected and defended by a divine power and presence which wrought miracles for the people of God.

God's Purpose For Abram Did Not Fail

Again and again the carnal mind (enmity against God) attempted to superimpose its pictures upon the scene of Abram's experience. This evil influence seemed, at times, to confuse his spiritual senses, to blind and to bind him with human misconceptions. In Abram's record we see a moving picture of the opposition of materialism in all its forms to the fulfillment of his great mission. But even when, at times, his faith seemed to fail, God's purpose for him did not fail. God's will was firmly established in him and would not let him go. Each time fear seemed to weaken his faith, a sense of God's purpose strengthened him and kept him in the way of holiness. Hence, he never lost his dominion.

Abram was required to make his human life an illustration of man's likeness to God and let his Godlikeness shine so brightly that it would outshine the darkness of materialism and dissolve the dark visions of superstition, the dark images of paganism, the dark sentences of the carnal mind, the dark assumptions of occultism.

Abram's task was stupendous. He must walk consistently in the straight and narrow way of scientific understanding. He must disregard the evidence of the material senses and abide strictly in the spiritual, scientific knowledge of God and of the spiritual nature of God's universe — the first and primary lesson he was taught in his search for his city which hath foundations — the first lesson we are taught in our Bible.

Like the modern physicists or scientists of our day who, through years of scientific research and discovery, favor a spiritual interpretation of the universe and discount the materialistic view of creation held by physicists of centuries gone by (See p. 8), so Abram, the modern scientist of his day, through divine revelation and discovery, favored a spiritual interpretation of the universe including man and discounted the materialistic view of creation held by the people of his generation. Abram gradually forsook the matter-oriented concepts which had limited his demonstrations of divine power and found himself in agreement with the spiritual facts of creation revealed in the New Covenant (Gen.1:1-31; 2:1-3).

If anyone doubts the magnitude of Abram's task, let him read closely the record of this man of God and compare it with his own spiritual achievements.

Abram's task was doubly difficult because, except for Melchizedek, he stood alone in his divine adventure on the threshold of an unexplored new world. Not even his beloved wife Sarai at first understood the spiritual significance of his life. Some years later Sarai did become a part of Abram's Covenant understanding. In fact, Abram's story is really the story of *Abram and Sarai*. Their life together illustrates the fulfillment of the spiritual Marriage Covenant in its divine sense of completeness — the oneness of the male and female of God's creating, which reflects the compound nature of God as Father-Mother.

Chapter XX

AN ALLEGORY OF THE TWO COVENANTS

Ten years had passed since Abram first came into the land of Canaan with God's promise:

I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing:

And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.— Gen.12:2,3.

Abram had found his place in the land of Canaan. He had prospered in everything he had done. He was truly blessed. His progress in the understanding of God and of the divine nature was marked. But no seed of Abram had come forth to inherit the promised blessing. Then we learn that Abram's beloved Sarai was barren. Abram's faith was sorely tested. However, it was God who was testing his faith, preparing him spiritually for the great miracle of grace that was to come.

In the unfolding of Abram's spiritual journeying, Sarai's barrenness indicates to us that Abram's consciousness was barren, or bereft, of the understanding of the nature and power of God's Motherhood. Abram, whose name means *exalted father*, understood in some measure the nature of the Fatherhood of God and his relationship with his heavenly Father. But he appeared to be totally unaware of Sarai's relationship with God and of the fact that God had inscribed in her His divine nature as Mother. Manhood generally did not then and does not now seem to realize that God created both man *and* woman in His own image and likeness: "Male and female created he them" (Gen.1:27). Nor does manhood seem to understand that if man and woman, the male and female of God's creating, are made in God's image and likeness — and they are — then the nature of God must be compound. God must be and is both Father and Mother!

This understanding of God is set forth clearly in the very beginning of our Bible, where the nature of God as *Elohim* is revealed.

Elohim, a uni-plural name, is the Hebrew name for the Supreme Being which reveals the nature of God as Father-Mother. (See p. 26.)

Abram had not yet attained the advanced but primitive understanding of the complete nature of God as Father-Mother; nor had he even glimpsed the correlative fact that man and woman are co-equal. The male of the species does not yield readily on this point. Abram was no exception. But yield he must. This is the lesson which is now before him. And he learned it the hard way.

As much as Abram loved his wife, he did not realize that his marriage covenant symbolized the spiritual Marriage Covenant, the union of man and woman as co-equal partners, with neither subservient to the other. The nature of God's Motherhood, which *Elohim* had inscribed in Sarai, was hidden from Abram. Hence his understanding of the complete nature of God was spiritually immature. But God had determined that Abram should learn this vitally important lesson.

Even to this day mortal manhood rebels at learning this great lesson — a lesson which, when understood, will bring to light in individual human consciousness the complete divine nature of men and women and the spiritual authority which goes with this understanding — authority which is the dominion of heaven on earth. Abram apparently had not begun to comprehend this divine completeness. He did not realize that he was incomplete, lacking the understanding of the Motherhood of God, the power of divine conception. We know not how many private conversations between husband and wife had taken place before Sarai made a suggestion which, when carried out, changed the course of world history.

Sarai and Hagar

And Sarai said unto Abram, Behold now, the Lord hath restrained me from bearing: I pray thee, go in unto my maid; it may be that I may obtain children by her. And Abram hearkened to the voice of Sarai.—

Gen.16:2.

In those days a barren wife was permitted, even encouraged, to give her bondmaid to her husband. And a child born of that union

became the child of the wife by adoption, and not the child of the bondmaid. Sarai succumbed to the subtle suggestion of the serpent that an Oriental custom of the times be adhered to in order that God's promises might be fulfilled. Abram readily agreed to Sarai's suggestion.

The tempter probably caused Sarai to reason thus within herself: "I am standing in my husband's way, thwarting God's will for him. The selfless thing for me to do is to give my maid to him so that he might have a son. After all it is my fault, not his, that God's promise to him has not been fulfilled." This suggestion was a not so subtle attempt of the serpent, the carnal mind, to prove that sensuous womanhood, in the figure of Hagar, was better equipped than was spiritual womanhood, in the figure of Sarai, to bring forth the child through whom a great nation was to emerge — a nation in which the knowledge of God would be the guiding light.

When reading the account of Sarai's action in giving her maid to Abram as his wife, it is not immediately apparent that this was also an attempt of the serpent to obscure the compound nature of God and to break the spiritual Marriage Covenant of Abram and Sarai. But this could not be. They were one in their demonstration and exemplification of the compound nature of God and of man.

Hagar, an Egyptian bondwoman, showed her unreadiness to mother the child of promise, for when she knew she was to bear the heir of Abram, she became haughty and despised her mistress. Hagar was a sturdy, independent, self-assertive Bedouin woman. She ridiculed the spiritual idea of womanhood which Sarai exemplified and scorned Sarai's nobility.

When she saw that she had conceived, her mistress was despised in her eyes.

And Sarai said unto Abram, My wrong be upon thee: I have given my maid unto thy bosom; and when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her eyes: the Lord judge between me and thee.

And Abram said unto Sarai, Behold, thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee. And when Sarai dealt hardly with her, she fled from her face.—

Gen.16:4-6.

Those who might feel that neither Sarai nor Abram dealt justly with Hagar will be interested in the following addenda concerning the Sumerian law governing such cases:

One of the criteria by which a society can fairly be judged is the position which it accords to women. In Sumer monogamy was the law of the land, and though in practice this was modified by the toleration of concubinage, yet the status of the legitimate wife was so well protected that the principle was not seriously impugned. . . . A barren wife might present to her husband one of her own slaves as a concubine; on giving birth to a child the slave-woman automatically became free, but was by no means the equal of her mistress; indeed, should she rashly aim at becoming the rival, the mistress could reduce her again to slavery and sell her or otherwise get rid of her from the house. The domestic sentence involved banishment from the city. The history of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar is an illustration of this, for in every detail Abraham was not acting weakly or arbitrarily but was putting into practice the old Sumerian law in which he had been brought up.

(Dr. C. Leonard Woolley, *The Sumerians*, pp.100, 103.)

Sarai admitted that she had been wrong in giving Hagar to Abram. She learned that taking matters into her own hands instead of asking God for directions resulted in sadness for everyone concerned. But Abram was also at fault — not according to the law, but because he should have stood fast and waited for God to unfold His divine purpose instead of attempting to fulfill God's promise through human expediency. Abram's faith in God's disposal of events had been temporarily weakened. But he was quick to acknowledge his wrong. He did not defend Hagar or himself, nor did he accuse Sarai, as may be seen in his statement:

Thy maid is in thy hand; do to her as it pleaseth thee.— Gen.16:6.

Abram and Sarai were disciplined by God. But what of Hagar? Though she knew not the God of Abram and Sarai, God knew her. And the all-loving Father-Mother God both disciplined and comforted her:

And the angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, by the fountain in the way to Shur,

And he said, Hagar, Sarai's maid, whence camest thou? and whither wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress Sarai.

And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Return to thy mistress, and submit thyself under her hands.

And the angel of the Lord said unto her, I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude.

And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction.

And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren [live at odds with all his kinsmen, NEB].— Gen.16:7-12.

The fact that the angel of the lord called Hagar *Sarai's maid*, told her that she was not to think of herself as Abram's wife. She was told plainly that she must return not to Abram, but to Sarai, and submit herself to her mistress. But the angel also assured her that this son, whom she was to name Ishmael, would be her very own, and not Sarai's, and that both she and her son would be cared for. Through His angel, God told Hagar that her son would not be the heir of Abram nor of Abram's Covenant with God. He would dwell in the presence of his brethren and would prosper — he would have a land of his own where he would have authority.

In the name *Ishmael*, a Hebrew name meaning *God hears*, Hagar glimpsed something of the nature of the Supreme Being as the *All-hearing God*, the God who hears and answers our need even before we ask Him. Her momentary glimpse of the divine nature opened her ears to hear the voice of the angel of God's presence bringing to her the message of the Comforter.

And she called the Lord who was speaking to her by the name of El-Roi (that is God of a vision), for she said, "Have I indeed seen God and still live after the vision?"

That is why men call the well Beer-lahai-roi (that is, *The Well of the Living*).— Gen.16:13,14 (NEB).

In her acknowledgment of Deity as *Thou God Seest me*, Hagar glimpsed, though faintly, something of the nature of God as the All-seeing Presence which watches over all. And she was comforted, and for the moment, humbled in this divine Presence. Hagar was obedient to the angel's voice and returned to Hebron and to her mistress.

The Birth of Ishmael

And Hagar bare Abram a son; and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael.

And Abram was fourscore and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram.— Gen.16:15,16.

Abram had a son, but Ishmael was not the child of promise. Although it was customary for the child of the bondmaid to become the child of the barren wife by adoption, Sarai did not adopt Ishmael. He was his mother's child, as the angel of the Lord had said.

Twelve years passed, during which time Ishmael came to think of himself as Abram's heir and joint heir with Abram in the Covenant. Abram too seemed to think of Ishmael as the child of promise — the promised seed who would inherit the promises and in whom all nations of the earth would be blessed. There is no record of any divine unfoldment in Abram's life during these twelve years. His spiritual journeying seemed to be at a standstill. He appeared to be satisfied that, with the birth of Ishmael, his mission on earth had been accomplished. And he rested! But this rest was not the Sabbath Rest of divine completeness, as Abram soon learned.

Chapter XXI

THE COVENANT OF GODLIKENESS

Let's turn back the calendar of Abram's life for a moment and rediscover the divine purpose which had launched this man of God on his divine mission. His conviction that God, Spirit, was the Creator of the universe had led him out of Chaldea — a land typical of gross materialism and of carnal mindedness — the land of occultism. His search for "a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God," reached the vital point of discovery when God revealed to him the spiritual nature of the universe.

Although Abram acknowledged freely that God was the Creator of the universe, he resisted the fact that God was also the Creator of man. This understanding was essential to Abram's spiritual progress. In fact, the understanding of God, Spirit, as the Creator, Source, and Cause of all creation was the keystone of the arch of all Abram's spiritual building. However, this essential element of his unfoldment was dormant. He was ninety-nine years old before the spiritual scientific sense of God as the Creator of the universe *including man* matured in him sufficiently to dispel the mist of material knowledge concerning the divine origin of man.

As previously stated, Abram had some understanding of the nature of the divine Fatherhood of the Creator, as the meaning of his own name or nature — *exalted father* — indicates. But he had not yet learned that God is the Father of man, a profound truth Christ Jesus taught centuries later. (See Matt.23:9.) Nor had he learned that it is the power of the Motherhood of God which conceives and brings forth those children who call God Father. He had yet to learn the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God. But this lack of understanding of the complete nature of *Elohim* was soon to be corrected.

Twice The Great *I AM* had spoken to Abram, proclaiming the power of the Divine *Ego* in man — Almighty power that performs all things that are appointed for man. (See p. 267.) Had Abram comprehended what the *I AM* proclaimed, he would never have fathered a child by his wife's bondmaid in order that God's promise

of an heir be fulfilled. He would have waited for God's purpose to be fulfilled in God's own way. Now The Great *I AM* speaks again. And this time Abram listens!

God Makes His Covenant With Abram

Hear the words of the *I AM* proclaiming the divine nature of God in man to be Almighty — All-mighty:

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the Lord appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.— Gen.17:1,2.

Though Abram knew it not, and few individuals in time past or in time present realize it, the *I AM* proclaims not only the nature of the Fatherhood of God and the divine Sonship of man, but also the nature of the Motherhood of the Supreme Being — the nature of God which is Almighty. This is the keynote of God's Covenant with man. The patriarch Job, who knew God as *The Almighty*, understood the all-might of God's Motherhood, who, he said, "performeth the thing that is appointed for me" (Job 23:14.)

The term *Almighty God* — translated from the Hebrew *El Shaddi*, meaning *The Breasted One*, *The Nourisher* — is a term through which we may comprehend the nature of God's Motherhood. The nature of Deity as *El Shaddi* reveals the all-might of the Creator, Omnipotence in operation, the God who knows all and performs all things for Her people, and in whom all the divine attributes are concentrated. (See *The Companion Bible*, Ap.4,p.6)

The record declares emphatically that this new-old concept of the nature of the Supreme Being *appeared* to Abram. He began to comprehend this advanced, but primitive, understanding of Deity. It was as though The Almighty, in tender loving-kindness, said to Abram: "Son, if you would father the child of promise, you must understand that God is the Father *and* Mother of man. Sarai's barrenness is but the evidence of your own barren understanding of the nature of the divine Motherhood, which brings forth after its own kind and is almighty to perform all things. Sarai reflects this divine Motherhood. You must understand that I have engraved

this divine nature in her just as I have indelibly written the nature of divine Fatherhood in you.”

El Shaddi had a further message for Abram which embodied the law of the New Covenant: “Walk before me and be thou perfect.” This *Me* is the *I AM*, demanding: “Walk ever mindful that *I AM* your I am, your divine *Ego*, the very *I* of your being. Identify yourself aright by learning how to say *I am*, and you will walk in the way of holiness and be perfect.”

The understanding of the nature of God as *I AM* brings man very close to God. When we learn to say *I* and *I am* aright, a newer, more spiritual concept of our divine being unfolds in us, giving us a larger, more dynamic sense of our abilities and capabilities — our God-being.

Because the *I AM* is *Being*, everything that exists is saying *I am*, thus identifying itself with *The Great I AM*, divine Being, with the Life which is God. When the bird sings, it is saying *I am*. When the flower opens, it is saying *I am*. When the dog barks joyously, it is saying *I am*. When each one of us breathes, we are saying *I am*. When we think, talk, walk, work, play, we are saying *I am*. As we learn to say *I am* aright, we will be perfect.

The New Covenant records the *I AM*'s demand thus: “Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” — the desires of your lower nature will not have dominion over you. To walk before God and be perfect is to live in the Spirit, not in materialism, hence, not subject to material conditions. To walk before God is to be ever conscious of God's presence. To walk before God is to walk in the way of holiness, in the path of righteousness, and thus avoid the pitfalls of evil which, sooner or later, engulf one in degradation. To walk before God is to be dedicated to doing God's will — having no will of one's own. To walk before God is to live in humble obedience to divine law, which supplies our every need by causing the visible manifestation of good to come forth from the invisible spiritual reality of all that God has made. To walk before God is to be conscious of the dominion of heaven on earth, to be mindful of the divine presence everywhere.

Think what it means to be always mindful of God's presence, to be conscious of walking with God everywhere we go. There is no evil in God's presence; hence no evil can come into our presence when we walk with God. There is no limitation or lack in God's

presence, no sorrow or sickness, no fear or danger; hence none of these things can invade our presence when we are mindful of the divine presence. The Psalmist sang: "In thy presence is fulness of joy. At thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore" (Ps.16:11). What greater joy can we have than to walk with God!

Perfection is Godlikeness — like God. The word *perfect* has a compound meaning and embodies the sense of both *being* and *doing*. To be perfect means to be complete, whole, entire; to be full of integrity and truth; without blemish; that which is perfect has all its parts or elements entire, full, whole. However, to be perfect also means to do, to act, to perform, to finish; that which is perfect has all its properties, characteristics, and wholeness developed to the fullest degree and is not lacking in any essential element, quantity, or development.

The first time the word *perfect* appears in the Bible is in the story of Noah: "Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations" (Gen.6:9). Now, in God's demand that Abram be perfect, we find the first commandment concerning perfection. Throughout the Bible we hear this command as a kind of theme song of the prophets, kings, Christ Jesus, and the apostles. Moses demanded: "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God" (Deut.18:13). David observed: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace" (Ps.37:37). Solomon admonished: "Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments" (I Ki.8:61). Christ Jesus decreed: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt.5:48). St. Paul declares: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" — that he "may be efficient and equipped for good work of every kind" (II Tim.3:16,17 KJV, NEB). James, the brother of Jesus, besought all mankind: "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing" (Jas.1:4).

In the divine demand of The Almighty God: "Walk before me and be thou perfect," Abram was required to understand the complete nature of God as Father *and* Mother. He was to live in this full realization of the divine nature and to be completely operative

in expressing the divine completeness — in manifesting the majesty and dominion of the Father, who sets His beloved child on high, and in demonstrating the all-might of the Mother, who performs all things for Her children. It was as though *El Shaddi* said to Abram: “Express this divine completeness. But remember, you cannot do this without Sarai. Together you are representative of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of the Supreme Being. Realize this momentous Truth, and this realization will develop in your consciousness the image and likeness of Divinity and will bring forth into your experience the child of promise.”

But Abram could not seem to grasp this truth. He was convinced that Sarai’s barrenness barred her from being any part of the Covenant promise concerning the child of promise. And his mind seemed closed to any idea which even suggested that Ishmael was not the promised heir.

It is worthwhile here to consider the word *barren*: Anything that is not obedient to the divine command, *Be fruitful*, is barren — unprofitable, non-productive, yielding no intellectual stimulation. It were well for each one to contemplate the problem which confronted Abram — the lack within himself which manifested itself as Sarai’s barrenness.

When our land is unproductive, when our efforts are not fruitful, when our business is not successful, when we are confronted on all sides with incompleteness — we should seek out the barrenness, or lack, within ourselves. For the law is that we bring forth that which is within us. The Motherhood of God expressed in each one of us causes us to be fruitful in good works, having ability to conceive ideas and the power to bring them forth. The all-might of *Elohim*, the Motherhood of God in all Her strength and power, the Creator putting Omnipotence into operation, performs this vital function for each one of us. When our activity is unprofitable, when our land is barren, we need to learn more of the nature of the Almighty Motherhood of God, which causes all creation to conceive and to bring forth fruit after their own kind.

Although there seemed to be no response in Abram to the voice of his divine Mother, the power of the Word was working in him. The irresistible Spirit of God moved upon the waters — stirred the elements of Abram’s consciousness — causing him to be receptive to the divine message. And we read: “He fell on his face”

(Gen.17:3). He bowed low in reverent humility before the revelation of the nature of God's Motherhood — *El Shaddi, The Almighty God*.

Of special interest to us here is a new interpretation of the Hebrew name *El Shaddi* as *God-All-Knowing*. This interpretation in no way conflicts with the translation *The Almighty God*. Rather it confirms the annunciation "I, The All-Knowing, AM All-Mighty."

Immediately the nature of the *I AM as All-Mighty and All-Knowing* dawned in Abram's consciousness, we read that "God talked with him." God, *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe including man, spoke to Abram! And Abram heard!

This is the first time the name *Elohim, God*, has been introduced into Abram's unfoldment. Humble before the revelation of the nature of The Almighty, the Motherhood of God, as All-knowing, his consciousness became receptive to the unfoldment of the highest concept of the Supreme Being revealed in the Bible. The understanding of the Triune divine Principle of the universe began to dawn in him. This revelation marks the beginning of Abram's understanding of the spiritual significance of his Covenant with God and the magnitude of his divine adventure.

Hear again the trumpet call which awakened Abram to a higher, holier understanding of God and of man in God's likeness, possessing God's power and authority. Note the continued insistence of The Almighty that Abram identify the "I" of his being with *The Great I AM, The All-knowing Mind*. Feel the power of the *I AM* in all God's talks with Abram. In this enunciation we hear the divine demand that we identify the "I" of our being with the *I AM*. Never ignore or pass lightly over God's use of the pronoun "I," for therein we hear the trumpet call which strikes the keynote of our divine mission.

I am the Almighty God; walk before me [be ever conscious of my presence], and be thou perfect.

And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and I will multiply thee exceedingly.

And I will make thee exceeding fruitful.—

Gen.17:1,2,6.

We hear in these words an echo of the climax of creation, stated in the first chapter of Genesis:

And God [*Elohim*] said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion . . . over all the earth . . . Male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it; and have dominion . . .

And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.— Gen.1:26-28,31.

Thus we see that the original Covenant of Godlikeness and the Covenant of Perfection which God made with Abram are one and the same. God proclaimed the provisions of the New Covenant and called upon Abram to perform his part. *Elohim*, the Triune divine Principle, the All-inclusive Creator, the Father and Mother of the universe including man, has spoken!

Abram's New Name Abraham

Now note how the *I AM*, Omniscient, All-knowing divine Mind Itself, speaks in Abram's consciousness:

And God talked with him, saying,
As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations.

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.

And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee and kings shall come out of thee.

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.— Gen.17:3-7.

The higher, holier concept of God as *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe, had not only elevated Abram's concept of the nature of God as Mother, but had also lifted his concept of the nature of God as Father. And immediately his concept of himself was changed. Through this higher concept of the nature of the

Supreme Being, a holier concept of man in God's image and likeness appeared to him. Abram's advanced understanding of man in God's likeness is confirmed by the divine proclamation which bestowed on him his new name:

Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.— Gen.17:5.

No longer was he to think of himself as Abram, an exalted human father. He must understand that God is the Father of man. And in this understanding he would comprehend, in some measure, the transcendent truth which Christ Jesus taught, namely, that man is born,

. . . not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.— John 1:13.

Not all at once was Abram, or Abraham, able to comprehend that man is "not born by fleshly desire of a human father, not dependent on the course of nature nor on any impulse or plan of man, but is the offspring of God Himself" (NEB, JBP). But his thought began to expand to behold something of the divine nature and origin of man. Through the absolute statement of the Covenant: *Be ye perfect*, or *Ye be perfect*, this great but humble man began to understand that he was Godlike — like God, like Mind, or Spirit — and not like Adam.

In this unfoldment of the divine nature, Abram began to comprehend, in some measure, that the *I AM* was his mind or ego, and that he was empowered to speak and act with the divine authority of *The Great I AM*. Further, he glimpsed the spiritual fact, although not completely understanding it, that his seed would be the offspring of God.

Then Abraham, the new man, heard God, *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe including man, reaffirm his possession of the land and of his dominion therein:

And I will give thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.— Gen.17:8.

Abraham was given dominion in the land of Canaan — dominion not only in the land itself, but also spiritual authority over the gross materialism of the land — the enchantments, necromancy, sorcery, witchcraft, and other forms of carnality that enslave the minds of men. Further, Abraham heard the promise repeated that his seed would inherit the land for an everlasting possession, but with this irrevocable provision: *I will be their God!*

When the *I AM* says *I WILL* — that is the law which can never be revoked! God's will stands forever! If these people turned from God, if they forsook the Covenant of Godlikeness, they would be cut off from the provisions and the blessings of the Covenant.

A Material Token of the New Covenant

At this time, as if to deny the revelation that had come to Abraham, the tempter superimposed a picture of the Old Covenant and its provisions upon the imagery of his thought. It was as though “a mist went up from the earth” (Gen.2:6). A confused, materialistic interpretation of the Covenant of Perfection and Godlikeness dimmed and blurred Abraham's vision of God and of his relationship with God, which had been so clear moments before. How like the records of the New Covenant and of the Old (Gen.1:1-31; 2:1-3 and Gen.2: 4-26; 3:1-24). One seems to merge into the other as though the second were a continuation of the first. So now another covenant is presented to Abraham as “a *token* of the covenant betwixt me and you” (Gen.17:11). One has only to read this second covenant to see how utterly different it is from the Covenant of spiritual Perfection which God made with Abraham:

This is my covenant which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.

He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised; and my

covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant.

And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.—

Gen.17:10-14.

The same difference exists between God's Covenant with man and this spurious counterfeit that exists between the spiritual record of creation in the first chapter of Genesis and the material picture which is presented immediately thereafter in the second and third chapters. One is spiritual, the other material. One is filled with the goodness of God, the other partakes of the nature of both good and evil. One exalts the spiritual nature of man, the other emphasizes the sensuous nature of a mortal.

The Covenant of Perfection with its spiritual conditions and rewards had been plainly stated: "Walk before me, and be thou perfect" — Walk ever mindful of my presence, the presence of Spirit, the Presence of Mind, and so be entire, complete, accomplished, and able to bring all things to fruition. Abraham had heard this message clearly. He knew that if he walked in the Spirit, he would not fulfill the lust of the flesh — the desires of his lower nature would not be made manifest in his experience. Thus God's Covenant of Godlikeness and spiritual Perfection could be established in him. And yet, immediately thereafter, the serpent, with cunning subtlety, insinuated its suggestions into his thoughts, as though saying: "This is the way the Covenant of Perfection must be kept: Every man child shall be circumcised. This is a *token* of the Covenant of Perfection, the *symbol* that each one has been spiritually purified and brought into the Covenant." The Almighty God did not say or even intimate this, for God, who is Spirit, could never have sent forth a suggestion of physicality so unlike Himself. Further, The Almighty God, *El Shaddi*, the Motherhood of God, would not have left womanhood without a token or symbol of the Covenant.

Circumcision is practiced in modern surgery as a sanitary method and in no way determines one's spirituality or materiality. The Apostle Paul declared emphatically:

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.— 1 Cor.7:19.

Why did Abraham accept the idea that this ancient rite could be even a token of the Covenant between God and man? Some have projected the theory that this was a way, all be it a very material way, in which the people of God would be separated from the ungodly. However, circumcision was practiced by ancient peoples as a religious ceremony long before Abraham's time. The more probable reason Abraham accepted circumcision as a token of the Covenant was that it was a way in which Ishmael could be brought into the Covenant with God — whether or not he walked in the way of holiness. Or so Abraham thought.

The tempter used Abraham's fierce human love for Ishmael as a wedge through which to insinuate the conditions of the Old Covenant into Abraham's thinking and experience and thereby to belittle the wondrous Covenant of Perfection which God had made with him. And Abraham, to whom the glorious statement of the Covenant had just been given, was so immersed in the mesmeric picture of the Old Covenant and its token of circumcision, that he lost sight of the great significance of what *El Shaddi* had said to him. But above the voice of the tempter the divine voice is heard, as though saying: "Listen and understand: What you are hearing is but a human misconception of the requirements of the Covenant of Godlikeness and spiritual Perfection. Harken to my Word. It concerns *Sarai*, not Ishmael!"

Sarai's New Name Sarah

And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be.

And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. — Gen.17:15,16.

God was insistent that Abraham acknowledge Sarai's place in the Covenant. What Abraham did not seem to understand was that the revelation of the nature of the Almighty God regenerated Sarai, as it had regenerated him, and gave to her her new name *Sarah*. No longer was he to think of her as Sarai, a lovely princess. Her new name and divine nature was *Sarah* — *mother of nations*.

Through her the nature and power of God's Motherhood was to be exemplified. For the revelation of the nature of The Almighty — the mighty power of the Motherhood of God, who performs all things for Her people — had removed the reproach of Sarai's barrenness and equipped her with power from on High to be *Sarah, a mother of nations*.

Through the bond of union called marriage, God had made His Covenant with both Abraham and Sarah. The fulfillment of the Covenant would come to them through a higher understanding of the significance of the spiritual Marriage Covenant, typical of the oneness of man and woman, expressing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

The revelation of God as Father-Mother reveals and establishes the holiness and completeness of the marriage covenant, in which husband and wife go forward together in spiritual unfoldment and blessedness. Abraham could not walk before God and be perfect — be complete — without Sarah; he could not be completely operative in his expression of the complete nature of God, nor could He exemplify the nature of God as Father-Mother alone. The *male and female* of the sixth period of spiritual unfoldment of the Covenant of Godlikeness must be exemplified by man *and* woman.

It is natural that men and women reflect the qualities of both their parents. It is natural that men and women embody and express the compound nature of *Elohim*, God, and thus manifest the divine completeness indicated in God's holy name, Father-Mother. Each one of us must express the tender, gentle, intuitive, faithful, loving, all-seeing, and all-knowing qualities of God's Motherhood and the strong, courageous, powerful, intelligent qualities of God's Fatherhood. Otherwise we are pitifully incomplete and bereft of the dominion which the divine completeness bestows — the dominion of the perfect, completely operative man made in God's own likeness.

Abraham probably felt that he expressed the divine completeness; and in a sense he did. But he denied Sarah her right to do the same. All unwittingly he epitomized human manhood in all ages which denies to womanhood its right to be Godlike, complete, and to exercise dominion. Abraham — the new man — must understand that in the unfolding consciousness of the Covenant conditions, Sarah — the new woman — must walk side by side

with him in his ascending spiritual footsteps and in the understanding and demonstration of the divine nature.

In the metaphor of Scripture the meaning of Sarai's name — noble lady or princess — reveals her nobility and tells us not only of her status in her home land of Chaldea, but also of the high place she held in Abraham's affections and in his household. However there is no indication that Abraham as yet recognized the spiritual status of her womanhood and her place in the Covenant. Even at ninety years of age Sarai was still a beautiful woman. But she was too old, or so Abraham thought, to be considered as a part of the Covenant relationship through whom the promised *seed of Abraham* would come. Yet God's promise was, "I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her." Abraham seemed totally unaware that through the law of the spiritual Marriage Covenant, which was the real bond that united him with his wife, *Sarai* was now *Sarah*, and *Sarah* must accompany him in his growing understanding of God, in every progressive spiritual footstep, and in the unfolding of the Covenant. But there was another problem which kept Abraham from immediately accepting the divine promise that a son would be born of Sarah. He had come to think of himself as an old man, incapable of fathering a son. We read:

Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, shall a child be born of one that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarai, that is ninety years old, bear?— Gen.17:17.

"Abraham laughed!" He must not have heard God aright! Such a thing was incredible! It was much easier to believe that Ishmael might become a righteous man than to believe that the law of the Covenant could set aside the laws of nature and that the child of promise might be born of Sarah by promise of God. There was nothing in Abraham's experience or knowledge that he could use as a precedent for the unprecedented demand being made upon his faith and understanding — the demand that he trust God to bring forth a son of Sarah by divine power. The order of human generation was deeply ingrained in his concept of life and productivity.

Combined with his incredulity that a son could be born of Sarai, who was barren and old, was the yearning of a human father for his first born son after the flesh. His human heart cried out:

O That Ishmael might live before thee! — Gen.17:18.

Sarah Shall Bear Thee a Son.

But the divine Word was insistent that Abraham hear and understand the promise of God and obey the divine demand — the demand that Abraham recognize Sarai's spiritual status and her new name, *Sarah—mother of nations*. He *must* acknowledge womanhood as co-equal with manhood in God's Covenant with His children. He was to learn that with God all things are possible (Matt. 19:26). But Abraham continued to question God's promise that Sarai would bear him a son. Then *Elohim* thundered:

Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.— Gen.17:19.

And then the all-loving Motherhood of God answered the plea of a human father for his first born son after the flesh:

As for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation.—

Gen.17:20.

God had not condemned Ishmael. God blessed him and bestowed upon him all of the divine good that Ishmael was capable of receiving. But Ishmael was not the one whom God had appointed to establish the nation through whom the knowledge of God and of the Son of God would come to the world. As though to re-emphasize this point, God, *Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother said;

But my covenant will I establish with Isaac, which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year.

And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham.— Gen.17:21,22.

“He left off talking with him.” God closed the interview. He had nothing more to say on the subject. Abraham *must* accept the terms of the Covenant. The *I AM* had spoken!

The Struggle Between
The Old and New Covenants Continues

It had been comparatively easy for Abraham to accept the wholly spiritual nature of the universe. His scientific senses discounted the evidence of the material senses, enabling him to see through the mist of material reasoning to the spiritual reality — the universe created by God, Spirit, in the likeness of Spirit. But it was not easy for him to accept the spiritual fact that God, the only Creator, is the Father and Mother of man. What appeared as Sarai's barrenness was, in the spiritual unfolding of Abraham's life, not only an indication of the fact that his consciousness was barren of the understanding of the nature of the Almighty — the All-might of God's Motherhood, Who performs all things for Her children — but also a stubborn refusal of mortal manhood to admit the vitality and power of the Motherhood of God reflected by womanhood. The higher spiritual order of generation — man brought forth by promise of God and not by physical law — had to mature in his consciousness and outshine the sensual material beliefs concerning the reproduction of man. But it was more than this. Abraham loved Ishmael, his first born son. The fierce love of an Oriental father for his elder son was a form of worship, and this adoration of Ishmael stood between Abraham and his acceptance of the fulfillment of the promise that Sarah would bear a son. *The generations of Adam were dying hard.*

Abraham's great human love for the members of his household-family was another weak point through which the tempter took possession of his reason. Abraham wanted all of them to be gathered into the Covenant of Godlikeness and spiritual Perfection. This was commendable. But he was reluctant to impose upon his loved ones the same stern discipline which God exacted of him. He seemed unwilling to set the same high standard of perfection for others which he was willing to abide by. The compassion of his human love caused him to pass lightly over the shortcomings of others. The conditions of the Covenant were Godlikeness and spiritual Perfection. Yet Abraham hoped to enfold all of his household within the Covenant through a token, or symbol, of the Covenant instead of insisting on implicit obedience to the demand which God made upon him: "Walk before me and be thou perfect." He probably reasoned that if he could identify them with the Cove-

nant by a token of circumcision, no harm could come of it, and much good might result. And so, even though God had declared emphatically what the demands of the Covenant were and had stated repeatedly that the Covenant concerned Sarah, and not Ishmael,

Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of his house, and circumcised them.— Gen.17:23.

Abraham and his seed continued to regard circumcision as a religious rite which set them apart from all other peoples of the earth, although he must have known that circumcision was practiced by other ancient tribes — the Egyptians, Phoenicians, Babylonians, and other peoples. The custom was followed by all Hebrew people, even by Christ Jesus' immediate disciples, who at first insisted upon circumcision of the Gentiles as a condition of their acceptance into the Christian Church. Not until the Apostle Paul became active in the Church was this rite challenged. In a letter to the churches in Galatia he wrote:

In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.—
Gal.6:15.

The question was not and is not whether circumcision was right or wrong, but that it should not be considered as a religious rite.

Abraham seemed to be satisfied that Ishmael was the heir of the Covenant, and he rested in this mistaken concept of the fulfillment of God's promise. Ishmael had been circumcised. Abraham was confident that by this "token of the Covenant," Ishmael had been brought into the Covenant relationship with God and was the heir of the promises. But Abraham appeared to have forgotten, or was unmindful of, the message enunciated by *El Shaddi*, The Almighty. He seemed unwilling to admit that the annunciation concerned not Ishmael, but Sarah, and her place in the Covenant. Hear again the divine message:

Thou shalt not call her name Sarai [lovely princess]
but Sarah [mother of nations] shall her name be.

And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her: yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her.— Gen.17:15,16.

Abraham may have thought he had forgotten what The Almighty said. But the soul-stirring words iterated and reiterated by his Mother-God had been inscribed on the very tablet of his being, and though apparently dormant, the divine message was very much alive. The mighty power of *Elohim* was having its way with him, though he knew it not.

Abraham's New Birth

Subsequent events disclosed something of the upheaval which took place in Abraham as the force of the divine message began to stir within him and to clash with old concepts which had been deeply rooted in the bedrock of traditional beliefs. The Spirit of God, moving resolutely on the waters, or elements of his thought, was changing his whole body of consciousness, as leaven changes the properties of meal. The leavening influence of scientific unfoldment was transforming his whole concept of creation. The generations of Adam were being swallowed up in the regeneration of Spirit.

St. Paul beautifully describes the change that was taking place in Abraham:

Adapt yourselves no longer to the pattern of this present world, but let your minds be remade and your whole nature thus transformed. Then you will be able to discern the will of God, and to know what is good, acceptable, and perfect.— Rom.12:2 (NEB).

The *Phillips'* translation strengthens the spiritual meaning of Paul's words:

Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within (let God re-make you so that your whole attitude of mind is changed), so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves you toward the goal of true maturity.— Rom.12:2 (JBP).

Listen as the Apostle enunciates the spiritual law of transformation and transfiguration:

When anyone is united to Christ he is a new creature: his old life is over; there is a whole new world; the old order is gone; a new life has already begun. — II Cor.5:17 (NEB).

Abraham had been touched by the law governing the new birth, which transforms mind and body. He was learning the mighty lesson embodied in Christ Jesus' declaration that the only way to understand the power of the kingdom of heaven on earth was to be reborn of Spirit (John 3:3), to be transformed spiritually. Only thus could he be fully obedient to the demands of the New Covenant, "Walk before me and be thou perfect." Walk in the Spirit, ever conscious of God's presence, and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh, the desires of your lower nature will not be fulfilled in you. (See Gal.5:16, JBP.)

Abraham did not realize it, but the chemicalization which had been going on within him was really transformation, the process of the new birth. His faint conception of the nature of God's Motherhood had actually changed his mind, transformed his thinking, given him a new spiritual concept of himself. Even though he had resisted this change, the new birth had gone on. And from this spiritual conception a new creature had come forth. Abram himself had been born again and given his new name *Abraham* by The Almighty, his Mother God. So completely did the *I AM* write its name or divine nature as *The Almighty God* in Abraham's consciousness that for all time to come The Almighty God — God-Almighty, God-All-Knowing, God-Omniscience — is known as *The God of Abraham*.

Abraham's new birth had been labored and protracted. He had clung to the "pattern of this present world." But at last he was freed from the cocoon of materialism in which his thinking had been enmeshed. Having emerged into more spiritual latitudes of thought, he now saw God *face to face* — he beheld the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, which before he had seen but faintly, as through a glass darkly. From the vantage point of his more spiritual vision, old things were passing away, old concepts based on a material conception of existence were yielding to

a more spiritual interpretation of life. At long last he began to comprehend the truth which *El Shaddi* had been enunciating — that Sarai too had been transformed, reborn, and given her new name Sarah, and that together they would exemplify the compound nature of God as Father-Mother, a fact which their new names blazoned forth: *Abraham and Sarah — father and mother of multitudes, in whom all the nations of the world would be blessed!*

Abraham comprehended for the first time that the divine law which had transformed and reborn him and his wife was the same law that would usher the child of promise into human presence. And he rested in this new-old concept of spiritual creation: that God, *Elohim*, was the *only* Creator, and that He created the universe and all that is therein, including man, and brought forth His creation through divine law in His own way and in His own time. Abraham was now ready to acknowledge the possibility that Sarah would indeed conceive and bring forth a son, and that this child of promise would be born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, not by the fleshly desire of a human father, not dependent on the course of nature, but the by the will of God Himself. (See John 1:13.)

Abraham had completely outgrown the old garment of material selfhood with which his human parents had clothed him and which had been tailored according to tradition and commonly accepted beliefs and opinions of mortals. He was now ready to put on the garment of praise, the robe of righteousness, the transfiguring raiment of spiritual enlightenment, the vesture of the new-born of Spirit, given to him by his Father-Mother God.

Abraham had learned what the beloved Revelator, St. John, learned in his new birth on the Isle of Patmos, namely, “Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world” (1 John 5:4). Or, as the *Phillips’* translation puts it: “God’s ‘heredity’ within us will always conquer the world outside us.”

A new day had dawned in Abraham’s spiritual journeying. He had risen to a spiritual dimension of thought he had never before attained. He was now prepared to hear, to comprehend, and to heed the voice of *Elohim* that would reveal to him and to the world the pattern of the Trinity, the revelation of the threefold nature of *THE GREAT I AM* whose Word brings creation to light:

Because God is the only Creator, He is the only Father and Mother of man and the universe.

Hence the son who was to be born of Sarah would be conceived, developed, and brought forth by divine law, not by laws of nature.

The Spirit of God, the mighty force of the Almighty, the Creator — Omnipotence in operation — would accomplish this.

And the human appearing of the Son of God would be called *the child of promise*.

Let us turn to the Bible and learn how this understanding of the mighty spiritual forces of creation revealed in the Trinity unfold in Abraham's consciousness and experience.

Chapter XXII

THREE HEAVENLY MESSENGERS

With Three Heavenly Messages

And the Lord appeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day.

And he lift up his eyes and looked, and lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground.

And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant:

Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree:

And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said.

And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth.

And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetched a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it.

And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat.— Gen.18:1-8.

In the metaphor of Abraham's unfoldment, the appearance of the three men indicates to us that the threefold nature of *Elohim*, the triune divine Principle, which had been revealed to Abraham during his spiritual journeying, had come into the focal point of understanding in his consciousness.

Abraham and Sarah lived in Hebron in the plains, by the oaks of Mamre. Recall that *Hebron* means *spiritual alliance*; *Mamre* means *strength*. Here, in this holy citadel, or consciousness of his alliance, or oneness with God and fortified with spiritual strength,

Abraham sat in the tent door (with open mind, in a state of spiritual receptivity) in the heat of the day (at noon, in the meridian light of spiritual contemplation). He lifted up his eyes (his spiritual perceptive faculties) and, looking from this higher vantage point, he saw three men! Abraham ran to meet them and bowed himself to the ground. He humbled himself in recognition of the representatives of the divine Trinity. He welcomed the visitors warmly, and, with true hospitality, he set before them the best of his provisions. He stood while they ate, an indication of his awareness of their divine status. His warm welcome revealed his state of mind; he was receptive to their message. But the messengers would not speak until they inquired after Sarah, for what they had to say concerned her. *She* must hear their words, and the spiritual import of their message must be impressed upon her consciousness. Recall that Sarah had not been present when the Almighty Motherhood of God had spoken to Abraham concerning her place in the Covenant relationship with God. At that time, Abraham had turned a deaf ear to the divine message. But now, being assured that Sarah was in the tent behind them, the voice of the Trinity spoke:

Sarah Shall Have a Son

And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife?
And he said, behold, in the tent.

And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah, thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him.

Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women.

Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my Lord being old also?

And the Lord said unto Abraham, wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?

Is anything too hard for the Lord?— Gen.18:9-14

The "I" which spoke to Abraham and Sarah was the Holy Spirit, the *I AM* appearing in its interpretative aspect, to make plain to

their receptive thought the message of the Trinity, namely, that the Science of creation would usher into human presence the Son of God whom they would know as the child of promise and the seed of Abraham.

Sarah, in joyous incredulity, laughed within herself and said: "Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old?" Her unspoken question was quickly challenged by the Spirit of God: "Wherefore did Sarah laugh? Is any thing too hard for the Lord?" Sarah fearfully denied laughing; but the divine voice insisted: "Nay, but thou didst laugh." As though to say, "Be sure that not one single element of doubt be found in you to delay the fulfillment of the divine will, for nothing is too hard for the Lord, the triune divine Principle of the universe. Nothing is impossible with God." Then the divine promise was reiterated:

At the time appointed I will return to thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son.—
Gen.18:14.

When Abraham and Sarah listened *together* to the voice of the Trinity, this togetherness acted as a spiritual force which silenced the voice of godless materialism and sensuous reasoning. When they listened together to the divine voice, the doubt was dispelled which had delayed the fulfillment of God's promise that a son would indeed be born of Sarah, not by laws material, but by the promise of God; not by the will of the flesh, but by the will of God. At long last they understood that when the *I AM* said *I WILL*, the law of fulfillment was inscribed in it.

For the first time the voice of the Old Covenant was completely silenced. Listening together to the Message of the Trinity, Abraham and Sarah were spiritually united in the holy relationship of God's Covenant, in which the divine completeness was revealed to them. And in this understanding a realization of the power and law of the creative Principle which ushers invisible spiritual realities into visible presence dawned on the horizon of their human comprehension and experience. Sarah *conceived this idea* and in fullness of time she brought forth a son — *the child of promise*.

Sodom and Gomorrah

There was a further message of great import for Abraham and Sarah from the three representatives of the Trinity. This message concerned Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities which Lot had chosen for his dwelling place.

And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;

Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, and do justice and judgment; that the Lord may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

And the Lord said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;

I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom.— Gen.18:16-22.

In order that we may comprehend these and other passages aright (Gen.18:16-23; 19:1-26), we must understand that they are, in part, an *anthropopatheia*, a figure of speech ascribing to God what belongs to rational beings, an interpretation of God's acts from man's point of view, an explanation of what God says and does on the analogy of human motives. (See *The Companion Bible*, ap.6,p.8; and *Dummelow*, p.15)

"The interpretation of God's acts" from a spiritual point of view is quite different from "The interpretation of man's point of view." Spiritually interpreted, the passage above tells us that the voice of the Trinity, the mighty Spirit of God, was demanding that Abraham recognize the utter degradation of all that the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah stood for and included; further he must understand that such evil includes its own seed of destruction.

These cities were infamous for their perverted sex practices and were typical of carnal mindedness and sensuality at its worst. And Sodom was the dwelling place of Abraham's beloved nephew Lot!

Abraham had separated himself from Lot soon after coming into the land of Canaan, but Lot's persistent association with sensuality, perversion, vice, and all forms of corruption was very grievous to Abraham. The cry, or sorrow, of Sodom — the iniquity of sodomy — was great within him. And although Lot's determination to abide with such wickedness was grievous to him, yet the Lord knew that Abraham would literally turn heaven and earth to help this wilful nephew if he thought Lot was in danger.

Although the voice of the Trinity had not yet pronounced the divine verdict against these cities, Abraham sensed the inevitability of their destruction. He was being forced to learn a vital, but to him a sad lesson, namely, that depravity embodies the seeds of self-annihilation and that he, Abraham, must not interfere with the law which brings about — effects or accomplishes — sin's destruction. He must realize that if he tried to save the Sodomites when they refused to change their evil ways, he was giving his unconscious consent to sodomy. He must understand that he could not condone iniquity because of his great human love for humanity.

Abraham was not yet willing to agree that there was a principle involved in the destruction of the cities of wickedness and that the dwelling place of vice and corruption would destroy itself. He pleaded with the Lord, as an attorney might plead for a client before a judge, that something should be done to save the city and its people:

But Abraham stood yet before the Lord.

And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?

Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that are therein?

That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?

And the Lord said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.

And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which am but dust and ashes:

Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five? And he said, If I find forty and five, I will not destroy it.

And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do it for forty's sake.

And he said unto him, O let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do it, if I find thirty there.

And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for twenty's sake.

And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.

And the Lord went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned to his place.— Gen.18:22-33.

Abraham's human sense of mercy pleaded that perhaps there was something good to be found in these cities of wickedness, something good to be found in the sensuous perverted mentality typical of Sodom and Gomorrah that would be worth saving. But there was nothing. Not ten people nor even a tenth part of such depravity was good enough to be saved. It must sink into the mire of its own making.

We must not overlook another side of this narrative, viz., the value of a good man. Ten righteous men in Sodom would have saved the city! How priceless and how powerful is the divine quality of righteousness!

Abraham did not plead further. "The Lord went his way." Abraham knew that the case was closed. In times past he would have gone into the city and forcibly saved as many as he could by his own strength, as he had done when the inhabitants of those same cities had been carried away captive by the four kings of the East. But Abraham saw at last, though reluctantly, that these people, including Lot, had to learn to save themselves. And if there

was not enough moral strength within them to turn them from their wicked ways, then they would have to learn, in another world, how to forsake wickedness and learn righteousness. This good man saw now that he could not save mortals from the penalties attached to their own wrong doing. Abraham was learning the lesson of divine justice — the lesson which Christ Jesus preached centuries later in his Sermon on the Mount, when he said:

Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.— Matt.7:6.

Abraham was learning a lesson which all of us must learn — a lesson that we are just as reluctant to learn as was he: We must permit our loved ones, and mankind generally, to learn from the things they suffer, rather than attempting to temper divine justice, which demands repentance and complete reformation of everyone.

We read that “Abraham returned to his place.” He returned to his place of spiritual observation and scientific thought and left off trying to save any part of the cities of wickedness — the perverted concepts of existence. It was as though he finally understood that the divine voice which had told him of things to come was not circumscribed, and that those who had ears to hear would hear the same warning and save themselves. He did not attempt to save Lot by his own human strength and love. He remained at his post of spiritual observation and left Lot with God.

The Angelic Warning and Deliverance of Lot

Two angels or divine messengers went to warn Lot of the impending disaster. Whether these angels were two of the representatives of the Trinity who had visited Abraham, or whether they were guardian angels ever at hand when they are needed, we know not. But we do know they had a divine duty to perform, and they completed their task of saving Lot and his family from the chemicalization of evil which precipitated the doom of the city he had chosen as his own.

And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

And he said, Behold now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways. And they said, Nay; but we will abide in the street all night.

And he pressed upon them greatly; and they turned in unto him, and entered into his house; and he made them a feast, and did bake unleavened bread, and they did eat.

But before they lay down, the men of the city, even the men of Sodom, compassed the house round, both old and young, all the people from every quarter:

And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.

And Lot went out at the door unto them, and shut the door after him.

And said, I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly.

Behold now, I have two daughters which have not known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof.

And they said, Stand back. And they said again, This one fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a judge: now will we deal worse with thee, than with them. And they pressed sore upon the man, even Lot, and came near to break the door.

But the men put forth their hand, and pulled Lot into the house to them, and shut to the door.

And they smote the men with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door.

And the men said unto Lot, Hast thou here any besides? son in law, and thy sons, and thy daughters, and whatsoever thou hast in the city, bring them out of this place:

For we will destroy this place, because the cry of them is waxen great before the face of the Lord; and the Lord hath sent us to destroy it.

And Lot went out, and spake unto his sons in law, which married his daughters [which were to marry his daughters], and said, Up, get you out of this place; for

the Lord will destroy this city. But he seemed as one that mocked unto his sons in law.

But when the morning arose, then the angels hastened Lot, saying, Arise, take thy wife, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city.

And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters; the Lord being merciful unto him: and they brought him forth, and set him without the city.

And it came to pass, when they had brought them forth abroad, that he said, Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.

And Lot said unto them, Oh, not so, my Lord.

Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

Behold now, this city is near to flee unto, and it is a little one: Oh, let me escape thither (is it not a little one?) and my soul shall live.

And he said unto him, See, I have accepted thee concerning this thing also, that I will not overthrow this city, for the which thou hast spoken.

Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.

The sun was risen upon the earth when Lot entered into Zoar.

Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven.

And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.— Gen.19:1-26.

Lot apparently had no idea of the divine nature of the two angelic visitors whom he invited into his house for the night. He received them with Oriental hospitality, but there was no evidence of moral stamina within him. For when the lustful men of Sodom besieged his house, demanding that he give them his visitors to

serve their perverted sensuous purposes, he, in a feeble attempt to observe an Oriental custom of providing safety for a guest beneath his roof, offered his own daughters as appeasement to the depraved aggressors who were storming the door. However, the holy visitants smote the men of the city with blindness, with utter confusion, so that they could not find the door of the house.

When told of the impending destruction of his city and urged to save himself and his family, Lot delayed, reluctant to leave his home. Finally the angelic visitors took hold of their hands — his, his wife's, and his two daughters' — and led them outside the city. They were all loath to go, for this city, with its grossness and materialism, seemed to be substance to all of them, and they lingered on the outskirts. They were urged on:

Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.— Gen.19:17.

“Escape to the mountain!” Lot was being urged to rise to higher dimensions of thought, to holier concepts of life, and to find safety from evil's self-destruction in exalted spiritual observations. But Lot was afraid to leave the plain — the flat evidences of materiality. He was unable to rise above the low level of materialism. He simply couldn't make the grade.

Lot was self-centered and was circumscribed by his own self-centeredness. His thoughts ever flowed inward instead of outward; hence he knew no unfoldment — material or spiritual. He could not find dominion, even with an angel leading him by the hand. The thought of striking out on his own to make a new life for himself and his family appalled him. “Find me a little city, just a little one will do. I cannot go to the mountains; don't ask me to rise up and build a new life; I must live in a city, in an environment others have made; I must have people around me to make my life complete.” Lot still lingered on the outskirts of Sodom but was finally turned away from the city when the angel promised that he might settle in the little city of Zoar.

Immediately Lot and his family were escaped, the destruction of both Sodom and Gomorrah began. The description of the cities' destruction by fire and brimstone is vivid. It was the spontaneous combustion of sensuality and lust which had been building up in-

ternal fires of self-annihilation. Lot and his family were commanded not to look back, not to turn back mentally or physically to the wickedness with which they had become identified. But Lot's wife could not resist a last look at the place which had been her home; and turning back, she was consumed, turned into a pillar of salt — literally crystallized by the chemicalization of evil.

Can we not conjecture that the fifteen-word Old Testament biography of Lot's wife was written for those who love the things of the world more than the things of the Spirit . . . ? Does not her biography also speak a message to those who are unwilling to flee from iniquity when all efforts to redeem iniquity have failed? . . . Lot's wife still stands as a permanent symbol of the woman who, faced toward salvation, still turns to look longingly on material things she had left behind.

(Edith Deen, *All the Women of the Bible*, pp.17-20.)

It is little wonder that Christ Jesus admonishes us all — male and female alike — “Remember Lot's wife” (Luke 17:32).

But what of Lot? When he left Abraham's protection he had great substance in herds and flocks, in herdsmen and servants. What happened to them? It is evident that Lot had not only turned from shepherding his flock but also from shepherding his thinking.

Probably the saddest part of Lot's story is that, with the priceless advantage of having been a part of Abraham's family and of having Abraham as his mentor and guide, he turned away to do his own thing, as we might say. He not only turned away from everything Abraham stood for, he also turned away from God. Human will, which for a time had seemed to be a constructive force within him, became a destructive force that reduced him to its own level and so weakened him mentally and physically that he was unable to develop his God-given potential of greatness. The evil, occult, carnal mind which had promised to set him on high and make him as a god cast him down to the earth instead. Even when he escaped from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and was given sanctuary in the little city of Zoar, he did not find peace. He fled in terror from that place and dwelt in a mountain. But instead of finding in the mountain an exalted place of spiritual observation where he might have regained some semblance of dominion, he dwelt in a cave with his two daughters. And the last we hear of him, he had become drunken with wine, and in a

drunken stupor he lay with his own daughters, and they begat sons by their father.

It can be clearly seen why it was necessary that Abraham be separated from Lot before he could progress in his divine adventure. Lot would have continued to be a subtle, unholy, occult influence in the large company that dwelt with Abraham in his holy city. Further, though he was a close blood relation, Lot could never have become a part of the family circle surrounding the child of promise.

It was nothing Lot had done which caused him to be saved when the city in which he lived was destroyed. It was because —

God remembered Abraham, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow when he overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt.— Gen.19:29.

It was Abraham's love for this willful, weak nephew that saved Lot's life. But Lot took his sensuous concept of existence with him. And the record of his daughters having children by their father in order to preserve their father's seed is utterly unpalatable (Gen.19:30-38). Truly, the end of that man is worse than at the first.

We do not hear of Lot again. In later years we do hear much of his ungodly offspring, who had been conceived by his daughters, and of their descendents — the children of Moab and Ammon, who were enemies of the Israelites all the days of their lives.

After the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah Abraham stood again at the place where he had communed with the Lord, and —

He looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.— Gen.19:28.

We know not what Abraham's thoughts were as he viewed the destruction of Lot's dwelling place. Perhaps he recalled the vision of "a smoking furnace" which had come to him many years before when he had seen "the horror of great darkness fall upon him" (Gen.15:12,17). Perhaps he saw in the complete annihilation of the

cities of wickedness the utter end of the hypnotic influence of mental darkness, the mesmeric spell of occultism, which had fallen upon him.

In Abraham's spiritual journeying the destruction of Lot's city signifies that the last vestige of Lot's influence in Abraham's life was destroyed. Further, the obliteration of all that Lot stood for tells us that at long last Abraham understood he could not save his beloved nephew from his own undoing. Lot escaped from Sodom, but he did not escape from his own thoughts. He took them with him wherever he went, and they continued to bring forth fruit after their own kind.

After the soul-rending experience of watching his beloved adopted son go out of his life, Abraham turned away from the contemplation of the cataclysm of self-destroying evil. When he saw the ultimate degradation to which sensuality and occultism descends, he let Lot go his own way.

We know that Abraham found his peace, for he returned to the place of his communion with the triune divine Principle of the universe, who had revealed to him the full meaning of the Covenant of Godlikeness and its fulfillment in his life. He rose again to the height of spiritual observation and understanding which he had gained when he and Sarah listened together to the revelation of the threefold nature of the Infinite and realized with joy their part in the exemplification thereof.

Chapter XXIII

THE CLIMAX OF ABRAHAM'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

The time for the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham was near:

Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him.— Gen.17:19.

Let us follow his footsteps as he and Sarah make ready for the birth of the child of promise.

Abraham and Sarah Sojourn in Abimelech's Country

And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar.— Gen.20:1.

Well might one ask: Why did Abraham and Sarah leave Hebron, typical of their holy city, and go into a strange country to await the birth of the child of promise? We need to reach forward in their story to learn the answer to this question. Their sojourn in "the south country" was for the purpose of establishing their son in a land where he could grow spiritually and learn to prosper. Hebron was *not to* be his home, or mental abode, for many years — until he grew to spiritual maturity, as had Abraham and Sarah. And so, "They dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar."

The names of these places are important in Abraham's spiritual journeying. *Kadesh* means *holy*, *Shur* means *wilderness*, *Gerar* means *a dwelling place*. In Gerar they found a resting place for themselves while the new idea of divine sonship was maturing in them. But what does their residence between Kadesh and Shur — between holiness and wilderness — indicate? Simply this: although they were conscious of the holiness that was unfolding

within them, a wilderness experience lay before them. As in all wilderness experiences, however, a great spiritual lesson awaited them. There was something vitally important for them to learn.

In Gerar they had an experience similar to the one that they had in Egypt. In the repetition of this experience we may see that they had not learned the lesson which they should have learned years before. You recall that when traveling Abraham introduced Sarah as his sister, as indeed she was, for they were both children of the same father, but of different mothers (Gen.20:12,13). Abraham saw in Sarah the supremely attractive woman and feared that some powerful king or chieftain would desire her and kill him in order to have her. Everywhere they went Sarah was much admired and sought after. Hers was the *beauty of holiness*. But hers was also *the beauty of nobility*, which kings desired. Recall that when they were in Egypt the Pharaoh sent and took her by force. But he released her when he learned she was Abraham's wife. Now, about twenty-five years later, when they came into Gerar, the same problem arose again. We read:

Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah.—
Gen.20:2.

It is interesting to recall that a short time prior to this Sarah had thought of herself as being old, stricken in age. And yet here again she is the very beautiful and much sought after woman. What has happened? Something humanly wonderful but divinely natural.

When God established His Covenant with Abraham and Sarah they had accepted the conditions of the Covenant, and these conditions were that they walk before God and be perfect — live always in His presence, live the life that is spiritual, obey God's laws, and strive to do His will at all times. They were reaping the blessed reward of obedience — dominion! In the words of St. Paul, they had been "transformed by the renewing of their minds" (Rom.12:2). They had refused to be "conformed to this world." They had discovered their God-being and had put off the old man and the old woman — the old concept of man as a finite mortal subject to age and decrepitude — and had put on the new man and the new woman, embodying and expressing vitality, beauty, immortality — qualities of the compound nature of their Father-Mother God. In their spiritual unfoldment they had literally been

born anew. Thus Abimelech saw Sarah as a beautiful, desirable woman and took her into his harem.

Why would Abraham not trust God to care for both himself and Sarah in their journeying? Why, when they had come so far in their divine adventure and had demonstrated so much of their God-given dominion, would they again resort to deception as a means of protection? Nothing but fear! But this was no idle fear, for Oriental princes and chieftains exercised the right to claim beautiful women for their harems. Abraham knew no fear in most things, as he had proved in his pursuit of the armies of the kings of the East (Gen.14:1-16). But his great human love for Sarah caused him to be vulnerable where she was concerned. Further, his concern for her safety was heightened by the fact that Sarah was carrying the child of promise. However, the time had come for Abraham's faith in God and in God's disposal of events to be absolute.

There is no record that Abraham prayed for Sarah. But Sarah's own innocency and the dominion of her God-being, expressing the power of The Almighty, her Mother-God, came to her defense in a most unusual way. We read:

God [*Elohim* — the Father-Mother] came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou has taken; for she is a man's wife.

But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? —

Gen.20:3,4.

So far as we know Abimelech was a pagan. But he was a good man, and this great human goodness made him receptive to the Word of God, *Elohim*, which came to him. He pleaded with God that he was not guilty of taking another man's wife, for he had been assured that Sarah was Abraham's sister.

And God said unto him in a dream, Yes, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.

Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.

Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: and the men were sore afraid.—
Gen.20:6-8.

Prior to this Abraham had been known as a great and good man, even a prince among men, and a scientific thinker. But now God revealed to Abimelech that Abraham was a *prophet*, one appointed of God to speak for Him. Abimelech was able to comprehend this, and he called his whole household together and told them what God had revealed to him. The king did not know the Almighty God, but he certainly recognized and acknowledged a divine power and presence greater than any authority he had before known.

The next morning Abimelech sent for Abraham and asked him what he had seen in his kingdom that caused him to say that Sarah was his sister and not his wife. Abraham replied:

Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake.— Gen.20:11.

Abraham explained to Abimelech the agreement which he and Sarah had made before leaving Chaldea and the reason for it (Gen.20:12,13). The king accepted Abraham's explanation and gave him a bond of a thousand pieces of silver, paid in the presence of witnesses, that no harm had come to Sarah. The payment of such a bond was not unusual in those days. It was, in a sense, a bond of good behavior not only for the past, but also for the present and future.

In this experience Abraham learned that "the fear of God" is everywhere. Remembering that the word fear means: to give power to, to stand in awe of, to reverence, we can see that Abraham learned a great lesson in this wilderness experience — a lesson that remained with him forever — a lesson each one of us must learn, namely, that everywhere we go God's presence and power are with us, and that there will be evidence of this omnipotent power and presence wherever and whenever we need it. Otherwise God would not be Omnipotent and Omnipresent.

Abimelech's true majesty is revealed in his words to Abraham:

Behold, my land is before thee: dwell where it pleaseth thee.— Gen.20:15.

We read further:

So Abraham prayed unto God; and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maid-servants; and they bare children.

For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham's wife.— Gen.20:17,18.

“Abraham prayed unto God” — *Elohim*. And God, the divine Father-Mother, healed Abimelech and all his house of barrenness and impotence — restored to them the power of conception.

Although this record may appear to be very material to us today, its spiritual significance transcends the material senses. To the Oriental mind nothing is more tragic than the barrenness of womanhood and the impotence of manhood. We do not know how long Sarah was kept in Abimelech's harem, but it was sufficiently long for the king to realize that his posterity was being threatened and cut off. Not to have heirs in the royal house was both a personal and a national calamity. The king's gratitude to Abraham was expressed in many ways during the time he sojourned in that land.

Abimelech was a Philistine. In the time of Abraham the land of the Philistines was a pastoral country, and Abimelech was a powerful, intelligent, and peaceful king. It was good for Abraham to have this good man's friendship and oversight while he and Sarah were awaiting *the appointed time* for the child of promise to appear.

In Abraham's spiritual unfoldment, Abimelech symbolizes a type of human goodness which gives sanctuary to seekers after righteousness, and in the mystery of godliness serves the divine purpose even while not understanding it. Abraham found a sense of establishment in Abimelech's country. He digged wells and found pasturage for his large herds and flocks. Symbolically, he digged deep for the water of Life, for the pure stream of spiritual understanding, and found both spiritual and material abundance.

Abraham sojourned in the Philistines' land many days.— Gen.21:34.

Move To Beer-Sheba

But the land of the Philistines was not to be the birthplace of the child of promise. Before this momentous event Abraham and Sarah moved to Beer-Sheba, in the south of the land of Canaan.

When The Almighty gave Abram and Sarai their new names, Abraham and Sarah, He gave them their new spiritual identity: *father and mother of multitudes, in whom all nations of the world would be blessed*. Together Abraham and Sarah exemplify the first aspect of the threefold divine nature of the Triune God Himself. In their human lives we discover an illustration of the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim* and the power of the Spirit of God to bring forth the human expression of the Son of God, not by laws of nature, but by the mighty force of The Almighty, the Creator — Omnipotence in operation.

Birth of Isaac, the Child of Promise

The time was at hand for the appearing of the one in whose life would be illustrated the nature of divine Sonship, the one who would be the exemplar of the second aspect of the Trinity, the one who, for all time, would be known as *the child of promise*. This child was born to Sarah at the time the holy messengers of the Trinity had promised. Let us turn to the Bible and read of this great spiritual event:

And the Lord visited Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did unto Sarah as he had spoken.

For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him.

And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, which Sarah bare him, Isaac.

And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him.

And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. — Gen.21:1-3,5,6.

Those who had ears to hear might have heard the herald angels announcing the birth of this child. By the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, a great nation had been born — a nation born to

inherit the blessing of the Covenant of Godlikeness, a nation which was to be cherished by the love of the heavenly Father-Mother, a nation chosen of God through whom the omnipotent power of *Elohim*, the triune divine Principle of the universe, would be revealed to the world for all time to come, and through which the scientific relationship between God and men would be made plain to humanity. This was the birth of a nation in which the Spirit of God would move with such force that all the world would know that Omnipotence was at work in them to accomplish the divine purpose on earth as it is in heaven.

Only Abraham and Sarah knew that the birth of this child was the fulfillment of the New Covenant promise — that Isaac was *the child of promise*, the human appearing of the seed in whom all nations of the world would be blessed.

Intrusion of the Old Covenant

And then, as though to deny the holiness of the event we read:

And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him.—

Gen.21:4.

Abraham had not yet learned the simple truth, voiced by the Apostle Paul, that

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.— 1 Cor.7:19.

The persistent adherence to circumcision as a religious rite instead of as a simple sanitary method did nothing to forward Abraham's spiritual unfoldment. He could not have foreseen that this practice, which apparently originated as a pagan religious rite among the priests of Egypt in ancient times, would have developed into a fetish in years to come, and that his people who practiced it would have thought more of this so-called *token* of the Covenant than they did of the *conditions* of the Covenant, which demanded Godlikeness and spiritual perfection of the people if they were to inherit the blessings of the Covenant.

Isaac's name means laughter — joy expressed. And this child was a joy to Abraham and Sarah, who had waited long for God's promise to be fulfilled in them. Joy, not alone because Isaac was their beloved son, but joy in the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, which had ushered the child of promise into human presence.

And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned.— Gen.21:8.

In that age a child was weaned at about the age of three years. The feast was the customary family feast on the occasion of weaning a child — an occasion of a special celebration when the child was the first-born son. There was great rejoicing in that household. There was also great rejoicing in the large company of servants and herdsmen, together with those trained to bear arms, over whom Abraham exercised both spiritual and material oversight. But the rejoicing was dulled.

The Child of the Flesh Mocked the Child of Promise

Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking.— Gen.21:9.

The child of Hagar, the bondwoman mocked the child of Sarah, the freewoman. The child of the flesh ridiculed the idea of divine sonship. But remember: "These things are an allegory" — the description of one thing under the image of another, portraying the way in which the Old Covenant of materialism belittles the New Covenant of spirituality, and treats with contempt our growing spiritual endeavors and accomplishments. (See Gal.4:22-26.)

Sarah knew the promises concerning Isaac. The idea of divine Sonship, in whom all nations of the earth would be blessed, was too precious to be mocked by a sensuous sense of manhood. Ishmael, through Hagar the Egyptian, was a descendant of Ham, the evil son of Noah. In the allegorical meaning of this record, Ishmael mocked Isaac and the divine nature which he had come to

express as Ham had mocked Noah and the righteousness and grace he expressed.

Hagar and Ishmael Banished from Abraham's Household

Sarah saw that this condition could not be tolerated:

Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.— Gen.21:10.

Sarah's action in demanding that Hagar and her son be sent away, though apparently severe, was divinely just, for she knew that nothing could stand beside her son that would mock or belittle his spiritual status and his divine mission. There could be nothing within his home environment that would act as a counteracting influence to hinder the spiritual unfoldment of the child of promise. That which mocked Isaac mocked the Covenant of God with man and belittled or scorned the understanding of the scientific relationship between God and man, which had come to Abraham and Sarah and which was exemplified in the birth of Isaac.

Abraham loved Ishmael, his son by the bondwoman. But Ishmael exhibited the same rebellious nature his mother expressed. Both Hagar and Ishmael were as alien to Abraham's household as Lot had been. Neither seemed to have any comprehension of the New Covenant and its spiritual demands. Ishmael was seventeen years of age at this time, yet he seemed not to have embraced any of the godliness his father expressed so abundantly. Ishmael's consciousness was so darkened by selfwill and self-exaltation that he was unresponsive to the spiritual influence which motivated Abraham's every thought and act. However, the idea of parting with Ishmael was grievous to Abraham. He turned to God for the answer:

And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for in Isaac shall thy seed be called.

And also of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation, because he is thy seed.— Gen.21:12,13.

The word of God to Abraham confirmed the divine justice of Sarah's action. And Abraham's humility before God, and his instant obedience to the divine command lifted his thought to behold God's all-encompassing nature as divine Mother Love, who cares for all Her children, wherever they may be.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beer-sheba.— Gen.21:14.

Hagar had not been sent out into a part of the world which she knew not. Abraham had dug seven wells in the wilderness of Beer-sheba. And it was here that he had pasture for his great herds of cattle, sheep, and camels. Nor had Hagar been sent away from God. The words of the Bible reveal clearly that God's presence was with her. though she knew it not.

And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs.

And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.

And God heard the voice of the lad; and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven, and said unto her, What aileth thee, Hagar? fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is.

Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand; for I will make him a great nation.

And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water; and she went and filled the bottle with water, and gave the lad drink.— Gen.21:15-19.

For the first time Hagar, the arrogant Egyptian bondwoman, expressed an emotion akin to humility; and immediately an angel of God, an idea of God's presence, came to her consciousness and spoke to her: "What aileth thee, Hagar? What's the matter with you? Open your eyes and see what God has prepared for you. Your resentment and despair have blinded you to the good that is before

your eyes. You are perishing from thirst, and yet there is a well of water beside you. Rouse yourself from self-pity and you will see that God is with you. Fear not: for God hath heard the voice of the lad where he is."

God heard Ishmael's voice *where he was*, not where he wanted to be. Ishmael had mocked — disbelieved and ridiculed — the idea of divine Sonship which Isaac represented. Therefore, it was impossible for him to receive the blessing of the Son of God, for the level of his belief determined the measure of his receptivity. The divine blessing is never withheld by God, for God's blessing is infinite, limitless. But the door of one's own receptivity must be opened wide in order to receive the full flow of God's blessing. Ishmael's thought was darkened by materialism, and his receptivity to the things of Spirit was thereby limited. But God blessed him where he was — as the point of his receptivity.

And God was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer.

And he dwelt in the wilderness of Paran: and his mother took him a wife out of the land of Egypt.—
Gen.21:20,21.

God's promise to Abraham for Ishmael was fulfilled:

As for Ishmael, . . . Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall be beget, and I will make him a great nation.— Gen.17:20.

Ishmael received his inheritance, and it was as large, materially, as was Isaac's. His was not the heritage of spiritual dominion which Isaac received, but it was an inheritance which Ishmael could understand. Hagar "took him a wife out of the land of Egypt," from whence she had come. And Ishmael fathered twelve sons and a daughter, Mahalath (Bashemath) who, many years later, married Isaac's son, Esau (Gen.28:9; 36:3).

Now these are the generations of Ishmael, Abraham's son, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's handmaid, bare unto Abraham:

And these are the names of the sons of Ishmael, by their names, according to their generations; the firstborn of Ishmael, Nebajoth; and Kedar, and Adbeel, and Mibsam,

And Mishma, and Dumah, and Massa,
Hadar, and Tema, Jerur, Naphish, and Kedemah:

These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their towns, and by their castles; twelve princes according to their nations.

And these are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty seven years; and he gave up the ghost and died; and was gathered unto his people.

And they dwelt from Havilah unto Shur, that is before Egypt, as thou goest toward Assyria: and he died in the presence of all his brethren.—

Gen.25:12-18.

Ishmael's descendants dwelt in the desert of northern Arabia. And many of them still dwell there. They were a nomadic people. Like Ishmael, they were celebrated for their skill with bow and arrow. The statement that they lived in towns and in castles is more properly translated villages and encampments. So far as can be determined, only the Nabateans established permanent residence. But mostly they perpetuated the inherent nature of Ishmael, who dwelt in the desert, "a wild ass of a man, his hand against every man and every man's hand against him" (Gen.16:12, RSV). True to God's word, the Ishmaelites, known today as Arabs, became a great nation.

Abraham's Covenant of Peace with Abimelech

Abraham continued to live in the south country for many years after the birth of Isaac. He pitched his great tents in the region of Beer-Sheba and there sprang up about him a veritable city. His large herds of sheep and cattle found good pasturage in the land, and wherever they roamed Abraham dug wells to keep his flock well watered. There was peace within his gates because there was peace within his heart. This unique man had become known as a mighty prince among men and Abimelech soon recognized that Abraham had it within himself to exert great power. Therefore the king sought to make a treaty of peace with him.

And it came to pass at that time, that Abimelech and Phichol the chief captain of his host spake unto Abraham, saying, God is with thee in all that thou doest:

Now therefore swear unto me here by God that thou wilt not deal falsely with me, nor with my son, nor with my son's son: but according to the kindness that I have done unto thee, thou shalt do unto me, and to the land wherein thou hast sojourned.

And Abraham said, I will swear.— Gen.21:22-24.

We do not know whether the following incident took place before, after, or during the meeting of Abimelech and Abraham. That it was a current matter is indicated in the fact that there is no break in the record:

And Abraham reproved [complained to] Abimelech because of a well of water, which Abimelech's servants had violently taken away.

And Abimelech said, I wot not who hath done this thing: neither didst thou tell me, neither yet heard I of it, but today.

And Abraham took sheep and oxen, and gave them to Abimelech; and both of them made a covenant.

And Abraham set seven ewe lambs of the flock by themselves.


And Abimelech said unto Abraham, what mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves?

And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well.

Wherefore he called that place Beer-sheba; because there they sware both of them.

Thus they made a covenant at Beer-sheba: then Abimelech rose up, and Phichol the chief captain of his host, and they returned unto the land of the Philistines— Gen.21:25-32.

In this record we see the spiritual authority which Abraham expressed at all times. He was loving but firm in defending his rights, but he did so in such a way that he kept the friendship and respect of those in the land in which he dwelt. Having made a Covenant with God, it was natural that he also made a covenant of peace with man. His harmonious relationship with God was reflected in his harmonious relationship with all men. His outward experiences manifested his inner peace — peace not only with God and man, but also peace with his environment, peace with everything in God's universe.



Chapter XXIV

ABRAHAM'S GREATEST TRIAL OF FAITH

And Abraham planted a grove in Beer-sheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the ever-lasting God.— Gen.21:33.

“The everlasting God” is *'el 'alam*, literally translated *The Ever-Living Eternal God*. This is a new understanding of the nature of Deity revealed to Abraham. Each successive stage of Abraham's unfoldment has been preceded and accompanied by some new revelation of the nature of the Infinite. Revelation is not ecstatic, illusory, theoretical, or abstract. Hence, as each new view of the divine nature has come to light in his consciousness, Abraham has been called upon to prove, or demonstrate, the power of the new unfoldment in his own life.

It should not be surprising then to discover that Abraham was soon forced to prove his understanding of the nature of God as *Ever-living*. He received a message from God which he did not read aright. And it was his absolute faith in God as The Ever-living Eternal Life, or The Everlasting God, which preserved his soul and saved the life of his beloved son.

Sacrifice Isaac! Misinterpretation of God's Command

And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt [test] Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.

And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee unto the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the

burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him.

And on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off.

And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.

And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together.— Gen.22:1-6.

Authorities differ as to Isaac's age at this time. Some suggest he was a lad of 14, others 18, and *Josephus* declares he was 25 years of age. Since a boy was not considered to be a man until he reached the age of 30, he might have been any of these ages and still called a *lad*. We have heard nothing of the child of promise since he was an infant, indicative of the fact that he had been living in the shadow of Abraham's greatness. We hear of him now in one of the most dramatic incidents recorded in the Bible.

This was truly a testing time for both Abraham and Isaac. For Isaac, it was the first great spiritual demand to be made upon him. For Abraham, it was the last and the greatest test of his faith in God. Throughout Abraham's many experiences, each time he was ready to take a momentous spiritual step forward in the establishment of the New Covenant, the Covenant of Godlikeness, there had been persistent attempts of the tempter to confuse him and to superimpose the conditions of the Old Covenant upon the imagery of his thought. Prior to this, when the serpent had attempted to insinuate its suggestions into the divine message and scramble the Word of God, it had been subtle. But now, with diabolical cleverness, it projects itself into Abraham's thinking, causing him to attribute to God a directive completely unlike God — the human sacrifice of his son — a suggestion which God, divine Love, could not possibly have conceived.

God had called Abraham to go to the land of Moriah, in which is Salem, or Jeru-salem, Melchizedek's city, to a certain mountain there — Mount Moriah — typical of the New Jerusalem. On this mount, in centuries to come, Solomon built the great temple and all Israel came there to worship God (Chron.3:1; *Dummelow*, p.30). This is the place where Abraham came at God's command to build an altar — not to worship God, but to sacrifice his beloved son, in

the mistaken belief that this was God's will. This was *not* God's will. But because the written word records Abraham's concept of the experience, that is what we hear.

Symbolically, Abraham had been called to go up higher in the understanding of Isaac's place in the Covenant. In Abraham's spiritual unfoldment his journey from Beer-sheba to Mount Moriah in Jerusalem was a divine demand that he seek again the understanding of God revealed to him through his association with Melchizedek, who was king of Salem — Jerusalem — and priest of the Most High God. Recall that Melchizedek is a prototype of the Christ. And in the unfolding of the Trinity, in which the triune nature of the Infinite was revealed to Abraham, Melchizedek represented to Abraham the idea of divine Sonship, "having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God" (Heb.7:3). It was necessary that Abraham regain the concept of the Son of God which had been revealed to him. Hence his return to the land of Moriah in which is Salem — typical of the New Jerusalem — and to the elevation of thought God called *Mount Moriah*.

Here, in the mountain of divine revelation, God demanded that Abraham sacrifice, or give up, a material concept of sonship and release Isaac from the binding influence of human fatherhood which held the growing lad in the bonds of childhood. Abraham must sacrifice this sense of a human father-son relationship, however precious it was to him, and let Isaac expand and grow in spiritual understanding and individuality and find his place in the Covenant. God was demanding of Abraham that he let Isaac come into the same scientific sense of man's relationship with God which Abraham had found in his own spiritual unfoldment.

But even while the word of wisdom was telling Abraham that he must stop binding Isaac and must sacrifice a material sense of his son, the dread word *sacrifice* took on the meaning of the land, for the Canaanites were notorious for their child sacrifices. In every temptation which had come to Abraham, it had been some custom of the land, some common consent, some general belief, which had been the pivot, or axis, on which his thought had turned to take in what the tempter had been suggesting. So, instead of hearing the full import of the message from God, which told him to go to the mountain of divine revelation and take Isaac with him to learn

what he had learned there, Abraham heard *the voice of the land*, with *its* materialistic interpretation of the word *sacrifice*.

Though the veil of occultism hung about him like a mist, obscuring the spiritual sense of the divine message, yet he plodded on up the mountain in blind faith, obedient to his highest concept of what God had said to him. Through it all his faith in his God never faltered. But the mist of material reasoning was dark within him.

But what of Isaac? What was he thinking during Abraham's night of agony? He was ever the obedient and loving son. His faith in his father was as great as Abraham's faith in God. Only once did he question Abraham:

Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.— Gen.22:7,8.

Did Abraham at that moment catch a glimpse of the Christ-idea, the Lamb of God, through which we learn that every sacrifice of a material sense of life leads us to a higher understanding of divine Life, which is eternal? The record continues:

So they went both of them together.

And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac, his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood.

And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son.— Gen.22:8-10.

Abraham built an altar and laid the wood *in order* upon the altar. Even at a moment such as this Abraham's well-ordered sense disciplined his hand. His human sense of order was a link to the divine order that was never disturbed. Still obedient to what he believed to be God's will, he bound Isaac and laid him upon the altar. Then, stretching forth his hand, Abraham took the knife to slay his son. And Isaac, with complete confidence in his father, submitted to this preparation for sacrifice! Can you picture this scene? A loving father, who would have given his very life for his son, about to offer his beloved child as a burnt offering to a God of Love who gives life to all! What a fantasy! What a mockery of God's will!

The Angel Of The Lord Stayed His Hand

Even as Abraham raised the knife to slay his son, the angel of the Lord stayed his hand: "Abraham! Abraham!" There was urgency in the call:

Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me.—Gen.22:12.

What was this angel that spoke to Abraham? It was God's own thought which had gained such ascendancy in his consciousness that it overshadowed and embraced his human thought. This angel thought of God's presence broke the mesmeric spell under which Abraham had been struggling and awakened him to see the real meaning of God's message. A scientific sense, a divinely logical sense, from the *Logos*, the Word of God, shined through the mist. This logical scientific sense told Abraham that action which was not in accord with the nature of God was not directed by God. It told him that all he needed to sacrifice was a mortal, material, possessive concept of his son. Abraham learned that giving his son's life to God did not mean sacrificing him as a burnt offering, but dedicating his life to the fulfillment of the Trinity as the exemplar of divine Sonship. The time had come for Isaac to find his place in the Covenant — to know God as his Father and not to look to Abraham as his highest authority.

But let us return for a moment to the text, for there is another vital message in it for us. After God's angel thought had taken possession of his consciousness, "Abraham lifted up his eyes." His spiritual perceptive faculties were awakened, his vision was spiritualized, lifted up above the evidence immediately before his eyes, and he saw a holier concept of God which requires no sacrifice of good as evidence of faith and love:

And behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son.— Gen.22:13.

God had provided Himself a lamb for a burnt offering! From ancient times the male lamb, or ram, has been the figure of sacrifice

for atonement. Symbolically, the lamb was supposed to symbolize the worshipper himself, sacrificing his material life for the divine, giving up a material sense of existence for the spiritual. Christ Jesus was called *the Lamb of God* because he laid down his material life that he might give to the world the proof of immortal life in his Resurrection.

Ancient records reveal that the figure of the ram as a symbol or crest, was significant of highest authority, and its use was reserved for royalty. Among pagan religions the ram was used as a sacrificial animal whose life was sacrificed that an individual's life might be preserved, or made immortal. In recent archaeological excavations at Ur in Old Chaldea (modern Iraq), there was found a tomb of a queen who was buried some fifteen hundred years before Abraham was born. The funeral bed of the queen was made of gold with four gold posts, one at each corner. Each of these golden pilasters was carved in the figure of a ram caught in a thicket by his horns. (See Dr. C Leonard Woolley, *Ur of the Chaldees*, pp.67-68, Plate VI.)

Abraham could not have been unaware of this symbol and its meaning, for he was one of the most learned men of his day. Hence, the appearance of a ram caught in a thicket by his horns must have had great significance for him. In the metaphor of the story, the appearance of this figure revealed to Abraham and indicates to us that Abraham had glimpsed the true meaning of the nature of *The Everlasting God — The ever-Living Eternal Life* — who gives eternal Life to man, His image and likeness. This incident also tells us that Abraham had come into the understanding of the divine royalty of his being, for only a prince or a priest could sacrifice a ram. Thus Abraham showed forth some comprehension of the compound nature of spiritual man as both priest of God and king on the earth, the human and divine coincidence, of which Melchizedek was the type. Further, Abraham showed that he was willing to sacrifice a material sense of life for the immortal idea of being.

With deep spiritual insight, the great writer of the Book of Hebrews wrote of Abraham's momentous testing time:

By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up
Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered
up his only begotten son,

Of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy seed be called:

Accounting that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead; from whence also he received him in a figure.— Heb.11:17-19.

Moffatt's translation of the last verse sheds much light:

... for he considered that God was able to raise man from the dead. Hence he did get him back, by what was a parable of the resurrection.— Heb.11:19 (JM).

Some elements of the Crucifixion, the Resurrection, and the Ascension may be glimpsed in this experience: Abraham's anguish over the prospective loss of his son, his joy at receiving Isaac as though raised from the dead, and the realization that he must ascend still higher in his understanding of God and man.

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen.— Gen.22:14.

The Zenith Of Abraham's Spiritual Unfoldment

This period in Abraham's spiritual journeying in his divine adventure brought to him a new understanding of God as *Jehovah-jireh* — *The Revealing Lord*. Literally translated this name for Deity means: *God sees*; but it also means *God-vision*. In the mount of revelation the vision of *Elohim* becomes the vision of man — scientific thought which sees above and beyond the evidence of the physical senses; vision that can never be dimmed, obscured, confused, mistaken, fooled, mesmerized; vision which penetrates and dissolves the mist of materialism and beholds the spiritual realities of God's creation on earth as it is in heaven. This is the vision of the spiritual seer, the prophet, who sees creation as God sees it, who sees God's children as God sees them, who sees Godlikeness everywhere.

God's revelation to Abraham on Mount Moriah of His name and nature as *Jehovah-jireh* proclaims the fact that Abraham was indeed a *prophet* — one whose heart is so close to God that *he sees as God sees*.

Jehovah-jireh is the symbolical name for the mount of Moriah and is typical of the height of Abraham's understanding of God and the *zenith* of his spiritual unfoldment. *His Covenant with God had come to its communion*. God's promise rings anew in his ears:

And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time,

And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son:

That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies;

And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.—

Gen.22:15-18.

Once more the *I AM* pronounces the divine will: "*I WILL* bless thee . . . *I WILL* multiply thee . . . In thy seed *SHALL* all the nations of the earth be blessed." This is the last record we have of the *I AM* speaking to Abraham "as a man speaketh unto his friend" (Ex.33:11). After this, the divine voice became to him the inner voice, the "I" of his own being, which speaks with divine authority.

In the New Covenant, or New Testament, the Apostle Paul wrote thus of the seed of Abraham: "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal.3:29). They who worship the God of Abraham and acknowledge His Christ, these are the seed of Abraham. The seed is not of blood, but of faith, as the Apostle further declared: "They which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham" (Gal.3:9). And *in these* shall all nations of the world be blessed.

Again the intent of the serpent to destroy the seed of the woman has been foiled and the child of promise, the new messenger of the Covenant, is made ready for his great mission — the exemplification of divine Sonship in the unfolding of the Trinity.

Abraham and Isaac returned to Beer-sheba, where Isaac grew to maturity. After some time, we know not how long, Abraham and Sarah returned to Hebron, their city of the Covenant, after having established Isaac in his city. They had come full circle in

their understanding and demonstration of the divine completeness.

On their return to their city we note a wonderful change which has taken place. They now call Hebron by its original name — *Kirjath-arba*, a Hebrew name meaning *city of four* (Gen.23:2). Metaphorically this name is typical of the nature of their foursquare city, their consciousness of the spiritual dimension in which they abode — the consciousness of holiness, or spiritual wholeness, so beautifully described by St. John as “the city which lieth foursquare and cometh down from God out of heaven” (Rev.21:2,16). The Genesis of their understanding had unfolded to include the Revelation of their divine completeness.

The conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness — of spiritual perfection: *Walk before me and be thou perfect* — had been fulfilled. Abraham and Sarah had been true to the trust invested in them. They expressed the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, the compound nature of *Elohim*, and thus exemplified the first aspect, or statement, of the Trinity: *God, the Father-Mother*. Upon their life-work was stamped the seal of divine approval: “And God saw that it was good.” Their Sabbath Rest had come!

Chapter XXV

S A R A H

Mother Of Nations

The Almighty God chose Sarah through whom to reveal to the world the nature of the Almighty Motherhood of God and to exemplify the power of divine conception in bringing forth the child of promise. Throughout her human life Sarah had demonstrated in some measure the dominion of spiritual womanhood. Recall that her name was *Sarai*, a Hebrew name meaning *princess, noble lady*. Metaphorically, this name reveals something of her nature. She had glimpsed her divine royalty and spiritual ascendancy. She demonstrated her God-given dominion in a world dominated by mortal men — a world in which woman was subordinate to father, husband, son, or to any male member of her family. But even the lovely name *Sarai* did not describe her divine nature.

The Almighty revealed to Abraham and to Sarai her new name *Sarah, Mother of Nations*, a name and nature indicative of her expression of the Motherhood of God. This revelation gave her power to conceive of her divinely royal status as the daughter of God, having spiritual dominion on earth. Further, this new name, or divine nature, gave her divine power to conceive and to bring forth the child of promise, “whose birth depended not on the course of nature nor on any impulse or plan of man, but on God” (John 1:13, NEB).

In Abraham’s story we learned that he had gained some understanding of the nature of the Fatherhood of God, indicated in the meaning of his new name *Abraham* — *father of a multitude of nations*. But not until he understood the nature of God as *El Shaddi, The Almighty*, the Mighty Motherhood of God, who performs all things for Her children, could Abraham fulfill the conditions of the New Covenant: “Walk before me (the Almighty) and be thou perfect.” Walk in the Spirit, in the way of holiness, ever mindful of the divine presence and of the spiritual nature of God’s universe! Be perfect! Be Godlike! Express spiritual maturity, the

compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, and thus have dominion over all the earth!

At first Abraham had thought God made His Covenant with him alone. This beloved man was slow in comprehending the reason he and Sarah were joint tenants in the Covenant. The Covenant with *Elohim* must be made with husband and wife, exemplifying the oneness of the male and female of God's creating, expressing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*. When Abraham still seemed unable to comprehend this fundamental spiritual fact, the tender Motherhood of God, *El Shaddi*, the Almighty Mother, literally thundered: *Sarah! Sarah! Sarah is the key figure in the Covenant!* Three times God had spoken to Abraham declaring: "Sarah shall bear a son, and I will make my Covenant with him." But Abraham could not believe that Sarah, who was barren and old, could conceive and give birth (Gen.17:16,19,21).

But the time was at hand for the Covenant to be ratified. And The Almighty sent a message to Sarah by three divine messengers, typical of the Trinity, to make plain to both Sarah and Abraham the power of the Almighty to accomplish the divine purpose. They appeared to Abraham as he sat in the open tent door of his home, and he received them graciously — he was receptive to their message. But what they had to say concerned Sarah. Being assured that Sarah was listening, the voice of the Trinity spoke:

I will certainly return unto thee, according to the
time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a
son.— Gen.18:10.

The "I" which spoke to Abraham and Sarah was the Holy Spirit, the *I AM* appearing in its Interpretive aspect, to make plain to their receptive thought the message of the Trinity — the *I AM* who speaks and creation comes to light. Sarah was incredulous. But the divine messenger exclaimed: "Is anything too hard for the Lord?" (Gen.18:14).

Sarah received the divine message with joy. Abraham also believed. The power of God's Motherhood to perform all things for Her people had dawned in their consciousness. The Spirit of God had moved upon the face of the waters.

When Abraham and Sarah listened *together* to the voice of the Trinity, this togetherness acted as a spiritual force which dispelled the disbelief which had delayed the fulfillment of God's promise that a son would indeed be born of Sarah, not by the will of the flesh, but by the will of God. At last they understood that when the *I AM* said *I WILL*, the law of fulfillment was inscribed in the divine mandate.

The Covenant had come to its communion: Abraham and Sarah, now comprehending in some measure the nature and power of the Fatherhood *and* Motherhood of God, became exemplars of this compound divine nature and thus became joint tenants in the Covenant. And in fulness of time, Sarah did indeed bring forth a son, the child of promise, born by promise of God, and not by laws of nature. And in Isaac, her son, all nations of the world have been blessed.

The birth of the child of promise did not bring joy to all of Abraham's household. Both Hagar and Ishmael were rebellious because the son of the wife took precedence over the son of the bondmaid. Ishmael despised Isaac and "mocked" the idea of divine sonship. It was mandatory that a separation be made between Sarah's son and Hagar's son.

This separation has been discussed in the context of Abraham's story. Now let us see it through the eyes, or spiritual discernment, of the Apostle Paul:

It is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

Which things are an allegory; for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar (Hagar).

For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.

But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.

But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuteth him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

Nevertheless what saith the Scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.

So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.— Gal.4:22-26, 28-31; 5:1.

Paul's words do not imply that the allegory of Sarah and Hagar is unhistorical myth. He points to the spiritual meaning of the text. A commentary in the *Interpreter's Bible* sheds light on the Apostle's words:

The Jerusalem which now is was a most unholy "Holy City," full of injustice, violence, and murder, and subject to the cruel and wicked rulers imposed by a Gentile empire. But over against this Jerusalem of slavery lay an ideal celestial city, unseen at present, but destined soon to supersede it. Paul called it the Jerusalem above. Sarah, the freewoman was the ancestress of its citizens, who were the people of faith and of freedom in Christ. (*IB*, Vol.10, Expos. pp.540-541.)

The power of God's Motherhood is revealed in this allegory — the power of the divine Mother-nature in each one of us which performs the miracle of grace for Her children — power revealed in Sarah's conception of Isaac. This allegory — this description of one thing under the image of another — when understood, enables us to conceive the spiritual fact that now are we the sons and daughters of God, free from the binding conditions of the Old Covenant of materialism, free to do the will of God, free to be partakers of the blessings of the Covenant of Godlikeness, free to be kings and priests unto God, having the dominion of heaven on earth. This freedom is the heritage of all who acknowledge that God is not only the Father of man and the universe, but also the Mother of all.

Although the figures of Hagar and Ishmael are used to portray the Old Covenant and Sarah and Isaac the New Covenant, it is not correct to assume that all of Hagar's descendants are bound by the Old Covenant and that all of Sarah's offspring are enfolded within the New Covenant. These things are an allegory, and it is as an allegory they must always be considered.

The children of the bondwoman (Hagar) are typical of the children of the flesh — in doubt of God's way. These walk in the way of Adam and inherit Adam's unholy legacy of bondage to materialism in all its forms. The children of the freewoman (Sarah) are typical of those who have been new-born of Spirit, regenerated by the Holy Spirit, transformed by the renewing of their minds. These walk in the way of holiness and inherit the blessings of the New Covenant — freedom from the bondage of materialism, having the dominion of heaven on earth.

Actually the children of the bondwoman and the children of the freewoman are not particular people — either individuals or nations. They are characteristics, qualities of thought, idiosyncrasies of disposition, which all people of the world embody and express at various times and in various degrees.

What does this mean to us today? Even this: We strive to express the qualities of spiritual freedom typical of the son of the freewoman. But too often we seem to be the offspring of the bondwoman, with an inheritance of bondage, limitation, and fleshly cares which persecute and obstruct our spiritual instincts of liberty, freedom, joy, accomplishment, and dominion. Well might we ask: Is there no deliverance from this bondage, from this heritage of mortality?

What saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman
and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not
be heir with the son of the freewoman.— Gal.4:30.

St. Paul echoes this divine demand in words which enunciate the transforming power of the Spirit of God to born us anew:

Leaving your former way of life, you must lay aside
that old human nature which, deluded by its lusts, is
sinking towards death. You must be made new in
mind and spirit, and put on the new nature of God's
creating, which shows itself in the just and devout
life called for by the truth.— Eph.4:22-24 (NEB).

We can cast off the bondage of the Old Covenant that binds us to a material, sensuous concept of existence and holds us in the bonds of mortality. We can cast out the bondwoman and her son. We can put off the old man and the old mortal nature. And we can put on the new man and the new divine nature and be made new in mind

and body. Then we naturally walk in the Spirit, ever conscious of the spiritual nature of everyone and everything in the world. Thus we fulfill the conditions of the New Covenant and are the beneficiaries of its blessings.

The nature of God's Motherhood has been obscured throughout the ages. But through Sarah's exemplification of the power of God's Motherhood, some understanding of the nature of The Almighty God — the All-might of God's Motherhood and the Almighty power of spiritual conception — has been revealed to mankind. In the understanding of the Motherhood of God and of man's expression of this divine nature is power to conceive and to bring forth the unseen spiritual verities of God's creation and power to conceive the wondrous fact that now are we the sons and daughters of God.

Few of us acknowledge the unique place Sarah holds in Biblical history. Few of us give her the honor due her exemplification of the Almighty power of God's Motherhood. Few of us realize her place in the Covenant.

The New Covenant, with its provisions and its promises, was made with Abraham. But it was made by *El Shaddi*, The Almighty Mother-God. And Sarah was and is the key figure, yea the keynote, in God's Covenant with man — the New Covenant of Godlikeness, of divine completeness, which gives us the dominion of heaven on earth.

Edith Deen wrote of Sarah, Abraham's beloved wife, thus:

Sarah was a princess in bearing and character, as her name signifies. . . .

Sarah's life became Abraham's. Where he went she went, not as his shadow but as a strong influence. . . . The beautiful confidence and true affection existing between Sarah and Abraham are reflected in the authority she had over their household during his absence. He recognized her as his equal. She never subjected herself to a lesser role, and Abraham never demanded it. . . . The intensity of their union deepened and became like a mighty force that nothing, not even Hagar, a secondary wife and mother of Abraham's first child, Ishmael, could diminish. Sarah surely had developed great faith or she could not have become the mother in the Bible's first story of a miracle birth. — (Edith Deen, *All the Women of the Bible*, pp.9-13.)

And Sarah was an hundred and seven and twenty years old; these were the years of the life of Sarah.

And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan: and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.— Gen.23:1,2.

Sarah, Abraham's beloved, is gone. But her mission in life was fulfilled. She lives in our hearts and minds as the mother of the child of promise who was born by promise of God and not by laws of nature. She is remembered as the one who was found worthy to prefigure the Virgin Mary's divine conception of Jesus, "who was born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13).

We glimpse something of the respectful attitude of the people of the land toward Abraham when he asked that he might buy the field, the cave that was therein, and all the trees that were in the field as a burying place for his beloved. They said:

Hear us, my lord: thou art a mighty prince among us: in the choice of our sephulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sephulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.— Gen.23:6.

But Abraham wanted the plot of land near his home. He asked that a sum of money be named. Although the price Ephron the Hittite declared the land was worth was far in excess of its value, Abraham made no attempt to bargain with him. In the presence of witnesses he paid the full price, thus making sure his title to "the field of Ephron, which was in Machpelah, which was before Mamre, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, that were in all the borders round about. And there he buried Sarah his wife" (Gen.23:1-20).

It is significant that the only property Abraham owned was the field of Ephron in Hebron, the city of the Covenant. In Hebron he and Sarah had reached their pinnacle of spiritual unfoldment. Here their Covenant with God came to its communion in the understanding of the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, God, which they exemplified. It is natural that Abraham should have buried his beloved in Hebron, as though in so doing he knew that she still lived in God's spiritual universe, of which their city of the Covenant was the symbol.

Chapter XXVI

THE QUEST FOR A WIFE FOR ISAAC

Abraham and Sarah, expressing the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, had ushered Isaac into his Covenant relationship with God and prepared him for his great mission — that of exemplifying the nature of the Son of God, the second aspect of the Trinity. However, Abraham had one more vitally important task to perform for Isaac before the child of promise was ready to embark on his divine adventure.

Isaac must learn more of his divine completeness in order that he properly exemplify his place in the Covenant of Godlikeness. In years to come each individual would find divine completeness through expressing the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*. But the unfoldment of the Trinity demanded that Abraham find a wife for Sarah's son who would be a true helpmeet in exemplifying the compound nature of the Son of God.

The task before Abraham was not an easy one. The womanhood of the land of Canaan embodied none of the spiritual qualities that would have qualified any one of them for marriage with the new representative of the Covenant. Isaac must have a wife who would be to him what Sarah had been to Abraham — a spiritual partner who would stand side by side with him in establishing the Covenant, having co-equal responsibility for upholding its provisions. She must be chosen prayerfully.

The future of the race, the history of the people of God, and the unfoldment of the knowledge of God and of the Son of God depended largely upon the wife chosen for Isaac. Abraham knew this. He had learned that the deep discernment and spiritual intuition of the Motherhood of God, reflected by righteous womanhood, cut through occult influences in mortal thought. Abraham had reason to know that woman's intuition and spiritual vision quickly see through the veil of matter and material circumstances to the unfoldment of divine purpose. She is more apt

to see in the events before her the *seed* of God's purpose and to know how important it is that the seed be preserved so that its fruitage may appear in due time, and that it may grow and multiply and fill the earth.

Abraham's deep human love for his first-born son would have caused him to give to Ishmael the blessing of the child of promise. But Sarah saw that the blessing of God must go to the son chosen of God, and that no matter how humanly unjust such action might seem to be, "the son of the bondwoman cannot be heir with the son of the freewoman." Abraham had come to trust Sarah's vision and intuition. And he knew that Isaac needed such a wife as Sarah had been to him.

His thought turned instinctively to his brother Nahor, who, with his large family, lived in Padan-aram — the land into which Abraham and his father and family had gone when they migrated from Chaldea. Abraham had learned that Nahor's wife had born him eight sons, and that one of these sons had begotten a daughter whose name was Rebekah (Gen.22:20-23). Spiritual intuition told Abraham that the search for a wife for his son would begin and end in his brother's house. He quickly put thought into action:

Eliezer Abraham's Faithful Steward

And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh:

And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell:

But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac.

And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me into this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest?

And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again.

The Lord God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I

give this land; he shall send his angel with thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence.

And if the woman will not be willing to follow thee, then thou shalt be clear from this my oath: only bring not my son thither again.

And the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and sware to him concerning that matter.— Gen.24:2-9.

Abraham had been wise never to return to Chaldea — the land of organized occultism, idolatry, necromancy, and the like. He was equally wise in refusing to permit Isaac to leave Canaan and go where his pure mind might become adulterated and enslaved by the influences of the highly developed powers of the carnal mind. Even in Padan-aram, the powerful occult influence of the carnal mind was felt. This area was a kind of crossroads of mortal thought through which travellers from Chaldea, Babylon, Egypt, and all parts of the civilized world passed. The great trade route of the Fertile Crescent from Chaldea to Egypt arched through Padan-aram. Here merchants not only sold their goods but also exchanged news of their respective worlds. Abraham knew that it was not knowledge of the world but knowledge of God which Isaac needed to prepare him for his great mission as heir of the Covenant of Godlikeness.

“The eldest servant that ruled over all that he had,” was Eliezer of Damascus, who had been Abraham’s chief steward since he first came into the land of Canaan (Gen.15:2). It is evident, from subsequent events, that Abraham had instructed Eliezer in the things of Spirit. This trusted servant prepared for his journey carefully and prayerfully. He took costly presents of gold, silver, and raiment for Rebekah and her family. But most important of all, he took with him a spiritual sense of his mission. He realized the deep significance Abraham placed on finding the proper wife for his son. And he was mindful of the complete trust Abraham accorded him in this undertaking. But let us turn to the Bible and read one of the most precious stories in all scripture: The quest for a wife for Isaac by Abraham’s trusted servant:

And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor.— Gen.24:10.

When, with his small caravan of camels and camel drivers bearing costly presents, Eliezer came to the outskirts of the city of Haran,

He made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water.— Gen.24:11.

And then this faithful servant of Abraham prayed:

And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.

Behold, I stand here by the well of water; the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water:

And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master.— Gen.24:12-14.

Immediately his prayer was answered:

It came to pass, before he had done speaking, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcar, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder.

And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up.

And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher.

And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him to drink.

And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking.

And she hastened, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again unto the well to draw water, and drew for all his camels.

And the man wondering at her held his peace, to wit whether the Lord had made his journey prosperous or not.— Gen.24:15-21.

The events followed exactly the pattern of his prayer. He was convinced that the Lord had made his journey prosperous. So much so that when Rebekah identified herself as the daughter of Bethuel, he gave her "a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold." He then asked her if there was room in her father's house for him and also both straw and provender for his camels (Gen.24:22-25).

And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord.

And he said, Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.

And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things.— Gen.24:26-28.

Abraham had foreseen that the same God who had led him out of Chaldea into his promised land would send His angel, His holy thoughts, to accompany this faithful servant on his journey and lead him in the right way. And so it was that this righteous man was ever conscious of God's presence with him, guiding and guarding. Faithfulness, humility, consecration, gentleness, trust in God's guidance — Godlike qualities which this servant possessed and expressed — reveal the fact that Abraham had taught his servants to love and honor the God he worshipped. They also show us why Abraham had given all things he possessed into the hand of his chief steward, and why he had entrusted to him the vitally important mission of finding a wife for Isaac.

And Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban:

And Laban ran out unto the man, unto the well.

And it came to pass, when he saw the earring and bracelets upon his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rebekah his sister, saying, Thus spake the man unto me; that he came unto the man; and, behold, he stood by the camels at the well.—

Gen.24:29,30.

Laban's hospitality was based entirely on the evidence of wealth that Abraham's servant had brought with him. With feigned graciousness he said:

Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels.

And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men's feet that were with him.

And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on.— Gen.24:31-33.

Eliezer identified himself as Abraham's servant and told of his mission:

The Lord hath blessed my master greatly; and he is become great: and he hath given him flocks, and herds, and silver, and gold, and menservants, and maidservants, and camels and asses.

And Sarah my master's wife bare a son to my master when she was old: and unto him hath he given all that he hath.

And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell:

But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son.

And I said unto my master, Peradventure the woman will not follow me.

And he said unto me, The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son of my kindred, and of my father's house:

Then shalt thou be clear from this my oath, when thou comest to my kindred; and if they give not thee one, thou shalt be clear from my oath.—

Gen.24:35-41.

Eliezer then told Rebekah's family of his prayer that he would be guided aright and of his meeting with Rebekah. He begged that they would give Rebekah as a wife to Isaac (Gen.24:42-49). And Laban, Rebekah's brother, and her mother said:

The thing proceedeth from the Lord: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good.

And they said, We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth.

And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.—

Gen.24:50,57,58.

The Betrothal of Isaac and Rebekah

The servant then gave to Rebekah and to her mother and brother the presents which he had brought, jewels of gold and of silver, and raiment, and many precious things. After they had tarried all night, Abraham's servant asked that they depart immediately. And although Rebekah's mother and brother sought to delay their departure for a time, they consented when Rebekah agreed to go.

And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men.

And they blessed Rebekah, and said unto her, Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them.

And Rebekah arose, and her damsels, and they rode upon the camels and followed the men: and the servant took Rebekah, and went his way.—

Gen.24:59-61.

Rebekah was thus married to Isaac by proxy through a verbal contract or betrothal. No other ceremony was required to make the marriage binding. So Rebekah left her home in Haran to go into the land of Canaan to Beer-sheba to become Isaac's wife. Through the marriage covenant she became an integral part of the New Covenant with Isaac — the same Covenant which God had made with Abraham and Sarah, the same conditions prevailing: "Walk before me, and be thou perfect." Live ever mindful of the divine presence and be fruitful in expressing the divine nature.

At journey's end we find Isaac going out to meet the caravan:

And Isaac came from the way of the well Lahairoi; for he dwelt in the south country.

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at eventide.— Gen.24:62,63.

The child of promise was entering a new era in his unfoldment. We do not know what his meditation revealed to him. But the fact

that he paused to meditate by *the Well of the Living One of Vision* (NEB) before going to meet this bride indicates that he felt the need for communing with God, of prayerfully listening for a message, a vision, that would tell him that this marriage was a part of God's divine plan for him. Perhaps he was remembering vital truths concerning the spiritual Marriage Covenant which his father and mother exemplified so faithfully. Perhaps too, in his sacred meditation he saw a vision of divine Love that governs the true Marriage Covenant. For he went forward to meet Rebekah, satisfied that she was the wife chosen of God to go hand in hand with him in the unfolding of the New Covenant.

And he lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, the camels were coming.

And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.

For she had said unto the servant, What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us? And the servant had said, It is my master: therefore she took a veil, and covered herself.

And the servant told Isaac all things that he had done.

And Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rebekah, and she became his wife; and he loved her.— Gen.24:63-67.

He loved her! Thus began a marriage unique in Oriental life, for Rebekah was the only wife of Isaac. It was a marriage fit for the child of promise. And Rebekah was a daughter worthy of Abraham and Sarah.

It is significant that Isaac brought Rebekah into Sarah's tent. This simple act tells us that Isaac recognized in Rebekah the same qualities of spiritual womanhood he had seen and loved in his mother. However this act tells us something of far greater significance: Isaac recognized that Rebekah inherited the blessing of the Covenant which *El Shaddi*, the Almighty God, had bestowed on Sarah — the blessed power of the Motherhood of *Elohim*. That Isaac still maintained his mother's tent long after Sarah, with Abraham, had left Beer-sheba and returned to Hebron, reveals the tender love of the child of promise for his mother, and a recognition of the spiritual wonder of Sarah's life, reflecting the All-might of God's Motherhood.

In arranging for Isaac's betrothal to Rebekah, Abraham had led Isaac into the marriage covenant in which he learned something of the divine completeness of which the marriage covenant is symbolic. Having fulfilled his duty, Abraham left Isaac to work out his own life under the direction of his Father-Mother God. And we hear no more of Abraham entering the unfoldment of the child of promise. Isaac's individual divine adventure had begun!

Chapter XXVII

ABRAHAM'S MARRIAGE TO KETURAH

Abraham's duty to Sarah's son, through whom all nations of the world would be blessed, had been completed. It was now his task to be active in the establishment of other nations whose history would intertwine with the history of the seed of Isaac. For, when bestowing his new name upon Abraham, The Almighty God had declared, "A father of many nations have I made thee" (Gen.17:5). In furtherance of this task he entered into a marriage covenant with Keturah (Gen.25:1). Although Keturah is referred to as a *concubine* in some Bible texts, the record states plainly that he thought of her as a legitimate wife. We read:

Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah.— Gen.25:1.

This union brought forth six sons:

Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian; and Ishbak, and Shuah - Gen.25:2.

The genealogy of only two of these sons is given:

Jokshan begat Sheba, and Dedan. And the sons of Dedan were Asshurim, and Letushim, and Leummim. And the sons of Midian; Ephah, and Epner, and Hanoah, and Abidah, and Eldaah.— Gen.25:3,4.

A descendant of Midian, Jethro-Reuel, gave Moses sanctuary when he fled from the wrath of Pharaoh in Egypt about four hundred years after Abraham's sojourn on earth (Ex.2:16-21; 3:1). Abraham must have imparted some understanding of the Royal Priesthood of Melchizedek to his sons, Keturah's children. For Jethro bore Melchizedek's dual title: He was *prince of Midian and priest of the Most High God*. Recall that it was through Melchizedek that Abraham learned the nature of the Christ and

the dominion of the Christ indicated in the dual title *priest and king* (Gen.14:18-20, pp. 257-258).

And so it was that a descendant of Abraham and Keturah — Jethro-Reuel — protected the *seed of the woman*, Moses and the children of Israel, who were the progeny of Abraham and Sarah. Through Jethro, the Royal Priesthood of Melchizedek became Moses' tutor at Mount Horeb and in the wilderness of Sinai. Jethro also opened Moses' thought to the idea of giving his people laws to govern them, thus paving the way for the establishment of the first great commonwealth in the world. Jethro gave them refuge while they were growing into the recognition and understanding of their national status and their spiritual responsibility as the only nation of ancient times who walked in the high road of worship of the one God, and through whom the knowledge of God and of the Son of God could come in such abundant measure to the world.

Abraham's Legacy

The conclusion of Abraham's story in the Bible records what might be called his last will and testament:

And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.

But unto the sons of the concubines [Hagar and Keturah] which Abraham had, Abraham gave gifts, and sent them away from Isaac his son, while he yet lived, eastward, unto the east country.— Gen.25:5,6.

Abraham gave to Isaac all that he had, not only all of his huge material estate, but also all that he had learned of the spiritual nature of God, man, and the universe. Isaac's inheritance was probably the finest, the grandest, the most wonderful heritage any son ever received from a human father. Abraham was a rich man — rich in the things of Spirit, rich in material wealth, rich in wisdom, rich in friends — rich in heaven and on earth. And all these riches were Isaac's.

And what of the sons of Hagar and Keturah? He gave them gifts. And knowing Abraham's love, generosity, and his wondrous sense of justice, we know that these gifts to his sons were appropriate and adequate to care for them abundantly when he sent them into the east country, where they founded nations.

The generations of Keturah's children and of Hagar's son Ishmael are recorded in Gen.25:1-4, 12-18. Some of the names of Keturah's children have been identified in Arabia as tribes. The Midianites (Midian) became a considerable nation, spreading over the country south and southeast of Palestine, from Moab to the Gulf of Akaba. The descendants of Ishmael settled generally in northern Arabia, and with the Joktanites (Gen.10:26) formed the great Arab race scattered over Syria and the shores of the Persian Gulf. (See *Dummelow*, pp.31-32 for other references to the descendants of Keturah and Hagar.)

And these are the days of the years of Abraham's life which he lived, an hundred threescore and fifteen years.

Then Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age, an old man, and full of years, and was gathered to his people.

And his sons Isaac and Ishmael buried him in the cave of Machpelah, in the field of Ephron the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre;

The field which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth: there was Abraham buried, and Sarah his wife.— Gen.25:7-11.

And the Scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, . . . and he was called the Friend of God.— Jas.2:23.

It seems strange to read the words: "Abraham died." For even now, after nearly four thousand years, he is one of the most alive individuals in all history. Actually, Abraham never stopped living, but went right on into a new divine adventure in a spiritual dimension of life which mortal eyes cannot see.

The revelation of the Covenant relationship of God with man and with every living thing was illustrated in Abraham's human experience. The Dominion of the New Covenant was exemplified in his life. The coincidence of the human with the divine is evident throughout his long sojourn on earth. He was a spiritual leader and a ruler of his human experience. He wore the metaphorical crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek. His harmonious relationship with God and with men was acknowledged wherever he spread his great tents. He was known as "a mighty prince among men." And he won the distinct honor of being called "the Friend of God."

ABRAHAM'S WALK WITH GOD

When God revealed His nature to Abraham as *I AM*, the Almighty God, the revelation was accompanied by the demand: "Walk before me and be thou perfect" — Live ever mindful of my presence and so be blameless (Gen.17:1). The reward for obedience to the divine demand was: "I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly" (Gen.17:2).

Abraham's whole life was truly *a walk with God*. He was ever mindful of God's presence. He talked with God. He was obedient to God. Every footstep, mental and physical, was taken at God's direction. His great desire was to please God. And he did. In his human footsteps we discover a divine adventure in which he grew to understand the nature of God and how to be Godlike. The Covenant was written in the very fiber of his being. His relationship with God was so close he won the singular honor of being called "the Friend of God." What greater honor and reward could anyone desire! So faithfully did this Godlike man walk with God, always conscious of God's presence, always doing God's will, that he had dominion everywhere he went. And he prospered in everything he did. He reigned as Priest and King unto God on the earth and was known as a mighty prince among men. (See Jas.2:23; Rev.1:6; 5:10; Gen.23:6.)

Abraham is the first character in the Bible in whose human life we may trace *a progressive understanding of the divine nature of the Supreme Being*. So important is his growing concept of Deity we will review briefly his human footsteps — footsteps that are a divine adventure in which is revealed not only higher and holier concepts of Deity, but also spiritual concepts of man and the universe. In the record of his divine adventure we may also see something of what it means to be ever conscious of having a Covenant with God.

Abraham learned to know Deity first as *Yaweh, Jehovah*, the Lord, Self-existent Being — the God of his father Terah and of his

noble ancestor Noah. In the metaphor of Scripture, his name *Abram*, meaning exalted father, indicates that some understanding of the nature of the *Fatherhood of God* had been written in his nature.

As the idea of the Fatherhood of God grew in him he came to know Deity as *Bara, The Creator*. This higher concept of the Supreme Being led Abraham out of the pagan city of Ur in search of "a city which had solid foundations, of which God himself is both architect and builder" (Heb.11:10, JBP). As he journeyed the spiritual nature of the universe began to dawn in him — creation like the Creator. He heard and heeded the divine demand to look to the north, south, east, west — to the four points of the compass and, metaphorically, to the infinite foursquare spiritual nature of the world. The divine voice commanded: "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it thee" (Gen.13:17). The command was that he explore this new concept of creation, with the promise — all that you understand or comprehend of its spiritual nature is yours, you have dominion there. In this understanding of the divinity of God's world Abraham found his "city," his citadel of spiritual consciousness. The human appearing of his "holy city" he called *Hebron* — a Hebrew name meaning *alliance*, typical of his alliance or Covenant with God.

The revelation of Deity as *El Elyon, the Most High God*, Possessor of Heaven and Earth, source of all supply, and dispenser of divine blessings on earth, came to Abraham as he was finding his establishment in the new spiritual concept of God's universe — the land of Canaan being but the human appearing of that holy land. The understanding of God as *El Elyon* was confirmed in Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek, who was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God. The appearing of Melchizedek in Abraham's experience is symbolic of the appearing in Abraham's consciousness of the idea of divine Sonship, the Christ, through whom the nature and dominion of the Most High God is revealed. At this time the nature of his own Christliness was made plain to Abraham. He discovered the human and divine coincidence — his own dual office as priest and king, which made him a spiritual leader of his people and ruler over his earthly experience. In this revelation of the nature of God as *El Elyon*, source of all supply, he also discovered the law of increase, the law

of spiritual multiplication — the law of the tithe, which made him rich — which multiplied, or magnified, every item of good in his experience (Gen.14:18-20).

The nature of God as *Elyeh*, *I AM*, was revealed to Abraham when the divine *Ego*, Supreme Being, declared its nature as *The Almighty God* — God All-Knowing, Omniscience itself (Gen.17:1,2). Because it is vitally important that we understand the nature of God as *I AM*, we will pause briefly in tracing Abraham's unfoldment to trace the unfoldment of the divine *Esse*, the *I AM*, in our Bible. For this understanding brings to light a mighty, dynamic individuality which develops in us the power and presence, the knowledge and action of the divine *Ego*.

Although the revelation of the nature of God as *I AM* has been with us from the beginning, this holy name, or divine nature, has been obscured by a limited, personal, material sense of God, of man, and of the universe. In the first chapter of Genesis we read: "In the beginning . . . God said." This is the *I AM*, who spoke into visible manifestation the whole universe and all that is therein, patterned after the divine nature. The *I AM* enunciated the creative mandate: *Let there be!* "Let there be light!" And there was light: "Let there be a firmament!" And the firmament was there. "Let the dry land appear!" And the dry land appeared. "Let the earth bring forth!" And tree, grass, herb, and all manner of vegetation came forth. "Let there be lights in the firmament!" And sun, moon, and stars appeared. "Let the waters bring forth!" And the great moving creatures of the sea and the winged fowl of the air appeared. "Let the earth bring forth!" And the magnificent living creatures came forth. Then the climax of creation: The *I AM* brought forth its own image and likeness to manifest the power and presence, the knowledge and action of the divine *Ego*: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion. And it was so!" It *is* so! The divine *Us* is the *I AM*, the *Esse*, who spake and it was done.

The forever nature of the name *I AM* is confirmed in *The Interpreter's One Volume Commentary on the Bible* (p.39):

The Hebrew name EHYEH denotes, not abstract being, but manifestation in a definite character, or name; for its form indicates habitual manifestation in past, present, or future. Since English requires a tense, the best rendering is *I will be as I will be*. The famous declaration (to Moses) signifies that God is

known in his dynamic confrontation of man and in man's active response to God.

When we read in the Scripture: "And God said, I am the Lord, I am God, or the name of the Lord" — this is confirmation that the voice of the divine *Esse*, the Great *I AM*, has been heard as the voice of conscience, whether or not it has been heeded.

In the revelation of Deity as *El Shaddi*, *The Almighty God*, the Nourisher, who performs all things for Her people, Abraham glimpsed something of the nature of the Motherhood of God, the all-might of the Great *I AM*. The divine Mother gently but firmly declared: "*I AM* the Almighty God." Now note how the *I AM*, Omniscient, All-knowing divine Mind, spoke in Abraham's consciousness: "Walk before *me* — the *I AM* — and be thou perfect." Walk ever mindful of my presence, the presence of Mind, or Spirit; let the divine *Ego* be the 'I' of your being and think my thoughts after Me. And so be perfect — be complete, entire, accomplished, blameless, and thus bring all things to fruition."

In this revelation of the nature of the Supreme Being, Abraham discovered the Covenant relationship of God and man, the inseparable oneness of Creator and creation. In this discovery he also glimpsed his harmonious relationship with everyone and with everything in God's universe. Hear the divine mandate, or law, which the *I AM* proclaimed: "And *I will* make my covenant with thee, . . . *I will* multiply thee exceedingly, . . . *I will* make thee fruitful, . . . and *I will* give thee the land wherein thou art a stranger." And then this righteous man, whose name had been *Abram*, heard the divine decree that sealed the Covenant promises. The Almighty, his divine Mother, gave him his new name, *Abraham*, declaring with prophetic certainty, "A father of many nations have I made thee." No longer was he to think of himself as an exalted human father. He must acknowledge God as the Father of man. And this understanding would bring to light in his consciousness the idea of divine Sonship.

But this was not all. The revelation of the nature of God's Motherhood also revealed to Abraham his wife's new name *Sarah*. He heard clearly the mandate of the *I AM*: "I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations." This irrevocable mandate assured Abraham that *Sarah* would conceive the idea of divine Sonship that had been revealed to him, and that she would bring forth a

son in the divine likeness. In this revelation Abraham discerned, though faintly, that the compound nature of God as Father-Mother is manifested in the compound nature of the male and female of the species, and that woman stands co-equal with man in relationship with God and with all that God has made, and in man's God-given dominion over all the earth. (See Gen.17:1-7, 15-19.)

The threefold nature of *Elohim, The Triune God Himself*, which had been unfolding in Abraham and Sarah, was confirmed by the appearance of three representatives of the Trinity. Their understanding of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God had come to its communion. The power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, enabled Sarah to conceive the idea of divine Sonship and, in fullness of time, to bring forth a son whom they and future generations would know as *The Child of Promise*. (Gen.18:1-15; 21:1-3; Heb.11:11.)

The nature of God as *The Judge of All the Earth* came to Abraham when God judged Sodom and Gomorrah and revealed the true nature of Lot. In the metaphor of Abraham's story, it was his own understanding of the Trinity, the complete nature of the Infinite Triune divine Principle, the Great *I AM*, which judged evil and condemned Sodom and Gomorrah, even while his human heart pleaded for the cities of wickedness and their inhabitants. (Gen.18:16-33.)

The nature of God as *Ever-Ministering Divine Love* was revealed to Abraham in the care of Hagar and Ishmael, even though they were rebellious. The loving divine Mother nature of the *I AM*, active in his consciousness, assured Abraham that Ishmael, like Isaac, would become a great nation, even though Ishmael would not be the one through whom the divine promises would be fulfilled. Nor would Ishmael be the one through whom the knowledge of God, the Son of God, and the Spirit of God would be revealed to the world. Ever-ministering divine Love imprinted its message on the "I" of Abraham's consciousness: "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee; Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly." The nature of divine Love never failed to find expression in the life of this man of God. (Gen.17:20; 21:12-21.)

The nature of Deity as *'El Olam, The Everlasting God, Eternal Life*, was revealed to Abraham at Beer-sheba. The understanding

of the nature of God as Life itself helped to sustain Abraham when later he misunderstood God's command and believed he was supposed to sacrifice his son Isaac as a burnt offering. The angel of the Lord, a message from The Everlasting *I AM* Himself, appeared to him and awakened him to understand the real meaning of the divine directive. Abraham learned that giving his son's life to God did not mean sacrificing Isaac as a burnt offering, but rather dedicating Isaac's life to the fulfillment of the Trinity. Isaac's life was to symbolize and foreshadow the human appearing of the Son of God, and to portray, in some measure, the nature of God as eternal Life, "by what was a parable of the resurrection." (Gen.21:33; Heb.11:17-19, JM.)

The nature of God as *Jehovah-Jireh*, *The Revealing God* — God-sees, God-vision — was made plain to Abraham in the revelation on Mount Moriah. Here the revelation of the nature of God as the All-seeing Mind, the *I AM* itself, reflected by man, enabled Abraham to see with God-vision. This was the pinnacle of Abraham's understanding of the nature of the Infinite, an understanding reflected in words from the climax of creation in Genesis: "God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." (Gen.22:14; 1:31).

Abraham's progressive understanding of the nature of God and his faithful endeavor to let his life be an image and likeness of Divinity enabled him to present to the world a figure of majesty and dominion wherever he was. When reading the record of his life, we might be tempted to think of his accomplishments as something possible only in the dim and distant past. But recall the Apostle Paul's words:

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

That the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. — 2 Tim.3:16,17 (RSV).

The record of this great man's life should not be confined within the pages of a book, even so sacred a book as the Bible. It must be lifted into our hearts where it will live and act as a powerful influence for good — a divine influence that will give spiritual authority and vitality to our every thought and deed.

In the degree that we learn to know and love and obey God and live in harmony with the conditions of the Covenant as Abraham did, we will comprehend in some measure the spiritual nature of God and of the spiritual universe as he did. And we will find that we are living in a divine dimension of thought and action which the material world cannot invade, a state of Mind in which it is divinely natural to demonstrate the harmony of heaven on earth, to feel and to express the Dominion of the New Covenant.

Biblical names for God through which the divine nature was revealed to Abraham:

<i>Yaweh</i>	<i>Jehovah, The Lord, Self-existent Being.</i>
<i>Bara</i>	<i>The Creator</i>
<i>El Elyon</i>	<i>The Most High God</i>
<i>El Shaddi</i>	<i>The Brasted One, The Almighty God</i>
<i>Ehyth</i>	<i>I AM, the divine Ego, Supreme Being</i>
<i>Elohim</i>	<i>The Triune God Himself</i>
<i>Shaphat</i>	<i>The Judge of all the earth</i>
<i>Malak</i>	<i>The Angel or Messenger of the Lord; Ever-Ministering divine Love</i>
<i>'El Olam</i>	<i>The Everlasting God, Eternal Life</i>
<i>Jehovah-Jireh</i>	<i>The Revealing God; God-Vision</i>

Chapter XXIX

ISAAC

My Covenant Will I Establish with Isaac.

(Gen.17:21.)

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham's son: Abraham begat Isaac:

And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Pandan-aram, the sister of Laban the Syrian.—

Gen.25:19,20.

Long before he was born, Isaac, the child of promise, was destined to exemplify the idea of divine Sonship in the unfolding of the Trinity, just as Abraham and Sarah had been destined to exemplify the idea of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself. Isaac's life as a child was an integral part of the unfolding of the divine completeness in Abraham's and Sarah's lives. His boyhood and young manhood exemplified the nature of divine Sonship which had been revealed to them. But in the divine plan, it was not enough that Isaac should remain the beloved son of Abraham and Sarah. He must grow to spiritual maturity, to that measure of development which embodies and expresses the divine nature of the Son of God. Isaac's life must be a continuing exemplification of the spiritual unfoldment of man's divine completeness, revealed in the Trinity.

Although Isaac's divine adventure begins with the Covenant promise of his conception and continues through his birth, his childhood, his trial on Mount Moriah — all of which was a part of Abraham's and Sarah's spiritual unfoldment — the Isaac saga, as it is called, properly begins with his marriage. In the divine plan, Isaac's marriage, like Abraham's, symbolizes the divine completeness, the union of the male and female of God's creating, revealed in the sixth day of creation, or the sixth period of spiritual unfoldment of the divine nature in man and the universe:

God [*Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother] created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them.— Gen.1:27.

In the union of the masculine and feminine qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God there is spiritual strength, completeness, success, fulfillment. In the final analysis, each one must express the compound nature of our Father-Mother God. Each individual embodies all the qualities of the divine Father-Mother and inherits all the glories of the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, both the male and female of the species can and must express the power and authority and dominion of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself. The Almighty, the All-might of *El Shaddi*, the Motherhood of *Elohim*, will see to that — as the true mother sees to it that her children develop their full potential. But in the metaphor of the Bible and of the unfoldment of the Trinity in Isaac's life, this divine completeness is symbolized by the marriage covenant.

Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife. Twenty years have gone since that joyful day. During this time we have heard nothing from him. The absence of any record of unfoldment indicates that a human sense of well being had literally halted his spiritual development. It would seem that he was satisfied with the status quo. His human goodness was and is unquestioned. But he appeared to have no idea of the tremendous significance of his holy mission. And then we learn that Rebekah is barren (Gen.25:21).

Inasmuch as this is Isaac's story, the record of his spiritual unfoldment, his wife's barrenness is indication of the fact that Isaac's consciousness was barren of the understanding of the nature of God as The Almighty, *El Shaddi*. He did not understand the All-might of the Motherhood of God. Rebekah's barrenness also indicates that Isaac's consciousness was barren of the understanding of his wife's place in the Covenant. Recall that it was the understanding of the nature of the Almighty Motherhood of *Elohim* which had healed the barrenness in Abraham's consciousness, established Sarah as co-equal with Abraham in the Covenant, released her from the sense of barrenness, and revealed to her the power of divine conception.

The temptation which had come to Abraham and Sarah when they feared that Abraham would have no heir had been to follow the custom of the land, that a barren wife give her bondmaid to

her husband, the child of that union becoming the child of the wife by adoption. However Isaac and Rebekah did not succumb to this temptation. They sought divine help. We read that Isaac prayed for Rebekah:

And Isaac intreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren: and the Lord was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.— Gen.25:21.

Isaac intreated *the Lord*. This primitive concept of Deity as *Lord, Jehovah*, which had led Abraham out of Chaldea, led Isaac to look away from human ways and means to solve what appeared to be an insurmountable problem. Isaac did not yet know God as The Almighty, which knowledge would have revealed to him the power, the All-might, of the Motherhood of God which Rebekah embodied; but Isaac and Rebekah understood in some measure the spiritual fact that God's Covenant promise — that the seed of Abraham would multiply and fill the earth — must be fulfilled by and through the will of God and not the will of man. They had faith that what God promises He is able to perform. And this faith and understanding was sufficient to break the mesmerism of impotence and lack of fulfillment in Isaac's consciousness and to free Rebekah from the barrenness of mortal womanhood. And we read that Rebekah conceived twins:

And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? and she went to inquire of the Lord.

And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.—Gen.25:22,23.

Dummelow (P.32) suggests this translation or interpretation of the message Rebekah received: "From the womb they shall be at variance." *Dummelow* also suggests that when Rebekah went to inquire of the Lord concerning the struggle going on within her, she inquired of God through Abraham, her father-in-law, who lived nearby in Hebron. It is natural to suppose that this is true, for throughout his sojourn on earth, Abraham was both priest and king unto God — the spiritual leader of his family and titular head

of his clan. Further, Abraham was known as a prophet — he saw through the material evidence to the spiritual fact of whatever was before him.

It is also natural to assume that Isaac accompanied Rebekah. It was most unnatural for a woman of that day to go anywhere unaccompanied. In fact *Josephus* records that it was Isaac who inquired of God to learn what the struggle within Rebekah signified (Book I, Chap.xviii,p.52). So both Isaac and Rebekah heard the message that within Rebekah's womb were two manner of people, two nations, two nativities, who would be at variance from their birth. Further, they were both told plainly that the elder would serve the younger — that not the elder but the younger would have the dominion, or authority, of the firstborn and by divine right have the birthright of the elder son. It would seem, however, that Rebekah, not Isaac, heard, or felt within herself, acceptance of the word of the divine *Ego*. From events which developed later in their story, it would appear that the *I AM* had written its message in the very fiber of her being. And she did not forget it!

The Birth of Jacob and Esau

And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled,
behold, there were twins in her womb.

And the first came out red, all over like a hairy
garment; and they called his name Esau.

And after that came his brother out, and his hand
took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called
Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she
bare them.— Gen.25:24-26.

Two sons! Two covenants! Recall St. Paul's words concerning Abraham's two sons — an allegory which half conceals, half reveals, a spiritual truth:

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the
one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.

But he who was of the bondwoman was born after
the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.

Which things are an allegory: for these are the two
covenants;

But as then he that was born after the flesh
persecuted him which was born after the Spirit, even
so it is now.— Gal.4:22-24,29.

These things are still an allegory, and it is as an allegory that we must understand them. Abraham's two sons had different mothers; even so, it was difficult for Abraham to discern or to accept the truth that Ishmael, his first-born son, was not the one chosen of God to establish the new nation of God's appointing. Isaac's sons had the same mother. It was therefore doubly difficult for Isaac to accept the divine decree that the elder son should serve the younger.

The Oriental tradition of favoritism of the elder son must have been so ingrained in Isaac that he either misunderstood or ignored the divine message concerning his two sons. But the word of the Lord, Omniscience itself, which came to Rebekah and to Isaac, shows clearly that the younger was the child of promise, in whom the promises of God could be fulfilled, and the elder was the child of the flesh, in whom the divine nature of man would not come to fruition. Omniscience, the all-knowing divine Mind foresaw the way in which these two sons would develop and knew that the elder son would not accept the strict spiritual discipline demanded of one through whom a divine purpose would unfold.

Never forget: while these things are historically true, they are an allegory through which the pattern of the Trinity is revealed. With the birth of his sons, their development blends with Isaac's and at times seems to overshadow his unfoldment. It would seem that this beloved child of promise was unmindful of the divine purpose unfolding in the birth of his sons, even as God's plan had unfolded in his own birth.

We have evidence that from the time of their birth Isaac was mesmerized by the tempter regarding the character and the mission of the two children. He did not give either of them names which had spiritual meaning. Esau's name means *red*. He was named thus simply because at birth he was "red all over like an hairy garment." According to many Bible dictionaries, Jacob's name means *heel-catcher*, derived from a verb meaning trip up, overreach, grasping for place, because when he was born "his hand took hold on Esau's heel." However, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* adds this pertinent information:

The name *Jacob* — *Yakub* — a later interpretation of *Yaqub-el*, is an extremely old name meaning probably God protects, or May God protect.

And *Hastings Dictionary of the Bible* (p. 420) records:

Jacob — an elliptical form of an original *Jakob'el* — God follows (i.e. — rewards), which has been found on both Babylonian tablets and on the pylons of the temple Karnack. By the time of Jacob, this earlier history of the word was overlooked or forgotten, and the name was understood as meaning "one who takes by the heel, and thus tries to trip up or supplant."

In the Hebrew, names of people and places had great significance. The names given to Abraham and Sarah at birth had been *Abram*, meaning exalted father, having a priestly connotation, and *Sarai*, meaning princess, signifying royalty. But even these unusually lovely names were changed to conform with the spiritual change which took place in the natures of Abram and Sarai. And today they are known to all the world as Abraham and Sarah — father of a multitude and mother of nations — names reflecting their understanding of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God and their higher universal concept of their mission. They named her son *Isaac*, meaning *laughter*, signifying their joy at the birth of the child of promise — the miracle birth which was a rebuke to unbelief — and the joy of triumph over the obstructions which a material concept of existence, indicated in the Old Covenant, would have placed in the way of the demonstration of the power of the Trinity to bring forth its representative of divine Sonship.

The fact that Isaac called his two sons by names which merely identified them materially indicates to us that he had not discerned the spiritual significance of the great event which had just taken place. He did not grasp the momentous fact that the new representative of the third aspect of the Trinity had come forth! He did not comprehend that the one through whom the power of the Spirit of God to transform and transfigure the human with the divine had appeared! Isaac's spiritual vision seemed to have been clouded by the picture immediately before him.

And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents.— Gen.25:27.

"Esau hunted cunningly." He was literally a man of the field, an outdoor man of a rebellious, restless nature. The following summary of his nature is revealing:

The character of Esau has many attractive features; but he cared only for the pleasures of the moment and was without any lofty spiritual aspirations. . . . He appears plainly as a worldly, irreligious man, indifferent to his parents' wishes, uninterested in the divine covenant, and unmindful of the privileges and responsibilities which were to distinguish his race. (Gen.26:34: 27:46.) His character is summed up in Heb.12:16,17, where he is called "a profane," i.e. unconsecrated or common person. (*Dummelow, p.32.*)

"Jacob was a plain man." The Hebrew word translated *plain* as here used means complete, upright, whole, pious, gentle, dear, undefiled. That Jacob preferred dwelling in tents to being a man of the field is simply a statement of the fact that Jacob was of a quieter, more thoughtful, home-loving nature than his roving twin brother. Jacob was the typical shepherd, a quiet man, who leads a settled, orderly, well-integrated life and has a tent and flocks of his own. The following summary of his nature is thought-provoking:

While craftiness and subtilty, even meanness and deceit, mark many of his actions, on the other hand, his patient endurance, strength of character, and warmth of affection call forth admiration. Long years of suffering and discipline were needed to purify his character from its baser elements, and make him worthier of the divine blessing. And certainly he was worthier than his brother, for he believed in and sought after his father's God, held spiritual things in reverence. . . . These considerations help us to understand why Jacob rather than Esau was selected as heir to the promises. (*Dummelow, p.32.*)

From what we know of these two sons, both of them were fine, good individuals, although exactly opposite in nature. Their parents should have loved both of them dearly. But a note of conflict is sounded between Isaac and Rebekah concerning their children:

Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.— Gen.25:28.

Isaac was a good man, not to be deceived by evil alone. But the tempter, determined that the generations of Seth and the seed of

Abraham were not to accomplish the divine purpose, conjured up a temptation that would find a response in Isaac. Like the temptation in the garden of Eden, the one that came to Isaac partook of the nature of both good and evil.

Isaac was mesmerized by the physical prowess and human goodness of his firstborn and by the Oriental custom of favoring the elder son. Isaac seemed to be impressed by Esau and almost overshadowed by him. The message of God which had come to him and to Rebekah before the birth of the two boys had apparently not written itself in his consciousness as it had in Rebekah's. The Lord had said:

Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.— Gen.25:23.

While the struggle in the womb before the birth of the sons prophesied that they would be at variance from their birth, and that from this variance would emerge two nations of people, the struggle was also typical of two conflicting natures struggling for supremacy *within Isaac*. Although this confusion appeared to concern two sons, the problem was in reality a conflict within Isaac himself as to whether the conditions of the Covenant are exemplified by a vibrant nature accompanied by great physical energy or by the quiet vitality of great mental strength. And is not a similar struggle going on within each one of us today?

A commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible* is worthy of our consideration.

Why did Rebekah prefer Jacob? . . . In spite of limitations and glaring faults, Jacob had something which Esau did not have. . . . He had a concept of the spiritual nature of the birthright. . . . Jacob knew that the holder of the birthright would be a shaper of ideas and ideals. . . . Rebekah saw this, and she was determined to protect it. . . . She represents the woman's greatest contribution to the race, vis., the ability to recognize and to cherish those qualities in her child by which the future may be shaped.
(*IB, Vol. 1, p. 669.*)

Isaac's story appears to be interrupted by a controversy between Jacob and Esau concerning the birthright. But in its

allegorical sense, these happenings are still typical of the conflict going on within Isaac himself and probably also portray something of the struggle between Isaac and Rebekah concerning their sons.

Esau Sells His Birthright

We do not know at what period in their lives the following incident occurred, but it is evident that Jacob and Esau had grown to young manhood. We read that Esau came in from hunting one day, faint and famished from his strenuous outdoor activity. He was greeted by the aroma of a steaming pottage of lentiles which Jacob was preparing. Almost overcome by hunger and fatigue the carefree hunter said to the careful shepherd:

Feed me, I pray thee, with the same red pottage;
for I am faint. . . .

And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die; and what profit shall this birthright do to me?

And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.

Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.—

Gen.25:30-34.

What was this birthright that Jacob so greatly desired and Esau valued so little? It was a symbol of authority, signifying the rights and privileges of the elder son. He who had the birthright inherited a double portion of his father's estate. Upon the death of the father, he who had the birthright exercised fatherly authority over the household and assumed spiritual, or priestly, leadership of the tribe. In the unfoldment of the Covenant, the birthright is bestowed on one in recognition of his spiritual status, or potential. The bestowal of a double portion of the father's inheritance on the firstborn is symbolic of the two-fold office of priest and king and is an acknowledgment of the son's ability to minister to both the spiritual and temporal needs of his family, or tribe. The firstborn was the representative of the family in its relationship with God, its priestly intercessor.

The human birthright could be sold by the elder son to any of his brothers for certain considerations, and this transaction was considered binding. But the spiritual birthright is divinely bestowed and cannot be transferred from one individual to another. Esau could sell his birthright, for it was a human one, and belonged to him only by right of Oriental custom and his father's preference. But Jacob had the promise of the spiritual birthright; his were the rights and privileges of the Son of God. And this divine birthright, by God's promise, carried the rights and privileges of the human birthright. But Jacob had yet to earn the divine birthright.

The fact that Esau had the birthright instead of Jacob tells us plainly that Isaac regarded Esau as his heir, having all the rights and privileges of the elder son — and all the responsibilities. Esau appeared not to care too much about the birthright, for when he was hungry and wanted food, the food became more important to him than the birthright. The birthright, which should have meant more to him than food or drink, was so lightly regarded that he did not hesitate to sell it. That he did not see the spiritual significance of the birthright is plain. To him the material circumstances and conditions immediately before him were the reality. His sense of values was completely material. When he was challenged as to the value in which he held the birthright, he was willing to forego it for a momentary gratification of appetite. There was nothing within him to rise to the challenge and hold to his birthright, regardless of the sacrifices it entailed. Though strong physically, Esau lacked the sinews of spirituality. Without a moment's regret, "He did eat and drink, and rose up and went his way." He went his own way, not God's way — a way which bound him to the Old Covenant and its conditions. And the Bible says simply: "Thus Esau showed how little he valued his birthright" (Gen.25:45 NEB).

Esau was a good man, but he was not a godly man. There is little doubt that Esau would have been chosen above Jacob in a popularity contest. He was a man of the world, of athletic build and habits, physically attractive, the type of man that the world admires and accepts as its own. He is typical of those sons who excel at material activity but who rebel at mental discipline and spiritual development, who are good-natured, eager to please, indulgent with themselves and with others, to whom physicality is vitally important, but to whom the things of Spirit are dim and little thought of.

Scotfield's summation of Esau's character is worthy of note:

Esau stands for the mere man of earth (Heb.12:16,17). In many respects a nobler man, naturally, than Jacob, he was destitute of faith and despised the birthright because it was a spiritual thing, of value only as there was faith to apprehend it. (*Scotfield's Reference Bible, P.38*).

The description of the controversy between Jacob and Esau for the birthright is so vividly portrayed we are apt to forget that this is still Isaac's story — a story prophetic of the struggles of the child of promise in all ages as he wrestles with the question: How to gain the dominion of heaven on earth — the double blessing which the spiritual birthright bestows?

The birthright of the firstborn does not always go to the one whom the world believes should have it, but to the one in whose heart a divine purpose can be inscribed. The double blessing which the birthright bestows is given to those who are willing to wear the heavenly title, *Priest and King unto God* — to those who are willing to accept the divine responsibility of being spiritual leaders among men and willing to exercise heavenly dominion over themselves and their earthly affairs. Such do indeed "reign on the earth" and wear the metaphorical crown of dominion of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek (Rev.5:10).

Frequently the birthright is bestowed on a Jacob who, in his youth, does not seem to be worthy; but in maturity "a soldier of God" comes forth, willing to wrestle with a mortal nature until *Israel*, the divine nature, wins the battle with self and "reigns with God." Or, he may be a youthful, proud Saul of Tarsus, whose zeal lacks wisdom, humility, and love, but in whom is a divine spark that can burst into great light and reveal a Paul, eager and willing to put off the old sense of himself for spiritual maturity and to serve God and man with great wisdom, humility, love, and spiritual strength.

Isaac has not yet seen or felt the power of the divine nature within himself; hence he does not see it within Jacob. But the nature of divinity is there in both Isaac and Jacob, and it will come to light in fulness of time.

At the time Rebekah came to Isaac as his wife, Isaac was dwelling in the south country by the well Lahai-roi (Gen.24:62). About thirty-five years later he still dwelt in the same place. It was here

that Jacob and Esau were born. Recall that Lahai-roi is the well at which Hagar found water when she fled from Sarai. It is known as "the well of the living one who sees me," or "the well of the Living One of Vision" (NEB), because there God had revealed to Hagar the spiritual fact that divine help is always at hand if we but open our eyes to see (Gen.16:7,14).

Does Isaac's long stay in this region indicate that his concept of God had not progressed beyond that of the bondwoman! Was his lack of spiritual unfoldment the result of the mesmerism of organized occultism, attempting to hold Isaac's spiritual progress on the level of Ishmael's, the son of the bondwoman? Or was this beloved child of promise reluctant to grow to spiritual maturity?

The fact that Isaac dwelt all these years by the well Lahai-roi indicates to us that for him there had been no spiritual journeying during those years. Apparently he had not been stirred to rise higher spiritually. There is no indication that the Spirit of God had moved upon the waters, or elements, of his consciousness. Without spiritual progress it is little wonder that there was a famine in the land, or consciousness, in which he lived.

In the metaphor of Scripture a famine indicates a loss or lack of spiritual vision, the faculty through which one discerns the ever-present goodness of God. Famine follows confusion, materialism, stagnation, disobedience, and lack of spiritual progress. We read:

And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham.— Gen.26:1.

Isaac's long stay in the simple, childlike understanding of God as "the Living One who seeth me" — in the concept of Deity as the Eternal God who cares for me whether or not I understand Him — had stultified his spiritual development. To stand still, even in a good place, is not enough. God demands progressive unfoldment of thought and action.

This young man had become satisfied with a sense of material wealth and luxury. In Lahai-roi he lived like an Oriental prince, rich in gold and silver, in flocks and herds, in servants and herdsmen. Isaac, like Abraham, moved in what today might be called the highest social circles. Recall that Abraham had been at home in the courts of the Egyptian Pharaoh and the Philistine king. His son enjoyed similar contacts with royalty and nobility as well as

with notable people from many lands who traveled the Great Trade Route of the Fertile Crescent. On this much traveled highway came people from all over the then known world on their way down into Egypt, which was the center of world culture at that time. The son of Abraham did not live in isolation from nor in ignorance of the world around him. Isaac was no "country bumpkin." Nor was he a desert nomad. Though he had not attained the towering majesty of Abraham, Isaac was established in the land in which he lived and had dominion there. While he did not dwell in a great stone or brick house like many that have been excavated in recent years, his great tents, like those of Abraham, were luxurious and bore no resemblance to the tents of the wandering desert tribes.

Isaac was a good citizen, an honest man, and he had the respect of all who knew him. But, like the sons of many wealthy men, Isaac had not needed to strive to earn a living. His wits had not been sharpened by experience in the market place. Certainly he had not cut his metaphorical wisdom teeth. He seemed to be mesmerized by a state of material well-being. Hence, until famine ravaged the land, there was nothing to bestir him to seek a higher concept of God and of the life which is spiritual.

It is supposed that about this time Abraham departed earth's scene. And we read:

And it came to pass after the death of Abraham,
that God blessed his son Isaac.— Gen.25:11.

Isaac accepted God's blessing as a child accepts favors from its parents. This child of promise had not been forced to come to grips with any of the problems which usually confront men as they go forward in development, unfoldment, and progress. But the time had come when he must grow up — grow into some realization that his life was to be, like his father's, a divine adventure. Although he seemed to be unaware of the divinity of his blessing, the power of God's blessing was at work in him. And it is this period in Isaac's unfoldment which is now before us.

Recall the power of God's blessing on man. (See pp. 63, 64, 76.) The blessing of God assures the recipient of divine favor, of fruitfulness, of both spiritual and material prosperity. God's blessing protects one from the curse of materialism. It causes one to be at

peace with man and beast and with one's environment — with everything in God's universe. Each one who has a divine mission has God's blessing — that is, when one accepts that divine mission. We have evidence that Isaac had begun to feel the power of divinity that God's blessing bestows. Perhaps the famine had been the catalyst which shocked him out of a sense of complacency. He moved from his old dwelling place, mentally and physically. And we read that "Isaac went unto Abimelech, king of the Philistines unto Gerar" (Gen.26:1).

Chapter XXX

ISAAC SOJOURNS IN ABIMELECH'S COUNTRY

Abimelech might well have been the same king who had been Abraham's friend. Or he might have been his son. In either case, Isaac's stop in Gerar was probably a courtesy call on the king as he passed through Abimelech's country. His intention was to go on down into Egypt, where there was plenty of food. But God warned him against this course of action. In fact, the Spirit of God, the voice of the Trinity, commanded him to change his plans:

And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of.— Gen.26:2.

This is the first record we have of the Lord appearing unto Isaac. Or, rather, this is the first time Isaac was spiritually aware of the divine presence and receptive to the divine voice speaking to him. How do we know this? Note carefully God's words: "Dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of." This is the *I AM* speaking! And the *I AM* found a response in Isaac. He began to feel the power of the divine *Ego* within himself. The divine "I" that performs great things for man became the motive power within him. He did not question the divine directive that changed his plans. The "I" of his being was at one with the Great *I AM*. It was therefore natural that he should immediately be at one with God's will for him.

Why did the Lord demand that Isaac not go down into Egypt where food supplies were plentiful? For the same reason Abraham had not permitted him to go to Haran to seek a wife. In both Egypt and Haran the mesmeric influences of soothsayers and magicians, with their highly developed carnal mind-power, would have been as injurious to Isaac's spiritual unfoldment as the same influence in Ur of the Chaldees had been to Abraham's spiritual unfoldment. In Egypt Isaac would have become like-minded with the Egyptians, and his divine adventure would have turned into a

material venture. Isaac had not yet attained the spiritual maturity that would have made him master of any situation in which he might find himself. Further, a wonderful experience was awaiting him in Gerar. Here Isaac would discover and prove the divine law which causes the earth to bring forth abundantly food for man's use, and that too in a land where famine ravaged most of the countryside. So he dwelt in Gerar.

In almost all of Isaac's divine adventure we see him as the son of Abraham or the father of Jacob and Esau. But in Gerar we see Isaac as himself — as the child of promise, in whom divine promises are fulfilled. Here he expresses the divine nature of the Son of God. Here the light of his Christliness shines brightly. Here he has dominion.

The name *Gerar* means *dwelling place*. It was in Gerar, the land of the Philistines where the kind and noble king Abimelech reigned, that Abraham and Sarah had found a dwelling place while awaiting the birth of Isaac. When Isaac came into Gerar his concept of Deity was the Lord, Self-existent Being. It was this understanding of Deity which enabled Abraham to hear and be receptive to the divine message assuring him of his possession of and dominion in the land. This understanding grew in him until he learned to know God as the Creator, and creation like the Creator. (See Gen.13:14-17.)

Now Isaac hears the voice of the Creator, demanding that he come into the understanding of the spiritual nature of the universe so that he might understand the spiritual nature of his inheritance or possession. This understanding is the beginning of all spiritual journeying! We hear an echo of God's words to Abraham in this message to Isaac:

Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father;

And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;

Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. — Gen.26:3-5.

Again the *I AM* speaks. And we hear the words through Isaac's response to them: "*I will be with thee; I will bless thee; I will give all these countries unto thy seed; I will perform the oath I swore unto Abraham; I will make thy seed to multiply.*" The *I AM* wrote its message in the very fiber of Isaac's being, unfolding within him a larger, more dynamic sense of his abilities and capabilities — his God-being.

The reiteration of God's promise to Abraham, that his seed would have dominion in the land and that through his seed all nations of the earth would be blessed, is a subjective experience, indicating that some realization of the tremendous spiritual import of the Covenant blessing had dawned in Isaac's consciousness — that he was indeed the child of promise, the one in whom the divine promises would be fulfilled. He seemed to realize that it was because of what his father was that God had made His Covenant with Abraham. And so Isaac strove to be like his father. He attempted to do what he had seen his human father do, thinking in that way perhaps to reach the understanding of God which Abraham had gained and to be able to exercise the spiritual authority Abraham had expressed. Deep within himself Isaac realized it was what he knew of God that determined his life experience.

Isaac's first step in the right direction was to dig again the wells Abraham had dug and to pasture his flocks where Abraham had pastured his great herds. It was, of course, natural that Isaac should redig the wells his father had dug — wells which the Philistines had filled in with earth. And it was natural that he should call the wells by the names by which his father had called them (Gen.26:15,18). But metaphorically, the redigging of these wells symbolized Isaac's search for the wells of salvation and the water of Life which had flowed through every avenue of Abraham's being.

It was commendable that Isaac should attempt to pattern his life after Abraham's life — to do what he had seen his great father do. But this was not God's plan for him. Isaac had his own mission to fulfill in the pattern of the Trinity. The great demand now upon him is to learn that God is his Father, and that his mission in life is to exemplify the character of the Son of God, not the son of Abraham. Then, by the law of reflection, he would be able, as was Christ Jesus, to know God aright and to do what he saw his

Father-God do (John 5:19). Then would his human activity pattern the divine and his life show forth the nature of the Son of God. Then would he be himself and accomplish his own divine mission.

St. Paul explained this law of reflection, in some measure, in his second letter to the Corinthians. He wrote of seeing God as in a mirror and seeing one's self as the mirrored reflection, or mirror-image, reflecting the image, or likeness, of Spirit:

We all mirror the glory of the Lord with face unveiled, and so we are being transformed into the same likeness as himself, passing from one glory to another — for this comes of the Lord the Spirit.—

II Cor.3:18 (JM).

It is not good to compare Isaac's faltering footsteps with Abraham's at the height of his dominion. Nothing is more frustrating to a son than to be told that he is not the man his father was. In comparing Isaac with Abraham, we are prone to think of the majesty Abraham attained at the height of his spiritual unfoldment instead of remembering the many mistakes he made in his spiritual journeying before he reached the climax of his communion with God. Yet some comparison between the two is needful because Isaac strove so valiantly to be like his father. He continued to try to do the things Abraham had done.

Abraham was a dynamic figure and always had been. Isaac, on the other hand, is not a dynamic figure. He is quiet, and appears almost timid at times. But it must be remembered that Isaac's divine mission is quite different from that of Abraham's. Together the lives of Abraham and Sarah, reflecting the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, exemplified in some measure the divine completeness indicated in the first aspect of the Trinity — God, *Elohim* the All-in-all Creator, or divine Principle of the universe. It is Isaac's mission to exemplify the second aspect of the Trinity — the nature of the Son of God. Isaac and Rebekah together have the task of presenting in their lives the idea of the compound nature of man, expressing the nature of the divine Father-Mother in the masculine and feminine qualities of manhood and womanhood.

No human exemplification of Divinity is perfect. It is always symbolic — typical of, but not exactly like, the perfect idea. Both Abraham and Isaac struggled against the prevailing gross

material mental concepts of the people of the land in which they lived — concepts which denied and opposed the spiritual concepts of God, man, and the universe which they were striving to express. It is not easy to move against the strong tide of the era in which one lives. But both of these individuals were willing to let their lives be examples of the mighty nature of the Infinite. God inscribed in their human experiences the pattern of unfoldment of the divine nature. And through them God has shown us how to let our lives exemplify the divine nature instead of imaging forth a wholly material concept of existence.

But Isaac still walked in Abraham's footsteps. Hence he had experiences similar to those Abraham had — both good and bad. One such experience concerned the fear Abraham had that someone, seeing the beauty and desirability of his wife, would slay him in order to possess her (Gen.12:9-20; 20:1-18). When Isaac and Rebekah came to Gerar the same fear overtook Isaac which had bedeviled Abraham. We read:

And the men of the place asked him of his wife; and he said, She is my sister: for he feared to say, she is my wife; lest, said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon.— Gen.26:7.

Isaac, like Abraham, saw his wife as very beautiful and desirable. But he did not at this time see her as his partner in the Covenant; thus he did not comprehend God's protection of Rebekah. In denying his marriage, he was really denying his divine completeness which his marriage covenant symbolized. This fear shows clearly Isaac's spiritual immaturity and lack of understanding of the divine authority God gives to those who express the qualities of spiritual manhood and womanhood. It is little wonder that the thing he greatly feared came upon him. We read:

And it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked out at a window, and saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting [flirting] with Rebekah his wife.

And Abimelech said, What is this that thou hast done unto us? one of the people might lightly have lain with thy wife, and thou shouldst have brought guiltiness upon us.

And Abimelech charged all his people, saying, He that toucheth this man or his wife shall surely be put to death. — Gen.26:8,10,11.

In Isaac's spiritual unfoldment, as in Abraham's, Abimelech symbolizes a type of human goodness which gives sanctuary to seekers after righteousness; and in the mystery of godliness, serves the divine purpose even while not understanding it. The king issued an edict which gave sanctuary to Isaac and Rebekah, even while he rebuked Isaac for the deception. But what is more significant, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, forced Isaac to acknowledge his marriage covenant and to give Rebekah the place of honor which, as his wife, was her due.

Did Isaac at this time glimpse the divine completeness of spiritual maturity which the spiritual Marriage Covenant signifies? It would seem not. Although Isaac loved Rebekah, and unlike other Orientals of his day, he had only one wife and no concubines, there is no record that he understood Rebekah's place in the Covenant. This indicates to us that Isaac had not yet learned to know the God of Abraham and Sarah, *El Shaddi*, the Almighty Motherhood of God, nor did he yet realize that Rebekah was co-equal with him in the Covenant relationship with God.

Isaac's Spiritual Journeying Begins

In Gerar Isaac worked diligently to establish a name for himself and succeeded gloriously. His first departure from following Abraham's footsteps was to sow in the land and thus cause the earth to yield her increase. His success in his first individual venture brought to him abundance of good, as the record indicates:

Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundred-fold; and the Lord blessed him.

And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:

For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants.—

Gen.26:12-14.

“Isaac went forward” in his spiritual journeying and came into some understanding of the law of fruitfulness revealed in the third

day, or third period, of spiritual unfoldment in the original statement of the Covenant of Godlikeness, in which the earth brought forth abundantly at God's command. Recall that God said:

Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:11,12.

In Gerar Isaac realized his potential. Here he began to feel and to manifest the power and authority of the Son of God. The Biblical account of his divine adventure in Gerar is short. However, the record stating that God blessed him — caused him to prosper in that land — tells us more than these few words might reveal to the casual reader. To feel the power of the divine blessing is to hear the *I AM* — the inner voice of divine wisdom and scientific skill — telling us not only what to do and how to do it, but also demanding that we do it!

In our mind's eye we can build on the simple statement: "He waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great." In Gerar Isaac found a sense of establishment and success. The fact that he sowed in the land and received in the first year an hundred-fold — an unheard of agricultural yield — tells us plainly that the divine power was at work in the child of promise, bringing his new venture to fulfillment.

In Gerar God had provided for Isaac a *dwelling place* while he grew — both spiritually and humanly. We do not know how long he remained in Abimelech's country. But we do know that he was there until the experience accomplished its divine purpose in the unfoldment of his divine adventure. Certainly he remained there where his abundant crops fed his family, his great retinue, and his flocks and herds until the famine in his own thinking was healed, and until the land of Canaan once more brought forth the fruit of the ground abundantly.

Although Isaac prospered greatly in Gerar and remained on friendly terms with the king and the people of the land, after some time, we know not how long, we learn that "the Philistines envied him" (Gen.26:14). The English word *envy* comes from the Latin *in-*

vidia, or *invidere*, meaning: to see against, or not to see; chagrin, mortification, discontent, or uneasiness at the sight of another's excellent or good fortune, accompanied with some degree of hatred and a desire to possess equal advantages; malice.

Isaac had glimpsed something of the spiritual fact voiced centuries later by the Psalmist: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (Ps.24:1). But he had not been obedient to the heavenly law recorded by the wise man in Proverbs: "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase" (Prov.3:9). And there is no record that he had given tithes of all that he possessed to help feed the hunger caused by the famine. His lack of understanding of the spiritual nature of his wealth, and his failure to give God the glory for his increase opened the door for envy to invade his experience and threatened to reverse his success. The Philistines sought to rob him of his riches by striking at his water supply, the source of life to his large herds and to his crops. Not only did the people of the land envy Isaac. The king himself turned against him. We read:

And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.— Gen.26:16,17.

Isaac lived like a prince in the land of the Philistines. He was probably the wealthiest and the most influential resident in Abimelech's country. Although an alien in the land, his large herds and his herdsmen had been free to wander far and wide throughout the countryside in search of pasturage. His great tents, besides sheltering his family and personal servants, also housed hundreds of other servants, herdsmen, and men trained to guard his family and possessions. His settlement, if it may be called that, must have resembled a large village. Further, we may imagine the vast acreage he planted in Abimelech's country that yielded fruitage so plentifully. There is no doubt that his presence was felt in the land. The king saw with dismay that Isaac was mightier, more powerful, than he. It is little wonder he feared that so great a company of foreigners within the borders of his kingdom might turn against him and usurp his crown. Hence his demand that Isaac depart.

We note, however, that Isaac was not forced to leave the land of the Philistines. "He pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there." This area was near the boundary of the land of Canaan (Gen.10:17). We do not know how far this valley was from Abimelech's capital city, but the king must have given Isaac permission to dwell there, for it was within the borders of his kingdom.

Although the record states that Isaac's forced move was at the King's command, in the unfolding of his dominion the move indicates a lack of spiritual authority within Isaac himself. His material identification of himself and of what God had given him robbed him of his spiritual dominion in the land. According to the pattern of spiritual unfoldment revealed in the first chapter of Genesis, man's dominion begins with the acknowledgment of God as the only Creator, thence to the understanding of the universe as spiritual, reflecting the nature of God, Spirit, and rises to full expression in the recognition that man is spiritual and has dominion wherever he may be. All spiritual journeying must follow this pattern of unfoldment. This is the pattern of the unfoldment of the Covenant of Godlikeness, revealing the nature of God, man, and the universe, and their relationship to each other, recorded in the first chapter of Genesis.

When Abraham learned this great lesson, he felt and expressed the divine authority which comes from such spiritual identification. And when he felt this inner dominion, others felt his divine authority also. Recall that Abimelech, sensing that Abraham's dominion was from on high, had said to him, "God is with thee in all that thou doest" (Gen.21:22). We do not read that anyone envied Abraham of his great possessions. Why? Because he knew that his real wealth was his spiritual understanding of God, and that what appeared as great abundance of flocks and herds and other possessions was but the visible evidence of his spiritual possessions. His true estimate of all things gave him divine authority and an honored place in whatever land he pitched his tents.

For a long time Isaac had expressed dominion in Abimelech's country. But because he failed to identify his gain spiritually, he lost, for a while, his dominion in the land. However, he began again to establish himself. His first step was to dig a new well, symbolically again searching for the water of Life — spiritual in-

spiration and nourishment. His servants found in the valley "a well of springing water." But the herdsmen of Gerar descended upon Isaac's herdsmen and drove them away, claiming the water as their own. His servants dug another well, and the herdsmen of Gerar strove for that well also. Isaac gave names to these wells. He called the first *Esek*, meaning *contention*; the second he called *Sitnah*, meaning *enmity*. Both names reveal Isaac's sense of helplessness before vicious physical attacks. Why? Isaac was a peaceful man, but his sense of peace included an element of timidity that recoiled from contention, enmity, and strife. Instead of resisting the Philistines when they claimed the wells he had dug, Isaac quietly moved to another place and dug another well. (See Gen.26:9-21.)

On one occasion the Philistine herdsmen had striven with Abraham's herdsmen for a well of water which Abraham had dug. Abraham, feeling divine authority within himself — the authority of his divinely royal priesthood — went directly to the king and reproved him. And Abimelech rebuked his herdsmen and made a covenant with Abraham to dwell in the land and forbade his people from interfering with the great man's work. (See Gen.21:25-32.)

But Isaac did not go to the king when the Philistines strove with his herdsmen. Instead, he moved from one place to another, hoping to find a place for which they did not strive. He did not express his divinely royal dominion. He did not yet realize that only as he saw the spiritual nature of the land could he have dominion therein, for he had no material title to any land. This basic lesson we, like Isaac, must learn.

The Philistines who continued to strive with Isaac for the wells are typical of the forces of materialism which challenged his spiritual authority. They were also typical of the forces that were struggling for supremacy within Isaac himself. It was the Old Covenant versus the New Covenant — the old concept of life, of progress, and success versus the new spiritual concept of Life and its unfoldment. Finally Isaac dug a well for which the Philistines did not strive. His spiritual senses prevailed and gave him divine authority, before which the forces of materialism faded away.

And he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.— Gen.26:22.

The Hebrew word translated *Rehoboth* is from a primitive root meaning: to broaden, to enlarge, to make room; breadth, enlargement. At Rehoboth Isaac learned something of the spiritual and infinite nature of the universe wherein each one has his own sphere of activity which does not intrude upon another's rights. Isaac was at last learning the true nature of the real land which God had given him. He was learning that his possession, or inheritance, was not a material location in time and space, but the realization that God possesses every place. When he realized this fundamental truth, he was conscious of his spiritual dominion, wherever he was. And immediately —

He went up from thence to Beer-sheba.—

Gen.26:23.

Chapter XXXI

ISAAC RETURNS TO BEER-SHEBA

Beer-sheba! What remembrances this must have brought to Isaac. For Beer-sheba was the land of his boyhood, the place where he had lived with Abraham and Sarah for many years. It was in Beer-sheba that Abraham had built an altar and dedicated it to *The Everlasting God*, and in his priestly role as spiritual adviser and teacher, had gathered his family and all those under his leadership into the sanctity of this new revelation of the nature of the Supreme Being. And it was in Beer-sheba that Isaac received his spiritual education from his beloved parents — an education which lifted his concepts of life above the low level of the materialistic concepts of existence in the world around him and established him in the straight and narrow way of true morality and spirituality.

Isaac Glimpses His Place In The Covenant

And the Lord appeared to him the same night [of his return to Beer-sheba], and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.— Gen.26:24.

The tremendous significance of God's enunciation to Isaac may be glimpsed in a commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible* (p.674):

Here for the first time appear the words which are to echo and re-echo in the Bible — *the God of Abraham*.

"*I AM* the God of Abraham, the Almighty God! *I AM* with thee! *I WILL* bless thee! *I WILL* multiply thy seed!" The *I AM* has spoken and identified the divine nature as Almighty. And Isaac heard! He heard the mighty voice of the God of Abraham and felt within himself the dynamic power of the Motherhood of God calling him into the holy relationship of the Covenant, demanding of him, as She

had demanded of Abraham: "Walk before me and be thou perfect." Walk ever in my presence and be completely operative in this higher concept of the Supreme Being. "Walk in the Spirit" — in the spiritual dimension — and "and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh" — your lower nature will not have dominion over you. (See Gen. 17:1; Gal.5:16.)

In recognition of the holiness of his communion with God at Beer-sheba, Isaac determined to establish his home there:

He builded an altar there, and called upon the
name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there: and
there Isaac's servants digged a well.— Gen.26:25.

First, Isaac built an altar in confirmation of his communion with Deity — an altar dedicated to the worship of the God of Abraham — the Almighty God. He put down his first stake claiming the land in the name, or nature, of the Great *I AM*, the Almighty God, *El Shaddi*, thus indicating that he had come into some understanding of the spiritual nature of his inheritance. Isaac made no claim to the physical land. His claim was a spiritual one which gave him dominion wherever he was. In his acknowledgement of God as The Almighty, Isaac quietly affirmed his dawning understanding of the nature of God's Motherhood and of the tender relationship of God to man indicated in the name *El Shaddi*. There he pitched his tent. Symbolically he gathered his household — his family and all his possessions — into this higher understanding of God. There he digged a well. He had begun to dig for his own understanding of the Infinite. In searching for his individual spiritual inspiration and understanding directly from God instead of trying to find it by retracing Abraham's footsteps, Isaac found his spiritual establishment in the land.

Let us pause for a moment and consider the significance of the order of the three separate steps Isaac took on that memorable day — the day when the God of Abraham appeared unto him declaring: *I AM* with thee, *I WILL* bless thee, *I WILL* multiply thee. Thus the *I AM* declared its nature as *Immanuel*, *God-with-us* the divine nature expressed in and as man's being. *This* is what appeared to Isaac. The nature of the Trinity is glimpsed in Isaac's response to the enunciation of the *I AM*. He was impelled to do three things — three things separate but united as one in divine unfoldment:

He first *built an altar* at which to worship God. God was of first importance in his life. While he could commune with God in any place, there must be a place of prayer where he and his loved ones could assemble to praise God together.

Then he *pitched his tent* — a dwelling place for himself, his family, and his many servants and herdsmen. A sense of establishment was important. He was not an itinerant, a nomad. He was a dweller in the land God had given him. He took possession of and dwelt in the new understanding of God, man, and the universe which had appeared to him.

Finally he *dug a well*. Throughout the Bible water symbolizes life-giving inspiration. Isaac's new well is symbolic of the water of Life springing up within himself, giving life a new meaning for him. This well and the wells of his father provided water — the life of the desert — for his family, for his great herds, and for the irrigation of his extensive "sowing in the land."

This orderly threefold expression of his activity is a reflection of the dawning in Isaac's consciousness of the threefold nature of the Infinite, of the Triune God Himself. His *altar* — typical of his worship of the Almighty God, the *I AM*, the God of his father Abraham; his *tent* — typical of his dwelling "under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps.91:1), in God's loving care — the divinity of his divine worship embracing and caring for his humanhood; the *well* — typical of divine Life springing up within himself and flowing out, like a river, through every avenue of his divine adventure, healing, nourishing, and enriching everything it touched, and assuring fruitfulness in all his endeavors.

When Isaac first heard the voice of the *I AM* and felt the power of the divine *Ego* as the very "*I*" of his being, he went forward and accomplished great things. This was a necessary part of his divine adventure — *to do* something well. And he did it! But when the *I AM* identified Himself as "the God of thy Father Abraham," he felt the Covenant demand to fulfill his part in the unfoldment of the Covenant — not just *to do*, but *to be* the very expression of the *I AM* in its Almighty nature. In other words, Isaac began to see what his real mission in life was: to exemplify the nature of divine Sonship in the unfolding of the Covenant, which is the unfolding of the threefold nature of the Triune God Himself. He came into some realization of his own spiritual nature as the expression of the Son of God. He saw himself, as in a mirror, reflecting the

qualities of Godlikeness, mirroring the divine authority of the Almighty.

And immediately Abimelech, king of the Philistines, who had ordered Isaac away from Gerar, saw him in the same light! The king came to Isaac, as he or his father had come to Abraham in the same place, to make a covenant of peace with him.

Isaac Makes a Covenant of Peace With Abimelech

Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army.

And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?

And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;

That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the Lord.— Gen.26:26-29

Abimelech recognized that Isaac had grown in spiritual stature and authority and had become a ruler of his own experience. Further, the king acknowledged that Isaac was indeed “blessed of the Lord,” a spiritual leader among his people. Though he knew it not, Abimelech recognized in Isaac’s ascendancy the divine authority of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek.

But there was a further acknowledgment from the king that is of tremendous significance. He declared: “We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee.” Is not this an acknowledgment of *Immanuel — God-with-us — Christ, the presence of God!* And does not this acknowledgment indicate to us that Isaac has indeed grown into some understanding of his place in the exemplification of the second aspect of the Trinity — the Son of God!

Abimelech’s acknowledgment of Isaac’s ascendancy is also indicated in the terms of the covenant he begged Isaac to make with him: “Let us make a covenant with thee; That thou wilt do us no hurt.” He recognized Isaac’s dominion and spiritual authority. He

knew that Isaac had defenses which he could not penetrate. So he desired a covenant of peace.

Isaac received Abimelech and his friends graciously and made a great feast for them, and they made a covenant with each other, "and swear one to another . . . and they departed from him in peace" (Gen.26:30,31). This covenant might well be called a covenant of "Peace on earth, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).

Of profound interest to us is the meaning of the Greek word translated *peace*. From a primitive verb, *eiro*, to join, *eirene*, or peace, means: to set at one, to harmonize. It is abundantly clear that Isaac felt and expressed the divine authority this peace gave him in his covenant with Abimelech. This inner peace gave him dominion. It harmonized his relationship with the king and gave him a sense of oneness with everyone and everything in his world.

When Isaac had sent Abimelech and his attendants away in peace, a message was brought to him that was a kind of *Amen*, or benediction, to the *Covenant of peace*:

And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well which they had digged, and said unto him, We have found water.— Gen.26:32.

Isaac called the name of his well *Sheba* — the well of the oath, typical of his *covenant of peace* with man (Gen.26:33). Actually Isaac called his well *Shibah*, the feminine form of *sheba*. And so, in his divine adventure, his well takes on greater significance. It is typical of more than a *covenant of peace*. Giving his well a feminine name might have been Isaac's way of acknowledging the power of the Motherhood of *Elohim*, the Almighty God, "who appeared unto him" — *El Shaddi*, the Nourisher, who gives life and nourishment to all people and things.

Isaac Finds His City Beer-sheba

Around Isaac's settlement a veritable city arose which took its name from the well:

Therefore the name of the city is Beer-sheba unto this day.— Gen.26:33.

The name of the city, Beer-*sheba* — the masculine form of the word. The name of his well, Beer-*shibah* — the feminine form of the word. What does this tell us? Even this: Some understanding of the compound nature of *Elohim*, God, as the Father and Mother of man and the universe, and some comprehension of his own compound nature reflecting both the masculine and feminine qualities of his divine Father-Mother, had dawned in Isaac's consciousness.

The union of the masculine and feminine qualities of Divinity in one individual consciousness is a powerful combination which unites such contrasting but complementary qualities as humility and majesty, gentleness and strength, simplicity and profundity, joy and poise, love and principle — qualities that give one spiritual equipoise, perfect balance, success — qualities that enable one to chart a steady course and to remain undisturbed by exterior forces.

So Isaac came to his city — Beer-sheba, as Abraham had come to his city — Hebron. In their spiritual journeying, in their divine adventure, each found a city, or spiritual abiding place, that was typical of St. John's vision of the Holy City, the holy consciousness of the New Heaven and the New Earth, the spiritual dimension of thought wherein dwelleth righteousness — right thinking, divine completeness.

Chapter XXXII

INTRUSION OF THE OLD COVENANT

Sometime after Isaac moved his large retinue from Gerar to Beer-sheba, we know not how long, Esau, at the age of forty years,

Took to wife Judith, the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite:
Which were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah.— Gen.26:34,35.

The Hittites did not control the land of Canaan, but their influence was felt throughout this part of the world. They were pagans in every sense of the word. They were famous, or should we say infamous, for the practice of witchcraft, divination, spiritualism, necromancy, and child sacrifice, which were an abomination unto the Lord. (See Deut.18:10-12.) In the spiritual progress of the generations of Seth and the seed of Abraham, Esau's Hittite wives, which he brought into Isaac's and Rebekah's household, stood for the unholy occult carnal-mind influence, typified by Ham and Canaan, on the generations of Shem.

It is little wonder that the Hittite wives of Esau were a grief of mind to Isaac and to Rebekah. Esau's marriages to these daughters of the land reveal to us that he was mesmerized by the occult influences they represented — influences which stultify free thought and rob it of its natural and essential spiritual vitality. He seemed to be in agreement with the beliefs of the people about him. There was no spiritual stamina in his thinking to resist the downward trend of materialism of the land. With his usual impetuous and careless nature he followed the open road of self-gratification instead of hewing to the line of self-discipline. His was the unredeemed human goodness that was unaware of its spiritual lack and was not roused or stirred to seek the divine guidance that would have led him step by step to the summit of Abraham's unfoldment. He seemed to know nothing of the de-

mand of the Covenant: "Walk before me" — live ever conscious of the divine presence, "and be thou perfect" — be blameless and be completely operative in doing God's will.

The apparent intrusion of Esau and his Hittite wives into Isaac's story at this time serves to alert us to the fact that Esau had not changed during the years we have heard nothing about him. He is still the care-free young man with no sense of responsibility to his family — not because he didn't love them, but because he loved himself more. He still goes his own way with no apparent thought about what might be God's way. There is no reason to believe that Esau intended to grieve his parents by marrying Hittite women. But his head-strong thoughtlessness in doing only what pleased himself, regardless of the feelings of others or of the effects of his selfish actions, reveal the nature of a self-centered little boy who would not grow up. It probably never occurred to him that bringing pagan wives into the household of his God-fearing parents would add nothing to their happiness. Nor did he give a thought to the fact that the offspring of such a marriage could not and would not do anything to forward the worship of the God of Abraham, nor could they become participants in the unfoldment of the Covenant of God with men. Yet this is the elder son who was confident he was going to inherit the rights and privileges, both spiritual and material, of the firstborn — "the representative of the family in its relationship to God, its priestly intercessor."

A Historical Lapse

Except for the incident of Esau's marriages, we have no Biblical or secular record of Isaac and his family after their return to Beer-sheba for about thirty-five years. It is generally assumed among Bible scholars that much of Isaac's history, even traditional stories or sagas, has been lost. It is regrettable that we know so little of Isaac's sojourn on earth. It is sad that we have no record of his spiritual unfoldment or of his communion with God during the years after he returned to Beer-sheba. We are inclined to feel a sense of disappointment, even sorrow, that we could not walk with this child of promise in his footsteps of spiritual unfoldment as he went forward in his divine adventure. And it is cause for deep regret that Rebekah's place in the Covenant has been obscured. It

is as though a curtain had been drawn across Isaac's path, blotting out an important era in his life.

However, this we know: Through the cohesive force of the marriage covenant which bound them together as one, Isaac and Rebekah exemplified the compound nature of the Son of God, embodying and expressing the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*. It is important that we know them as representatives of the second aspect of the Trinity. Their unfoldment is essential to the unfoldment of the Covenant.

Although we have no written record of many years of their lives, through our faith in the power of the Spirit of God to finish what The Almighty has inaugurated, we know that Isaac and Rebekah continued to exemplify that for which they had been chosen of God. They could not do otherwise. For their lives were ordained to unfold according to the pattern of the Covenant under the irresistible power of the Spirit of God. They had no choice but to be a part of that pattern of unfoldment. The influence of a pagan environment, the presence of human desires, the actions of their sons — this might for a time seem to deter or defer their spiritual progress. But the unfoldment of the Trinity took them with it as it swept majestically through the current of their lives and the history of their times.

An Unholy Influence

While we have nothing historically or metaphorically to draw on to account for the years between Esau's marriages and the dramatic events which are now rising on the horizon, it is evident that some sinister influence has been acting upon the pattern of Isaac's thinking. At this time, thirty-five years after Esau brought his pagan wives into his household, Isaac appears to be declining in age, activity, and in mental power. And what is also apparent is the tragic fact that he has lost sight of the power of his Covenant relationship with God. What has happened to Isaac? The answer is plain:

... His eyes were dim, so that he could not see.— Gen.27:1.

Isaac's *spiritual* vision had been dimmed by the influence of the occultism of the land which Esau and his Hittite wives had

brought into the household. His thinking had sunk to the level of their thinking. He no longer wore the spiritual crown of his divinely royal priesthood. He had literally been put to sleep — mesmerized, his mind swallowed up. He seemed to be held in a kind of mesmeric inertia. His spiritual scientific senses were dormant. His vision — both mental and spiritual — was dimmed. He seemed to have lost sight of the Covenant at Beer-sheba when, through the revelation of the nature of Deity as The Almighty, the God of Abraham, he had found his dominion in the land and was made Priest and King unto God — the spiritual leader of his people and ruler of his human experiences on earth.

Why has Isaac lost his vision? Why has he become feeble? Why has his mind become weakened? The occult mental influence Esau and his Hittite wives exerted upon him does not fully account for the mental condition in which we now find Isaac. The main reason, not easily detected by the casual reader, is the fact that Rebekah's influence in Isaac's life has been weakened by Isaac's intense, almost idolatrous, love of Esau. As a result, Isaac was influenced by this beloved son. Consequently, Esau, not Isaac, became the dominant figure in the household — the crown prince eager to take over the temporal authority exercised by his father. Esau's strong influence weakened rather than strengthened Isaac, with the result that Isaac became so feeble he thought he was at the point of death.

One might ask: How could Isaac, who loved Rebekah dearly, become so completely mesmerized by his parental adoration of a son, that he could forget it was his wife's strength that had made his gentleness great? Why could he not see that Esau's human goodness was not a divine quality? Why could he not comprehend that the children of Esau's Hittite wives could not fulfill the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness? The tempter, the abortive ego, had drawn a veil over his mind's eye, causing his vision to become blurred and his thinking confused. All the tempter had to do to dim Isaac's spiritual intuition and vision was to keep it focused on physicality, even though the form was that of a beloved son. Esau was first in Isaac's affections. What Esau stood for had become first also in Isaac's affections. Isaac, who was quiet, gentle, unemotional, enjoyed vicariously Esau's physical prowess and accomplishment, his lusty love of the world, his impetuous indulgence of human whims, his quick forgiveness of wrongs — fan-

ced or real. These qualities made of Esau an attractive figure and a lovable son. Isaac probably wished, secretly, that he could be like Esau. His love of Esau became a kind of idolatry, for he could not have preferred Esau so completely had he loved spirituality most.

Isaac Loved Esau — Rebekah Loved Jacob

A note of inharmony and misunderstanding between Isaac and Rebekah is indicated:

Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.— Gen.25:28.

Isaac loved this lusty son who was hearty in appetite and in friendliness, who satisfied Isaac's fondness for food and friendship. And of course, Esau was lovable and Isaac should have loved him. But Isaac's love of Esau was so all-absorbing he seemed not to have enough to embrace Jacob also. Perhaps that was one of the reasons that Rebekah loved Jacob.

Edith Deen writes thus of Rebekah's insight concerning her sons:

Records do not furnish actual historical details, but we can be sure that Rebekah was a mother who pondered deeply over her sons' destiny. She recognized the secular bent of her first-born, Esau, and the priestly mold of the last born, Jacob. Had she not also observed how Esau's associates were the Hittites, known to be a less religious race? He had even married two Hittite women, Judith and Bashemath, and in that marriage had returned to the polygamous ways of life which she and Isaac had abandoned. Had she not observed how Esau spent his time in hunting and other such pleasures while Jacob worshipped at the altar of God? Had she not seen how Esau lived for today and how Jacob, like herself, looked into the future? Had she not seen in Esau's face a love for a mess of pottage and in Jacob's a dream of divine glory? (Edith Deen, *All the Women in the Bible*, p.25.)

Rebekah remembered what Isaac had forgotten, namely, that God had chosen Jacob to be the heir of the Covenant. God had told her so. And she did not forget the words of the *Oracle* which spoke to her when she sought divine help before the children were born (Gen.25:23). The message of God that the elder shall serve the

younger is plain. In the language of their times, this meant that God had appointed the younger son to have the inheritance of his father, the blessing of the firstborn. In the language of Spirit, this means that Jacob, like Isaac, was the child of promise in whom God's promises would be fulfilled, and that the firstborn of heaven takes precedence over the firstborn of earth. *This was what Isaac had lost sight of. He was mesmerized by the sense of physical dominion which Esau expressed. And remember — Isaac was mesmerized.* He was not thinking clearly.

Spiritual vision would have shown Isaac what his material senses did not perceive, namely, that Jacob was the son in whom the spiritual promises of God could be written, the one who would be responsive to divine guidance, the one who could hear the voice of God, the one whose nature could be transformed by the renewing of his mind, the one who would become a soldier of God and win the battle with a mortal sense of selfhood.

Rebekah did what Isaac failed to do: She fostered Jacob's spiritual education, as Abraham had fostered Isaac's. She gave to him the spiritual heritage and individual instruction through which he might attain the understanding of the Covenant of God with man. This was Jacob's spiritual birthright. And this birthright could not be given to Esau, no matter how much Isaac loved him, for Esau's concept of life was wholly physical and material. He was not spiritually prepared to accept and to carry out the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness and spiritual perfection. But this Isaac could not see.

Isaac was asleep — the *deep sleep* of occult mesmeric influences — in the Adam dream, in which materialism is the reality and the things of Spirit are only visionary. How to rouse him out of this stupor? How to restore to him the *God-vision* that had been Abraham's great bequest to his beloved son? These must have been questions Rebekah asked herself many times. But she could find no answer.

To break a mesmeric spell requires scientific know-how. Rebekah was not versed in the art of occultism. She knew what the influence was that was robbing her husband of his mind and obscuring his vision. But she knew of no way to counteract it. The real enemy in this battle for Isaac's mind was the serpent, the adversary, the carnal mind itself, determined that the child of promise would not fulfill his mission. But the willing tools, or

agents, of this adversary were Esau's Hittite wives who were determined that *they* were going to be the dominating influence in Isaac's household. These shrewd Hittites knew that Rebekah saw through them. They also knew that as long as Isaac and Rebekah stood together in all things, Isaac could not be mesmerized by their influence. Hence their purpose in turning Isaac away from Rebekah. Isaac's great love of Esau was the only wedge they needed to cause Isaac to turn from Rebekah to Esau for companionship and enjoyment, and then to shut her out from his confidence completely.

Isaac's inordinate love of Esau caused him to be susceptible to the hidden occult influence of Esau's Hittite wives, who were determined that their husband would be named heir apparent of his father so that their own status would be elevated. And their scheme seemed to work. Isaac, separated from Rebekah, was separated from the power of The Almighty, the Motherhood of *Elohim*, which Rebekah reflected so gloriously.

The union of the masculine and feminine qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, symbolized by the marriage covenant, gives power and strength to both parties of this covenant. Under the unholy Hittite influence, Isaac began to go downhill, mentally and physically.

Isaac and Esau

At this time in Isaac's experience the conditions of the Old Covenant, in which a material sense of existence is exalted, seemed to overshadow the glorified sense of God and man revealed in the New Covenant. His scientific senses, which would have broken the mesmeric spell that dimmed his spiritual vision of himself and of his divine mission in life, seemed to be dormant. The fact that he had not utilized his scientific senses nor claimed his spiritual dominion consistently through the years is evidenced by the fact that he succumbed to the ravages of age. But let us read the account in the Bible:

And it came to pass, that when Isaac was old, and his eyes were dim, so that he could not see, he called Esau his eldest son, and said unto him, My son: and he said unto him, Behold, here am I.

And he said, Behold now, I am old, I know not the day of my death:

Now therefore take, I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison;

And make me savoury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat; that my soul may bless thee before I die.— Gen.27:1-4.

Although Isaac appeared to be courting death, what was actually going on at this time was the beginning of the demise of *the old man*, the mortal concept of himself. But the evidence of the senses was that death was nigh. The material concept of existence, the Old Covenant, had so clouded Isaac's vision and depleted his energy that he looked to savoury meat to strengthen him and to inspire him that he might give to Esau the blessing of the first-born. Isaac was not mentally equipped at this time to give a spiritual blessing to anyone, for he seemed unable to discern the difference between materiality and spirituality. It was as though he was endeavoring to endow Esau with a divine blessing that would empower his son to fulfill the mission which had been entrusted to him.

Isaac had not yet completely fulfilled the exemplification of divine Sonship, the second aspect of the Triune divine Principle. He might have believed he was near death. But he could not leave the scene until his mission was completed. He could not pass on his responsibility to another. Not even to a beloved son who was not spiritually qualified or God-appointed to fulfill that mission.

There is little doubt that through the years there had been many discussions between Isaac and Rebekah concerning the destiny of their sons. Rebekah had probably dreaded the time, which she knew would come, when Isaac would call Esau and bestow upon him the promised blessing of the Covenant and thereby attempt to endow him with the spiritual authority which was the heritage of the heir of the Covenant. The mission of the heir of the Covenant was, and is, to exemplify in his own life the spiritual scientific relationship between God and man. This had been and still was Isaac's heritage, a heritage which could not be bestowed upon Esau, no matter how much Isaac loved him; for Esau's concept of life, though humanly good, was physical and material. He was not spiritually prepared to abide by the conditions of the Covenant.

Further, it must be remembered that Esau had sold his birthright to Jacob. Yet he had not relinquished his claim on it and was willing to accept the blessing of the firstborn which he had bargained away. It is evident that his father knew not that Esau had sold his birthright to his brother for a mess of pottage. But it is also evident that in purposing to give the blessing to Esau, Isaac was acting in opposition to the expressed decree of God.

There must have been something within Isaac that told him he was not acting in accordance with God's expressed decree. Otherwise he would not have been secretive about his proposed actions. He would have called the whole family, all the servants, his friends and neighbors, to witness the sacred event — an event that would give Esau both spiritual and temporal authority over the family and over Isaac's entire estate. And certainly he would have had Rebekah by his side to witness their son's blessing. However, the evidence is clear that Isaac was planning to confer the Covenant blessing on Esau without Rebekah's knowledge or consent. But —

Rebekah and Jacob

Rebekah heard when Isaac spake to Esau his son.
And Esau went to the field to hunt for venison, and to bring it.

And Rebekah spake unto Jacob her son, saying,
Behold, I heard thy father speak unto Esau thy brother, saying,

Bring me venison, and make me savoury meat, that I may eat, and bless thee before the Lord before my death.

Now therefore, my son, obey my voice according to that which I command thee.

Go now to the flock, and fetch me from thence two good kids of the goats; and I will make thee savoury meat for thy father, such as he loveth:

And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and that he may bless thee before his death.— Gen.27:5-10.

Isaac was presumptuous in assuming the prerogative of bestowing the Covenant blessing on either of his sons. Only God blesses man. Man can only acknowledge this divine blessing. Even Abraham did not presume to bestow the Covenant blessing on his

son. "God blessed Isaac (Gen.25:11). And no matter what Isaac did or did not do, God would bless Jacob. Both Rebekah and Jacob should have known this. And certainly Isaac should have known it. But because Isaac claimed the right to bless Esau, both Rebekah and Jacob were mesmerized by his claim and tried to circumvent his actions — not trusting God to take care of it in His own way.

Rebekah's action was not that of a frustrated wife, nor of a mother who wanted to push her favored son into an important position. She knew that the blessing was to be Jacob's. God had told her so before his birth. Rebekah had come to know the God of Abraham. She knew the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness. She knew the Word of God concerning Jacob and Esau. And she knew that Isaac, blinded by a finite sense which focused all the love he had to give on a favored son, had lost his spiritual vision. She knew that she was co-partner in the Covenant with Isaac. When his vision of his mission failed, the full responsibility was hers. She tried humanly, with such means as she had, to carry out that responsibility and to be obedient to the word of the Lord which had come to her concerning the children.

Rebekah was fighting the battle between the Old and the New Covenants. This was a kind of warfare which is not evident to the casual reader or observer. It was a warfare between the will of God and the will of man, between spiritual clear-sightedness and material stubbornness which blinds one to righteous action. In warfare it is considered good strategy to outmaneuver an enemy. Rebekah outmaneuvered the mortal, material sense which seemed to possess Isaac and which would have caused him to be disobedient to the will of God, and she thereby kept him from committing an offense against God. Rebekah was fighting desperately, *alone*, that the Covenant of Godlikeness be preserved for the Godlike, that the blessing of spiritual perfection be kept for the righteous, and that the dominion of spiritual authority be given to the child of promise — the child promised of God to establish the nation through whom the knowledge of God would come to the world, even to that child who would give a nation his new name, *Israel*, a soldier who prevails, having power with God and with men. (See Gen.32:28.)

Rebekah was fighting for Jacob's rights as Sarah had fought for Isaac's. But there is one vast difference: Sarah fought in the open. Rebekah fought in secret. Further, Abraham acknowledged the

rightness of Sarah's demands; he listened for God's direction and the divine voice told him that Sarah was right. But Isaac had not listened to Rebekah, nor is there any record that he talked with God about what he intended to do.

As a strange example of the way in which lofty ideas may be made a motive for low acts, it may be that Rebekah told herself she was carrying out the will of God. (*IB*, Vol.I., Expos. p. 681.)

Rebekah is not to be complimented or excused for the means she used to circumvent Isaac's determined disobedience to the word of the Lord concerning the place of these two sons in the divine plan. She should have had faith in God's disposal of events. She should have known that what God ordains, the Spirit of God brings to pass. But Rebekah's action was the lesser of two evils. The far greater evil would have been for Esau to have been chosen to perpetuate a nation of people through whom knowledge of God should come to the world. Esau knew nothing of the God of Abraham, and his Hittite wives knew less. And it is a fearful thing to contemplate that the willful stubborn blindness of Isaac caused Rebekah to stoop to action wholly unlike herself in order to stay evil that would have been far greater than her own misguided action.

When Rebekah unfolded her plan to Jacob, he did not question the rightness of the proposed plan, possibly because he felt he was claiming what was his own. The blessing of the firstborn was his by divine right and by human right. God had decreed it and he had bought the birthright from his brother, including all the rights and privileges that went with the birthright. But he did question the feasibility of the plan:

And Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, Behold, Esau my brother is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man:

My father peradventure will feel me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver; and I shall bring a curse upon me, and not a blessing.

And his mother said unto him, Upon me be thy curse, my son: only obey my voice, and go fetch me them.— Gen.27:11-13.

The curse of an Oriental father was a fearsome thing and not to be taken lightly. It would deprive a son of his inheritance and a

wife of her place. Rebekah had nothing to gain and everything to lose by her plan. Hers was not a selfish or willful act, but a determination that the child of promise should not be robbed of his inheritance. She used the weapons of *the cunning hunter* to gain the blessing for *the plain man*.

And Rebekah took goodly raiment of her eldest son Esau, which were with her in the house, and put them upon Jacob her younger son:

And she put the skins of the kids of the goats upon his hands, and upon the smooth of his neck:

And she gave the savoury meat and the bread, which she had prepared, unto the hand of her son Jacob.— Gen.27:15-17.

Isaac and Jacob

And he came unto his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I; who art thou, my son?

And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau, thy firstborn.— Gen.27:18,19.

If Isaac had been spiritually alert, he would have known that it was Jacob. But then, if Isaac had not been mesmerized by his all-absorbing worshipful affection for Esau and Oriental pride for his first-born son, he would have been obedient to the word of the Lord and acknowledged that Jacob was the rightful heir of both the birthright and the Covenant blessing.

And Isaac said unto Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my very son Esau or not.

And Jacob went near unto Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. . . . So he blessed him.— Gen.27:21-23.

But Isaac still questioned:

Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.— Gen.27:24.

With this assurance, Isaac asked that the feast which had been prepared be brought to him “that my soul may bless thee.”

The Birthright Blessing

Fortified by his favorite meal, Isaac pronounced the birthright blessing — the blessing of the firstborn which belonged to Jacob by both divine and human right. But this blessing was *not* the Covenant Blessing. It was the blessing of an Oriental father upon a favorite son:

And his father Isaac said unto him, Come near now and kiss me, my son.

And he came near, and kissed him: and he smelled the smell of his raiment, and blessed him, and said, See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed:

Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven, and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine:

Let people serve thee, and nations bow down to thee: be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee: cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee.— Gen.27:26-29.

The blessing which proceeds from God has no curse in it. The Apostle James saw the incongruity of the duality of thought which sends forth both blessing and cursing:

Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.— Jas.3:9,10.

Jacob has yet to receive the Covenant Blessing of the God of Abraham. The Covenant Blessing of divine Sonship cannot be bestowed upon man by man. This blessing is bestowed by the Almighty God upon those who deserve it. It can only be recognized and acknowledged by man.

And it came to pass, as soon as Isaac had made an end of blessing Jacob, and Jacob was yet scarce gone out from the presence of Isaac his father, that Esau his brother came in from his hunting.

And he also had made savoury meat, and brought it unto his father, and said unto his father, Let my

father arise, and eat of his son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

And Isaac his father said unto him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy son, thy firstborn Esau.

And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed.— Gen.27:30-33.

“Isaac trembled very exceedingly.” Isaac was shaken! The mesmerism which had dimmed his vision was dissolving. The Spirit of God had finally touched a responsive chord. The child of promise was maturing quickly. Often human goodness, which Isaac expressed so abundantly, needs to be shocked out of its complacency before it is ready to change its mind. Isaac was beginning to see that *God had chosen the plain man to be blessed*, and that he had power to bless only when his will was in agreement with the divine will. He saw the hand of God in the blessing and had no word of reproof or condemnation of either Jacob or Rebekah. He had been forced to do what he should have done voluntarily — to give the blessing of the firstborn to the son whom God had chosen, *The Spirit of God had moved upon the waters!*

And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father.

And he said, Thy brother came with subtilty, and hath taken away thy blessing.

And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?— Gen.27:34-36.

Isaac was grieved, not only because he saw the divine hand in the blessing of Jacob, but also because the son he loved so fiercely had lost the blessing. Although both Isaac and Esau blamed Jacob for his subtilty, Esau is not without blame. For he claimed the blessing of the birthright he had sold to Jacob. This claim to something he had sold to another reveals an aspect of his character not detected by the casual reader. Do not forget that Esau fully intended to accept the birthright blessing from his father, knowing full well that it belonged to Jacob.

Esau's cry —

... Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?
... Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me,
even me also, O my father.—Gen.27:36,38.

has been repeated down through the ages. In our own day the cry of those who have been unwilling to seek the kingdom of heaven within is heard again and again: "Why do we not have the blessing of the dominion of the sons of God?" In the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, Christ Jesus brought home the lesson that without spiritual illumination one cannot behold the bridegroom and go in with him to the marriage feast, and thus be wedded to spiritual life (Matt:25:1-13).

Esau's cry brought from his father the response:

Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth, and of the dew of heaven from above;

And by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.— Gen.27:39,40.

According to several translations of the Bible, the correct rendering of this passage should be: "Far from the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven shall be thy dwelling." This prophecy is in agreement with the general barrenness of Edom, or Seir, where the descendants of Esau dwelt. The fulfillment of Isaac's prophecy, that Esau would live by his sword, would not change Esau's mode of life, for he was thoroughly familiar with the quiver and bow and was a cunning hunter, not a shepherd. The fulfillment of Isaac's blessing for his beloved son was conditioned only upon Esau's receptivity of divine good.

Esau craved the blessing of lordship over his family, but not spiritual oversight of them. He could have neither. Why? Because, as the record explicitly declares, he despised his birthright. When he was hungry, he valued the priceless heritage of the firstborn so little that he could sell it to satisfy his appetite. If there had been within him any response to the human and divine responsibilities of the birthright, he could never have bargained it away. Esau thus laid a judgment on his life which could not be altered.

The writer of the book of Hebrews (12:16) calls Esau "a profane person," irreverent, more or less contemptuous of the spiritual values of life. Bible historians agree that Esau himself made possible the success of Rebekah's and Jacob's plot. The method they contrived happened to be the particular means through which the Covenant blessing passed away from Isaac's firstborn. A commentary in *The Interpreter's Bible* confirms this:

The tragic lesson of the O.T. story is that some lapses are fatal. Isaac could give to Esau, when Esau woke in bitter realization, the blessing of affection; but he could never give now the full blessing of the destiny which Esau had denied. Esau had laid a judgment on his life which Isaac could not alter. (*IB. Vol. I, Expos. p.685.*)

Some commentators have said that, having blessed Jacob, Isaac could not revoke the blessing. But as the absolute ruler of his house, Isaac could have revoked the blessing of the firstborn bestowed on Jacob. There was no spiritual or temporal law which forbade his doing so. That he did not is proof positive that he was at last spiritually awake, that he had been shaken out of the mental miasma which had blinded him to God's will and had stopped for a time his own spiritual unfoldment. Human will was silenced, and Isaac was able to see that God's plan was in operation. At long last he realized that the vibrant physical dominion expressed by Esau was not spiritual strength which inherits the Covenant Blessing and has dominion over all the earth.

The prophecy that Esau would serve his brother is not a decree of servitude of one brother to another. Esau wore no yoke of bondage or servitude to Jacob. In fact Esau became very prosperous and his descendants were the first of Abraham's offspring to establish a temporal kingdom with a royal family. (See Gen.36.)

The yoke of servitude Esau wore was the same yoke all mortals wear to some extent. It was a yoke of bondage to the conditions of the Old Covenant through which we serve materialism in all its forms. The brother we must really serve is the Son of God! When he, the Christ, shall have the dominion in us, we shall break the yoke of servitude that holds us in bondage to a mortal material concept of life and of ourselves.

It is not surprising that Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing which his father bestowed upon him. He did not look within

himself for wrongdoing. He vented all his frustrations on his brother:

And Esau said in his heart, The days of mourning
for my father are at hand; then will I slay my brother
Jacob.— Gen.27:41.

Esau was not a murderer at heart. This was an impulsive statement made in the heat of anger and despair. Esau was not willing to admit his wrongdoing in being ready to accept something he had bargained away. His disappointment at not getting something he wanted, even though not rightfully his, vented itself in fierce anger. Rebekah, fearing for Jacob's life, persuaded Isaac to send Jacob to Haran to her brother Laban, under the guise of securing a wife for him, for, said she:

I am weary of my life because of the daughters of
Heth: if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth,
such as these which are the daughters of the land,
what good shall my life do me?— Gen.27:46.

Isaac was immediately in accord with Rebekah's counsel. It is significant that for the first time he was willing to listen to his wife, his co-partner in the Covenant.

The New Covenant Blessing

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and
charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take
a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel,
thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence
of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruit-
ful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a
multitude of people;

And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee,
and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit
the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave
unto Abraham.— Gen.28:1-4.

“Isaac called Jacob.” With patriarchal authority Isaac gave Jacob specific instructions concerning his choice of a wife. He in-

voked the Covenant Blessing on Jacob, the blessing which The Almighty God had bestowed upon Abraham and upon Isaac. At long last Isaac recognized that it is not the prerogative of man to bless man. His acknowledgment that it is The Almighty God, *El Shaddi*, which blesses man indicates that he had come into some understanding of the Covenant relationship of God and man, which had been revealed to Abraham.

The blessing which Isaac, as a human father, gave to Jacob when he thought he was blessing Esau, and the Covenant Blessing which Isaac acknowledged as Jacob's divine heritage are entirely different. The blessing which Isaac first gave to Jacob and for which Esau had wept was a promise of material abundance — plenty of corn and wine, instead of the understanding of ever-appearing fruition. This blessing, which Isaac believed he was bestowing upon Esau, was a blessing of accretion rather than the blessing of unfoldment. In it no mention was made of the divine birthright, which involved spiritual leadership and dominion over one's earthly experience, even that dominion of which the royal priesthood of Melchizedek is typical.

But now, with the scales fallen from his eyes, Isaac sees clearly the true nature of the Covenant blessing, even the wondrous blessing of continuous, uninterrupted spiritual unfoldment in which the glories of heaven appear abundantly on earth:

And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee.— Gen.28:3.

This blessing says naught of corn and wine and of abundance of material possessions. The blessing of The Almighty Motherhood of God makes one fruitful, and multiplies, or increases, one's capacities and accomplishments, and gives one dominion wherever one is. The blessing of the Covenant of Godlikeness does not teach one to *acquire* greatness but demands that one *express* greatness. For the blessing of The Almighty is like "leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened" (Matt.13:33). This leaven of the Christ had been dormant in Isaac's consciousness, but now it has been released, enlarging his concept of himself, expanding his views out of former limitations, and rending the veil of occultism which had dimmed his vision. No longer was he blinded by the belief that the

vibrant physical dominion expressed by Esau was spiritual strength which inherits the Covenant Blessing and has dominion over all the earth.

Isaac's new concept of the Covenant Blessing blessed not only Jacob but Isaac himself. For it opened his eyes to his relationship with the Almighty and to his own life as the expression of the divine Life. This understanding enabled him to lay aside the old garment of decrepitude which had bound him and to throw off the heaviness of death which had led him to the brink of the grave.

Allegorically, Isaac's recognition of Jacob's place in the Covenant indicates that Isaac himself has come into the realization of his Covenant relationship with God and has found that dominion implied in the title *King and Priest unto God* (Rev.1:6). He has found his place as ruler of himself and spiritual leader of his people. He has found the kingdom of heaven within himself. He has come into the understanding of the nature of God as Father-Mother. The child of promise has grown to the full stature of manhood in Christ Jesus — to full spiritual maturity (Eph.4:13).

The struggle between Jacob and Esau for the birthright has ended, and with it the struggle that it typifies, the one going on within Isaac himself. He has learned that the plain man, unsure of himself, but willing to give up all for the spiritual birthright and the Covenant Blessing, and not the man of the world, sure of himself but in doubt of God's way, shall have the dominion of heaven on earth. The victory is in accord with God's will and in conformity with the Covenant of Godlikeness.

Those who might be inclined to condemn Jacob and to say that he was not worthy of so high a mission as that entrusted to him, need to remind themselves that God's ways are not our ways, and that God sees not as mortals see, but God looketh on the heart. God saw in Jacob one who could be instructed in the things of Spirit, one in whom the power of the Spirit of God to transform and transfigure his life could be exemplified.

When Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob, and sent him away to Padan-aram, to take a wife from thence; and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan;

And that Jacob obeyed his father and his mother, and was gone to Padan-aram;

And Esau seeing that the daughters of Canaan pleased not Isaac his father;

Then went Esau unto Ishmael, and took unto the wives which he had Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife.— Gen.28:6-9.

At long last Esau came face to face with the fact that his marriages to the daughters of Canaan displeased his father and mother greatly and in some unexplained way, he associated his loss of the birthright and its blessing with his heathen wives. Seeking to regain the favor of his parents he courted and married a member of Abraham's family, the daughter of Ishmael. And whether or not Isaac and Rebekah approved is not known.

Chapter XXXIII

REBEKAH

A Dynamic Force In Isaac's Divine Adventure

We find no record which tells us whether or not Isaac acknowledged Rebekah's place in the Covenant. But there is abundant evidence of her oneness with and support of her husband in his divine adventure. Although she is not mentioned in the Biblical account of his success in Gerar, her presence is felt there in Isaac's expression of divine completeness, evidenced in his exceeding fruitfulness in that land. Rebekah, like Sarah, was strong. But unlike Sarah, Rebekah apparently stayed in the background of Isaac's human life as a powerful influence felt rather than seen and heard. Could it be that she deliberately refrained from asserting herself so that Isaac would not appear inferior to her? Like many strong women, Rebekah stood behind her man. Had she stood beside him, she would have overshadowed him.

We do have a record of Isaac's great love for his wife. Recall that when it was thought Rebekah was barren, Isaac did not even consider taking a second wife who could give him an heir. He prayed for Rebekah. And his prayer was so fervent it was answered. The mesmerism, whether it was Rebekah's barrenness or Isaac's impotency, was broken, and Rebekah conceived and brought forth twins. Isaac's love for his wife was so constant that after fifty years of married life, he couldn't resist "flirting" with her in Abimelech's court, even though he had introduced her as his sister. The only time the power of their togetherness was weakened was when, some years later, Esau brought two Hittite wives into the family, who exerted an ungodly influence on both Isaac and Rebekah. But when Isaac acknowledged Jacob's right to the birthright and to the Covenant Blessing, the unholy influence which had dulled his spiritual senses and separated him from Rebekah's strength was broken. And we see Rebekah, no longer

in the background of Isaac's divine adventure, but standing side-by-side with her husband.

Recall too that Isaac did not rebuke Rebekah when she circumvented his determination to confer upon Esau the birthright blessing. This was certainly the acid test of his love of and respect for his wife. It is evident that Isaac did not regard Rebekah's action as sinful or unforgiveable. Rather, he admired her intelligence and daring. In the Orient, even today, one who can outwit another is admired rather than censured. This does not justify either Rebekah or Jacob in the eyes of divine justice, and each paid dearly for their deception. For although husband and wife found their spiritual and human togetherness, mother and son never saw each other again.

There is no record in the Bible of the time of Rebekah's death. Apparently, she left earth's scene while Jacob was on his way from Haran to Hebron, about 30 years after Jacob had left home. (See pp. 527-528.)

There is no doubt that Isaac recognized Rebekah as a dynamic force in his life. Their life together is a real love story — something unique in the ancient east. And we learn that at the end, as at the beginning, of their life together, *he loved her!*

Chapter XXXIV

THE CLIMAX OF ISAAC'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

Isaac was about 136 years old when Jacob departed from Beer-sheba. At that time he thought he was ready to die. But when Jacob returned from Haran some thirty years later, Isaac was still living. When he had let God's will be done, instead of stubbornly clinging to what he thought was right, he took a new lease on life. Reaching forward into Jacob's story, we read:

Isaac in Hebron

And Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre,
unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where
Abraham and Isaac sojourned.— Gen.35:27.

We know not how long Isaac had made his home in Hebron, the city typical of the exalted state of mind which characterized Abraham. But metaphorically, Isaac's abode in the city of the Covenant is indicative of the fact that he had come into some understanding of the spiritual nature of the universe — the understanding which had come to Abraham and which had led him to Hebron. For Isaac, like Abraham, knew the city by its holy name *Kirjath-Arbah, the fourfold city* — symbolic in some measure of their foursquare understanding of the fourth dimension of Spirit, which transcends the finite sense of a limited material world. (See pp.334-335.)

Rebekah must have accompanied Isaac to this climax of his spiritual journeying. For Hebron is typical of the wondrous citadel of spiritual understanding of the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God — the understanding which had caused Abraham to recognize and to acknowledge Sarah's place in the Covenant.

So Isaac came to the city, or citadel of spiritual understanding to which Abraham had come and to which we all must come — to

spiritual maturity, "to that measure of development which is meant by the fulness of Christ" (Eph.4:13, JBP).

The Child of Promise learned to know God as the Father and Mother of all, who blesses the Sons of God according to their receptivity.

He learned that even the child of promise cannot remain forever a child, but must grow to the full stature of manhood; and through his faithfulness to his marriage covenant with Rebekah, he learned to express the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim* — the power and presence, the strength and the gentleness of the Almighty.

And he learned to yield to the power of the Spirit of God — to let this mighty divine energy transform his humanhood with the divine — in accordance with the law of the human and divine coincidence through which the dominion of heaven is expressed on earth.

The Child of Promise fulfilled his mission!

Isaac and Jacob dwelt together at Hebron for about twelve or thirteen years. Here, at the age of an hundred and fourscore years, "Isaac gave up the ghost," and rose into a new divine adventure, unseen by the material senses. Jacob and Esau, having made their peace, laid him beside his beloved Rebekah, near Abraham and Sarah in the Cave of Machpelah in the field of Ephron, which is before Mamre in Hebron. (See Gen.23:19,20; 25:8-10; 35:29.) But Isaac lives on as an essential link in the exemplification of the human and divine coincidence through which the dominion of the New Covenant radiates the power, presence, and science of The Almighty.

Isaac's recorded history is brief. Between Abraham and Jacob, two of the most towering figures in the Bible, Isaac seems almost obscure. In most of his record he is pictured either as the son of Abraham or as the father of Jacob. Only in the story of his marriage with Rebekah and in his prosperity in Abimelech's country does he appear as his own man. Here he expresses his divine nature.

Although not as majestic as was Abraham, nor as dynamic as Jacob grew to be, Isaac's gentleness, a priceless divine attribute, made him great. But what Isaac did or didn't do humanly is not im-

portant. What he stands for as the exemplar of the second aspect of the threefold divine nature of *Elohim* places him on the same high plane of unfoldment with Abraham and Jacob. As *the child of promise*, Isaac is the pre-figurement of the Son of God. In the Covenant relationship of God with man, he is vitally important as *the essential link between Abraham and Jacob* — Abraham who, together with Sarah, exemplified the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God, and Jacob, who exemplified the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, to redeem the human with the divine through the human and divine coincidence. This threefold nature of the Triune divine Principle, God, describes the individuality of the Infinite, enunciated by the Master Christian as *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*. No link in this chain or pattern of unfoldment is weak, obscure, secondary, or unimportant. Gentleness is an essential link between majesty and dynamism in the unfolding of the threefold nature of the Infinite through which divine authority, the dominion of heaven on earth, is expressed.

Chapter XXXV

JACOB

HIS MISSION

Come ye, and let us go up to the
mountain of the Lord, to the house of the
God of Jacob; and he will teach us his ways,
and we will walk in his paths.
(Isa.2:3; Micah 4:2)

The Trinity needed yet another witness. The exemplification of the threefold nature of God was not complete. Abraham and Sarah exemplified the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God. Isaac and Rebekah exemplified the compound nature of divine Sonship — the male and female of the sixth period of spiritual unfoldment of the New Covenant, in which the completeness of man in God's image and likeness is revealed. Now the Holy Ghost must have an exemplar. The Holy Spirit of God must be exemplified — even the Spirit of the New Covenant which moved upon the face of the waters, scattered the darkness, and brought to light the spiritual nature of the universe and man in God's likeness.

In Jacob's life we find the descent of the Holy Ghost in abundant measure. Each spiritual touch of the Spirit of God brought to light in Jacob's human consciousness more of the divine nature which prevailed over what had appeared to be an unyielding material sense of self.

In Jacob's story we see more clearly than in any other story in the Bible the individual human footsteps leading from a material concept of existence up to the spiritual understanding of life. In Jacob's life experience is plainly written the record of the intense struggle between the Old Covenant of godless materialism and the New Covenant of Godlikeness and spiritual perfection — the struggle which is to determine whether a dominant material nature shall triumph in man or whether the divine nature of man

shall have dominion. In this struggle is written a prophecy which shall surely come to pass, namely: the divine nature in man *shall* triumph over carnal mindedness and its gross nature in all the earth.

The story of Jacob is the story of every individual who has believed that his struggles for happiness, success, completeness, and dominion lie outside himself — with persons and things, with circumstances and conditions, with the world at large — only to learn that every struggle begins and ends within one's own consciousness. Jacob learned that no matter what the outward problem might seem to be, the answer lay within himself.

There is a law involved in this truth: When spiritual dominion is felt within, spiritual authority is expressed without; when the kingdom within us is governed by God, the city around us expresses the same harmony. This is the law of spiritual dominion, the dominion of the New Covenant — dominion which always begins within one's own heart and expands to include and govern everything within the radius of individual consciousness. We see this law in operation in every experience in Jacob's life. When his divine nature governed him, he was in command of outward conditions. When a mortal, material sense dominated him, he was enslaved by persons and circumstances. The outcome of his every struggle with the adversary was determined by this law.

In the struggle between Jacob and Esau for the birthright, we saw a struggle to determine whether The Spirit of God in man or the spirit of the world shall have dominion on earth. Esau, in whom the spirit of the world was dominant, lost in this contest. Jacob won, not because of deceit, but in spite of it; and not because of human goodness, but because the Omniscience of the Almighty knew that Jacob's gentle, teachable nature could be regenerated by the power of the Holy Ghost, that his mortal sense of self would yield to the holy influence of the Spirit of God, and that he would continue to grow in this understanding and exemplification of the divine nature until he reached the goal of spiritual maturity.

Jacob's new birth or regeneration was not easy. The physical travail of giving birth to a child is not to be compared with the mental travail of being born again. A mortal nature does not yield easily to the transforming influence of the Spirit of God; it will always be found justifying its indulgences and weaknesses. The travail goes on and on until the human yields to the divine.

Jacob learned that the struggle with Esau was as nothing compared with the struggle within himself between the divine nature, with its spiritual ways and means of accomplishing success, and a mortal nature, with its occult methods of bringing about a desired end. However, the renewing of his mind was a continuing process, for the Spirit of God had taken hold of him and would not let him go until he was transformed — until his human life conformed with the divine pattern of unfoldment. Though he knew it not, his was the task of building within himself the temple of the Holy Ghost and of fathering the progenitors of the nation in which the Covenant of God with man would be fulfilled — a nation that would bear his new name. He had no choice but to follow divine directions.

Jacob's spiritual journeying did not really begin until he left his parents' home. Prior to this time Jacob's experiences were, metaphorically, a part of Isaac's unfoldment. Even though the experiences were Jacob's, they showed forth the trials and triumphs going on within Isaac's own consciousness. But Jacob has left his father's house and his individual unfoldment has begun.

Let us accompany him and participate in his divine adventure — an adventure in which the *Seven Periods of Unfoldment of the New Covenant*, revealed in the first chapter of Genesis, are illustrated — periods of revelation of the nature of God and of his (Jacob's) relationship with God, periods of unfoldment of his divine mission and of his place in the Covenant, periods in which the old man, the old mortal sense of himself, is put off and the new man, his divine nature, is put on.

Throughout his journey we may see how the Spirit of God moves upon the waters, the elements of his consciousness, and brings to light the spiritual ideas that lead him into and through every period of unfoldment. But let us return for a moment to Isaac's house, that we may walk with Jacob as he departs from thence and goes forth on his holy pilgrimage.

Chapter XXXVI
JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

THE FIRST PERIOD

Bethel

The Spirit of God moved upon the face
of the waters.
(Gen.1:2.)

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan.

Arise, go to Padan-Aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother.

And God Almighty bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people;

And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee: that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham.— Gen.28:1-4.

With the Covenant blessing of the Almighty God, the All-Sufficient One, who nourishes, enriches, and makes fruitful, Jacob went forth from his father's house. The understanding of the nature of God as *El Shaddi* — a loving Mother whose All-might chastens, comforts, and strengthens Her children and makes them fruitful in good works — is the understanding of Deity through which the Covenant relationship of God and man was established with Abraham. And it is this understanding of God's Covenant with man which is beginning to dawn in Jacob's consciousness.

No colorful Oriental caravan accompanied Jacob in his journey as he went out from his father's house such as the one provided by Abraham when he sent to Padan-Aram to bring Rebekah from thence to be Isaac's wife. Why would Isaac send Jacob on such a journey without provisions for his well-being? Why would Isaac not have sent his chief steward to bring a wife for Jacob, as Abraham had done for him? We do not know. But we do know that in the divine plan there was a reason for it.

It is unlikely that Jacob set out on foot on this journey from Beer-sheba to Haran — a distance of several hundred miles. Travel by camel was so customary in those days it is not unusual that no mention is made of it. Jacob's only possession was his shepherd's staff (Gen.32:10). He had neither escort, companion, nor servant. But Jacob was not alone. The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, was with him, leading him into the first lessons of the New Covenant.

Jacob's first day's journey — the First Day in his divine adventure — brought him to the place where the pattern of his mission was revealed to him. He had traveled far both mentally and physically in this period of spiritual unfoldment. He traversed a distance of about sixty miles through time and space, but there is no way of measuring his spiritual journeying, for this gain is invisible to the material senses.

Before Jacob left his father's house his repentance had already begun. He did not claim the material inheritance of Isaac, which was obtained through deceit. All that he took from Isaac when he left was the promise that Almighty God, the God of Abraham, would bless him and make him fruitful. This mighty blessing was already at work in him. When Jacob left his father's house he thought he was fleeing from Esau's wrath, and that he was going to find a wife. But it was the Spirit of God that was even then leading him out of a mortal material sense of himself and of his mission into the realization of his divine completeness and his universal mission.

To one uninstructed in the ways of the Holy Spirit, this point in Jacob's journeying might seem to be retrogressive rather than progressive. Although he had been given the blessing of the first-born, which made him Isaac's heir, and he had received the Covenant Blessing, which gave him spiritual authority on earth, yet he was being sent away from the land which had been promised him as his inheritance. He was literally going into exile. But spiritual vision reveals this low ebb to be, not depression, but humility — one of the most precious and priceless qualities to be found in the human consciousness.

When one discovers humility within one's self, one is ready for progress, for the high road of humility leads away from the low road of self. And Jacob had found humility. This divine virtue had been awakened in him at the time Isaac invoked the Covenant

Blessing of The Almighty upon him. Now he *felt* the power which humiliates the mortal sense of self and elevates the spiritual concept of man in God's likeness. The Spirit of God within was leavening his consciousness, lifting his meditations from thoughts of self to thoughts of God.

And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. —

Gen.28:11.

Here Abraham had built an altar soon after coming into the land of Canaan. Here God had revealed to Abraham the spiritual nature of the universe and of his dominion therein. Doubtless Jacob knew this — knew the sacredness of Abraham's communion with God in this *well-known place*, and he felt safe there — it was *sanctuary* to him.

And he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. — Gen.28:11.

Jacob's Vision of the Ladder of Heaven

Jacob's sleep was *not* the deep sleep of the Adam dream. It was the sleep of restfulness in which a material sense of existence fell away, leaving him free to commune with God without interference from the troublesome material senses. Often individuals hear God's voice while they sleep because then their thoughts are quiet and less self-assertive. The Spirit of God lifted Jacob's sleeping or unresisting thought to behold the majesty of *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of the universe. And in this vision Jacob began to understand his place in the infinitude of God's unfolding plan. Let us read the holy record of Jacob's first awareness of God's presence:

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending upon it.

And, behold, the Lord stood above it. —

Gen.28:12,13.

The angels of God's presence are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (Heb.1:14).

Angels are not winged creatures clothed in white. They are God's holy thoughts, guiding, guarding, and made manifest in whatever form they are needed.

The way in which Jacob became conscious of his unchanging relationship with Deity was revealed through God's angel system — God's thoughts ascending and descending upon the ladder of life. This method of communication between God and man is familiar to all of God's faithful witnesses and is known as *communion*, not a religious ceremony, but uninterrupted communication, or oneness, with the Infinite — a conscious sense of God's presence. The vision which came to Jacob comes to those who have glimpsed something of their relationship with Deity, even the relationship of Parent and child — the holy relationship revealed in the first two statements of The Trinity in which the nature of the Infinite is defined in its Creative and its Self-revealing aspects. Christ Jesus often referred to this relationship of God and man. His statement: "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30), was a declaration of his absolute at-one-ment with his Father-God, with his divine source. To one who acknowledged his divine Sonship, he said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.— John 1:51.

Jacob's dream and Christ Jesus' words describing the uninterrupted communication, or communion, between God and man, are declarations of the same spiritual truth. The Master's words give a new dimension to Jacob's dream. Christ Jesus — the Son of God made manifest as the Son of Man — is himself the ladder of life, the connecting link between heaven and earth, between the divine and the human.

For the brief space of this holy vision, Jacob saw himself as a ladder whose feet rested on the earth even while his consciousness reached heaven. In this vision he was able to comprehend, in some degree, how the angels, God's thoughts, could ascend and descend upon him, keeping him ever mindful of God's presence, guiding and guarding his human footsteps and leading him in the way that he should go. Thus the true meaning of communion was revealed to him — conscious communication with the Infinite. The angels of God's presence — powerful and comforting thoughts sent to

minister to us — ascend and descend our ladder of life and bring to us, as they brought to Jacob, a conscious sense of the presence of God — of Immanuel, or God-with-us.

Notwithstanding all that Jacob had done, communication between earth and heaven was not broken. The God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac — the God of his fathers and of all the inheritance of his home — was with him still, and would go with him on the way ahead. . . . Even on the rocky slopes where Jacob was alone there rose the shining stairway that brought the heavenly glory, with angels going up like prayers of men to God and angels coming down like the grace of God to man. (*IB, Vol.I, Expo. pp.689-690.*)

“The ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached to heaven,” was the beginning of Jacob’s realization of the *link* between God and man, between heaven and earth, between the divine and the human. He was beginning to understand, in some measure, that earth was not a material sphere, isolated from heaven, but that it was indeed the sphere of heavenly harmony where the ideas of God, thoughts of God’s presence, were constantly communing with him.

Truly, the Spirit of God was moving forcefully on the waters, or elements of Jacob’s body of consciousness. The Interpretive aspect of the divine nature, revealed in the third aspect of the Trinity, was bringing to light in him some comprehension of his holy mission. The power of the Holy Spirit to regenerate, redeem, and transform mortals was to be exemplified in his human experience. And the vision of the ladder revealed the way in which this was to be done.

The Hebrew word *cullam*, translated *ladder*, or *stair-case*, carries the meaning of step *upon* step, not in the sense of material climbing but of spiritual ascendancy or exaltation. This word is not used in the same sense elsewhere in the Bible. The angels ascending and descending the ladder, God’s thoughts ever communing with Jacob, revealed to him that the way before him was to be not a step *by* step, but a step *upon* step of overcoming a mortal concept of himself, of resisting the earthward gravitation of materialism, and of nullifying the stultifying influences of Oriental occultism. Or, as the prophet Isaiah stated it centuries later:

Precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little.— Isa.28:10.

The promise of the vision was that the angels of God would accompany him in his spiritual journeying and lead him *step upon step* in the unfoldment of his divine adventure; that holy thoughts of God's presence would inspire him and turn his thoughts and his footsteps from earth toward heaven.

"The ladder reached to heaven . . . and the Lord stood above it." We may see in Jacob's vision a pre-vision of Jesus' experience at the time of his baptism when —

. . . the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God [the Holy Ghost] descending like a dove, and lighting upon him;

And lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. —

Matt.3:16,17.

Let us in thought ascend the ladder with Jacob, and stand with him in silent adoration before the open door of heaven and behold the unfolding glory of the divine presence. A voice speaks, and we listen reverently as the *I AM* inscribes its message in Jacob's sleeping consciousness:

I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac.— Gen.28:13.

This is the first time *El Shaddi*, The Almighty God, has so identified Herself to Jacob. What does this dynamic declaration — *I AM* the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac" — mean to Jacob? Even this: the All-knowing, Almighty *I AM*, who revealed the creative nature of *Elohim* to Abraham as the Father and Mother of man and the universe, and who revealed this compound nature to Isaac through the idea of divine Sonship, was ready to reveal the Interpretive aspect of the divine nature to Jacob. Or rather, that Jacob's thought was receptive to the revelation.

The revelation of God as Father-Mother (identified in the Bible as *the God of Abraham*) and of God made manifest as His image and likeness, man (identified in the Bible as *the God of Isaac*) was preliminary to the revelation of God in His Interpretive aspect,

known as the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God active in individual human consciousness, interpreting the relationship of God to man and ruling out everything that exalts itself against the knowledge of God (identified in the Bible as *the God of Jacob*).

At this time Jacob, not fully understanding his predestined part in the unfolding of the Covenant, calls his holy concept of Deity *the God of Bethel*, because it was at Bethel that the *I AM* revealed to him the triune divine Principle of the universe in its essential threefold nature.

The vision continues to unfold in Jacob's sleeping consciousness as the *I AM* proclaims:

The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it,
and to thy seed.

And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and
thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east,
and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in
thy seed shall all the families of the earth be
blessed.— Gen.28:13,14.

We cannot remind ourselves too often of this fact: When in the Scripture we read that God says "I" — this is confirmation that the voice of the divine *Esse*, the *I AM*, has been heard, whether or not it had been consciously accepted or heeded. Jacob's unconscious thought heard the voice of the *Ego* confirming the Covenant promise of divine blessedness made to Abraham and to Isaac. In this promise we may hear the echo of God's words to Abraham at the time of his communion with God at Bethel:

Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place
where thou art northward, and southward, and
eastward, and westward:

For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give
it, and to thy seed for ever.

Arise, walk through the land, in the length of it and
in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto
thee.— Gen.13:14,15,17.

A faint comprehension of the infinite spiritual nature of the universe and of his dominion therein dawns in Jacob's sleeping thought. He senses the spiritual dimension of his world. And we glimpse something of the majesty awaiting unfoldment in Jacob's consciousness. The *I AM* has begun to reveal its transcendent

message: The First Day, or first period of spiritual unfoldment of The New Covenant, dawns in Jacob's unresisting thought. And we are witnesses of this glory.

The divine *Ego* becomes Jacob's conscience and demands that he understand that his inheritance and dominion are not locations in time and space. He must let the comprehension of his possession *spread abroad* to the north, east, south, west — as far as his eye can see, to the borders of his spiritual comprehension. The promise is that wherever he is, *that* is his holy land which he possesses and where he has dominion.

The *I AM* continues to inscribe its message in Jacob's sleeping thought:

And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.— Gen.28:15.

This message leaves no doubt that the Great *I AM* is speaking and has been heard. *I am* with thee, *I will* keep thee, *I will* bring thee, *I will* not leave thee, until *I have done* that which *I have spoken* unto thee of. This iteration and reiteration of the *I AM* inscribed indelibly in Jacob's mind, is the descent of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, which embraces the human in the divine. It is the revelation of *Immanuel* — *God-with-us* — not a God afar off, but God made manifest as Jacob's own Christ-consciousness.

The coming of the Christ as Jacob's consciousness in his communion with God at Bethel, is comparable to the coming of the Christ in Abraham's consciousness when Melchizedek went forth to meet him with bread and wine, to confirm with holy communion Abraham's new understanding of the divine presence — Christ with him and in him. (See Gen.14:18-20; p.260.)

Unlike Abraham, who was wide awake when the revelation of the Christ came to him, Jacob was asleep. The revelation became a part of his unconscious thought. Later, when this idea matured in him, it sprang forth gloriously. But now the assurance of God's promise — "I am with thee" — was enough. The divine *Ego*, the *I AM*, was a living presence in Jacob's conscious thought when he awoke. With the holiness of the vision full upon him —

Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not.

And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful [awesome] is this place! this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.—
Gen.28:16,17.

Jacob's waking thought, transfixed by the radiance of the divine presence, found expression in one spontaneous exclamation: "The Lord is in this place!" This simple statement, destined to be the Comforter for countless millions in centuries to come, reveals the glory of the vision of the Christ, the divine ever-presence of the divine *Esse*, Supreme Being, the *I AM*, which had been gathered into a focal point in Jacob's human consciousness. Jacob's utterance, acknowledging the holiness of *this place*, acknowledges the holiness, or spiritual nature, of all places. For *this place* is not a material location. It is a divine state of Mind, the consciousness of the *I AM's* ever-presence and of man's oneness with that divine presence.

At Bethel, *the God of Bethel*, who is in truth the All-knowing God, the Almighty, *El Shaddi*, who had appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and now to Jacob, revealing three specific aspects of the divine nature, now pronounced the name by which the threefold nature of the Infinite was to be known throughout the Bible: *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*. "These three are one," as the New Covenant declares (1 John 5:7). Not three different gods, but three statements representative of three essential aspects of the *I AM* expressed in man and the universe.

Recall that these three definitive aspects of the divine nature were revealed in the very first day, or first period of unfoldment of the New Covenant (Gen.1:1-5; pp.39-40), and show clearly the threefold nature of the Infinite — the pattern through which all revelation comes to light and through which God gives a full expression of Divinity:

The God of Abraham: So called because Abraham and Sarah exemplified the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, the Creator. (Gen.1:1.)

The God of Isaac: So called because Isaac — the child of promise — exemplified the idea of divine Sonship, the Son of God, which is the Christ, "the light of the world." (Gen.1:3.)

The God of Jacob: So called because Jacob exemplified the power of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, to regenerate and redeem the human concept of life and thus bring the human into conformity with the divine. (Gen.1:2.)

While each of these individuals exemplified a distinct aspect of the Trinity, each one expressed in his individual life the three essentials of the divine nature:

Each learned to know the nature of God as the Creator; each learned to express the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

Each learned to know the nature of the Son of God; each learned to express both the masculine and the feminine qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God in his individual life; each learned to let the Light of his Divinity, his Christliness, shine wherever he was.

Each learned to know the nature of the Spirit of God and to feel the power of the Spirit to regenerate the mortal sense of life and to transform and transfigure the human with the divine; thus each learned to bring his human life into conformity with the divine; and each learned to say *I AM* with divine authority.

In the degree that each individual expresses this glorious threefold divine nature, he wears the crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek and is made both priest and king unto God — made a spiritual seer and leader and is king, or ruler, over his earthly experiences.

It must be remembered that neither Abraham, Isaac, nor Jacob chose for themselves to be representatives of the divine Trinity. God chose them and wrote His allegory in their lives for all to see and understand. They had no choice but *to be* what the *I AM* declared them to be.

Jacob's words — "How awesome is this place" — pronounce a holy benediction to the revelation. For the vision at Bethel reveals a transcendent truth, not seen by the casual reader, namely, that in our own Christliness, or Godlikeness, the fullness of the Godhead, the Divinity of The Almighty, is individualized. Hear St. Paul's confirmation of this truth:

For it is in Christ that the complete being of the Godhead dwells embodied, and in him you have been brought to completeness.— Col.2:9 (NEB).

The word *Godhead*, used in the Bible to define the threefold nature of Deity, has nothing to do with corporeal personality. The term has been translated variously: Divine Nature, Divinity, Divine Being, Fullness of Deity, A full expression of Himself, Divine Completeness. Truly, how awesome, how full of awe, reverence, and wonder is this place, this consciousness in which dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily — in which the divine completeness, a full expression of *Elohim*, is embodied, or individualized. Truly “This is none other than the house of God!” This is none other than the temple of the Holy Ghost, where the divine completeness finds expression. (See I Cor.6:19; II Cor.6:16; Acts 17:29; Rom.1:20; FF, NEB, JBP, JM.)

In the night vision at Bethel God revealed to Jacob, and makes plain to us, that the consciousness in tune with the Infinite is the house of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, the place where God is manifesting a full expression of Himself — even the place of communion with God, where man becomes conscious of his Covenant with The Almighty.

“The Lord is in this place!” The acknowledgment of God’s presence in any place presupposes the spiritual nature thereof and secures the spirituality, the divinity, of everyone and everything dwelling therein. This truth dispels the popular belief that man and the universe are material and that man is at the mercy of matter, material circumstances, or of a material environment. The degree of one’s understanding of this fact determines his demonstration of its truth and insures his divine authority on earth.

The vision is indeed *awesome*. But Jacob’s thought was not prepared to take in so infinite a view. Like Abraham, Jacob had to return to Bethel a second time before he could comprehend the magnitude of the vision which had come to him there.

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it.

And he called the name of that place Beth-el: but the name of that city was called Luz at the first.— Gen.28:18,19.

According to many scholars, *Luz* means separation. Both Abraham and Jacob may well have felt a sense of separation from God when they reached this place in their divine adventure. But neither Abraham nor Jacob accepted the Canaanite name *Luz* for this place. They saw the meaning of the place in their spiritual journeying, and *their* concept of it changed the name of the place, even unto this day. *The Interpreter's Bible* records this commentary:

In the tradition which came down from Jacob, this neighborhood was no longer merely what men had called it; it was what God had made it. Bethel means The House of God. So the whole suggestion widens. One's imagination dwells upon the fact that frequently in the O.T. and in history generally, a place which originally was ordinary has become exalted because some great spiritual experience was associated with it. (*IB, Vol.1, Expos., p. 693.*)

So Bethel, the House of God, or place of communion with God, was and is its name, and here Jacob erected his first altar. The building of altars was one way in which Abraham, on entering the land of Canaan, had taken possession of the land in the name of his God. And like an explorer, surveyor, and homesteader going into a new country, he staked out his claims to this holy land with altars of worship to the one God. Jacob, though leaving the land of Canaan, anticipated his promised return and put down his own first stake, claiming the land in the name of *the God of Bethel*, which is *the God of Jacob*.

Jacob's first altar was the stone upon which his head rested when, in the dream-vision, the *I AM* revealed to him the triune divine nature of the Supreme Being. He poured oil on this altar, a symbolical act of consecration in acknowledgment of the holiness of the experience. The real altar which Jacob erected was within his own temple, or body, of which Bethel, the House of God, is the symbol. Jacob's outward act of hallowing the place of his communion with God is typical of his inward consecration.

The Covenant which God made with Abraham and established in

Isaac has been confirmed in Jacob. Now Jacob gives his word that he will live in accordance with the terms of this holy agreement:

And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, 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:

And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee.— Gen.28:20-22.

There may be many who interpret Jacob's words in these verses as bargaining with God. But this is not true. *Dummelow* interprets the Hebrew text thus: "Jacob vows that in return for God's protecting care, if he is spared to return, he will regard this stone as a holy spot." Jacob promises that if he is spared to return to his father's house, he will continue to serve God — *the God of Bethel* — and live in accordance with the terms of the Covenant.

Jacob's Tithes

"Of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee." Whence came the idea of tithing? We first heard the word *tithe* at the time of Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek. Recall that Melchizedek, who was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, went forth to meet Abraham on his return from his victory over the kings of the East. The royal priesthood of Melchizedek prefigures the dominion of the Christ, which makes all men kings and priests unto God — a title used in the Bible to denote complete dominion (Rev.1:6). His meeting with Melchizedek confirmed Abraham's comprehension of his own Christliness, his divine nature, which embodies and expresses the dominion of heaven on earth. The blessing which Melchizedek invoked upon Abraham was the blessing of Christliness — the Christly understanding that God is the source of all supply and dispenser of all blessings in the earth. This Christly understanding was and is a blessing of perpetual fruitfulness, sufficiency, prosperity, well-being, and dominion. Abraham's faith and understanding that all things emanated from God was so firmly established in him that he refused to accept a reward from the king of Sodom for rescuing

his people from the invading kings of the East, lest the king or anyone else should say, "I have made Abram rich." (See p.263; Gen.14:18-23.) In recognition of this advanced understanding of Deity and of his own Christliness, Abraham gave to Melchizedek, the royal priest of the Most High God, tithes of all that he possessed. What is the spiritual significance of this act?

It is of more than passing interest to note that the idea of tithing, in both Abraham's and Jacob's spiritual journeying, followed immediately a higher recognition of the nature of God and the revelation of their own Christliness. What inference may we draw from the action of these two patriarchs that will help us in our divine adventure?

There is a law embodied in their action — the law of demand and supply. The divine authority of the Christ, indicated in the dual office of priest and king, bestows on man the power of the Spirit of God to bring to light the unseen spiritual realities of God's creation, so that "the visible comes forth from the invisible" (Heb.11:3, NEB). The royal priesthood of the Christ confers upon man the power of the creative *let*, revealed in the first chapter of Genesis. Instead of *letting* a finite sense of good limit our receptivity of God's blessings, we should give the divine *let* free rein. Our absolute faith in God as the source of all supply and the dispenser of all blessings in the earth, enables us to *let* the Spirit of God bring forth in our consciousness the specific ideas we need every moment out of the vast elements of infinite Mind. Since "Faith gives substance to our hopes, and makes us certain of realities we do not see" (Heb.11:1, NEB), our absolute faith enables us to *let* ideas translate themselves into forms we can see, understand, and utilize. In this way we find all our needs cared for. The source being infinite, the supply is also infinite.

Abraham's gift of tithes to Melchizedek was in acknowledgment of his understanding of God as the source of all supply and the dispenser of blessings in the earth, and of the revelation of the power of his own Christliness — the realization that he too expressed the divine authority of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek to invoke the law of the tithe and call forth the visible from the invisible — to *see* good flowing from its invisible infinite source. The understanding of God as *El Elyon*, the Most High God, source of all supply, and dispenser of all blessings in the earth, was so firmly fixed in Abraham's mind, or consciousness,

that it became to him a law of supply, a law of blessedness, a law of fruitfulness. This law of increase he interpreted as the law of the tithe, which, activated by gratitude, made him rich — rich in ideas, rich in health, rich in peace, rich in ability, rich in supply, rich in strength, rich in righteous activity, rich in companionship — rich in all good.

To Jacob, the grandson of Abraham, it was natural that his first acknowledgment of the great blessing bestowed on him at Bethel should have brought to mind Abraham's tithe to Melchizedek. He knew that tithing — the symbol of gratitude — was the key to prosperity, the key to spiritual riches and their evidence in human experience, the key to success in every department of life. And so, following Abraham's example, Jacob pledged tithes of all that he received from God. In his experience at Bethel, Jacob has touched the law of tithing, and the unfoldment of his greatness has begun.

The pattern of divine unfoldment established in the original Covenant of Godlikeness is the pattern of unfoldment we discover in Jacob's spiritual education. The First Day of his divine adventure, the first period of unfoldment of his divine nature, follows this pattern:

In the beginning God created [caused to appear,
made visible] the heaven and the earth— Gen.1:1.

The God who made heaven and earth appeared to Jacob at Bethel and revealed to him the spiritual nature of the universe. The vision of the ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached unto heaven, symbolized to Jacob the connecting link between heaven and earth, and revealed to him the wondrous fact that earth and his earthly experience were not separate from heaven but were embraced in heavenly harmony.

And the earth was without form and void; and
darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the
Spirit of God moved upon the face of the
waters.— Gen.1:2.

The vision of the spiritual nature of the earth was at first dark — Jacob could not comprehend it. But the darkness upon the face of the waters, or elements of his thought, was dispersed as

the Spirit of God moved him to contemplate thoughts of God — angel thoughts — instead of thoughts of self. And the invisible spiritual realities came to light in his consciousness. He *heard* the divine assurance: *I AM with thee, I AM present in all places. No matter where you go I AM there. You cannot go out of my presence.*

And God said, Let there be light; and there was light.— Gen.1:3.

This light is the radiance of God's own presence, the glory of God shining out from the Infinite. It is Godlikeness. It is the Christ, the divine manifestation of God, which is the light of the world. This light, or spiritual enlightenment, began to dawn in Jacob's thought when *the God of Bethel* identified Himself as *The God of Abraham* (revealing the Creative aspect of the Triune divine Principle of the universe) and *The God of Isaac* (the Self-revealing aspect of the Trinity). And in this light — the light of his own Christliness, his own Divinity — he glimpsed something of the nature of *The God of Bethel*, later known as *The God of Jacob* (the Interpretive aspect of the Trinity).

And God saw the light that it was good.— Gen.1:4.

The radiant unfoldment of the Triune nature of the divine Principle of the universe which had come to light, enlightened Jacob's understanding. And God saw, and by reflection Jacob saw, that it was good — Godlike.

And God divided the light from the darkness.—
Gen.1:4.

Light and darkness, good and evil, spiritual enlightenment and mental darkness! God divided these opposing forces in Jacob's thought, giving him to know what is good and what is evil as certainly as one can distinguish between light and darkness. And giving him to know how to overcome the darkness of ignorance, fear, malice — all the elements of the carnal mind — with the light of intelligence, the science of the divine Mind.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.— Gen.1:5.

In the Day, in the Light of his Christliness, the radiance of his divine nature, Jacob could see the wonders of God's spiritual universe and his place therein. But in the Night, when mental darkness — a mortal, personal concept of himself and of others — overtook him in his divine adventure, the way seemed rough and frustrating. But he had seen the Light of Heaven, and that Light continued to shine in him. The darkness could not put it out.

And the evening and the morning
were the first day.
(Gen.1:5.)

And the evening (the mistiness of comprehension) gave way to the morning (the dawning of spiritual understanding) in this first period of Jacob's divine adventure. The pattern of the Trinity began to unfold in Jacob's life. And though he knew it not, in this first period of his divine adventure, his body of consciousness embodied the revelation of *The God of Bethel* and became *the house of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost*, in which the power of the Spirit of God to redeem and to regenerate his humanhood was to be exemplified.

Jacob's First Day in the unfolding of the divine nature revealed in the Trinity has been accomplished. The revelation of Jacob's place in the Covenant has been clearly stated. But this is just the beginning of Jacob's divine adventure. Immediately he is led by the Spirit of God into the second period of unfoldment and into a series of events which force him to prove the power of the spiritual facts which had been revealed to him in the first period. Until spiritual facts are put to the test and show forth their vital evidence, or proof, they remain theoretical and fragmentary. Hence the Holy Ghost, or the Spirit of God within him, led Jacob into the experiences where he would learn to make his spiritual education practical.

Chapter XXXVII

JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

THE SECOND PERIOD

Haran

As Jacob, led by the Spirit of God, departs from Bethel, the Second Day, or second period, of his spiritual journeying begins. This period in Jacob's unfoldment promises to be filled with exciting adventure, but it is also fraught with danger. However, it is not the physical but the metaphysical nature of the adventure which is important to us.

In Bethel the heavens opened unto Jacob and the pattern of his great mission was revealed to him. In Haran, the place in which the second period of his divine adventure unfolds, a wilderness experience awaits him.

In Jacob's divine adventure a precedent is established which is repeated in the experiences of those who are led by the Holy Spirit into spiritual preparation for higher duties and responsibilities. This preparation is often likened to a wilderness. Never believe you have *wandered* into a wilderness experience. It is always the Spirit of God which leads one into the wilderness to be tested concerning the devilish ways of the carnal mind — a time in which one is taught to prove one's God-given dominion over evil.

Centuries after Jacob's wilderness experience, this fundamental point in spiritual education was illustrated in the life of Christ Jesus through an experience which has since been called *The Temptations* — an experience which gives us a clear picture of the scenes which are coming to light in Jacob's experience. (See Matt. 3:16,17;4:1-11.)

Like our Master, Jacob had been chosen for a great mission. Like Jesus, Jacob had been *led of the Spirit* into his wilderness experience where his spiritual faculties are to be tested. Jacob had much more to learn, much more to overcome, than did our Master. But the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, had moved upon the waters,

or elements of his human consciousness, and was leading him into the second lesson of the New Covenant.

In Jacob's journeying Haran is the city, or consciousness, typical of the cross roads of the material world. It is also typical of the occult influences of the east. Here the conditions of the Old Covenant prevailed. In Haran we see how the occultism of *the people of the east country* weave a web of mesmerism and inertia about Jacob, causing him to become "a forgetful hearer of the word" which God had spoken to him at Bethel. (See Jas.1:25.)

Hypnotic or mesmeric influences tend to change the character of an individual. They hold one in the bonds of servitude and keep one from thinking and acting intelligently. In Haran, the hypnotic influences of occultism changed Jacob's pattern of thinking completely and caused him to forget God's promise to him at Bethel: "*I AM* with thee in all places whither thou goest." The power of the divine *Ego*, if exercised, would have given him divine authority in every situation. But from the moment he entered the borders of Haran, he seemed to be unaware of his divine mission. Even though apparently awake, the *deep sleep* of hypnotic influences seemed to engulf his senses. And instead of thinking and acting like the representative of God's Covenant with man, his thoughts and actions seemed to be in tune with the low-level-frequency of the thinking of the people of Haran.

In the allegory which the Spirit of God has written in Jacob's life, his experiences in Haran are presented without gloss, so that mankind might learn from them the necessity of rising up and throwing off the enslaving influences of the occult mind with its domination, subtlety, deceit, and mental bondage. His experiences in this land also reveal the dominion which comes to man when he is roused spiritually to remember — *to be re-minded* — that he is empowered by God, the divine Mind, the *I AM*, to think and act rightly, to say "I" and "I am" with divine authority.

But let us trace Jacob's footsteps as he leaves Bethel and turns toward Haran:

Then Jacob went on his journey, and came into the
land of the people of the east.— Gen.29:1.

Figuratively, Jacob came into the *thinking* of the people of the east, into the mental atmosphere and dominant influence of the

land of occultism — influence which hung about him like a haze. Abraham knew this land. He knew the mesmeric mental powers of the people of the east — powers which took possession of the minds of the unwary, causing them to think and act unlike themselves. Having come from thence, Abraham never returned. Nor would he permit his son Isaac to go there.

But Jacob has come into this land, and some very vexing experiences are to be his. Sometimes he is alert, sometimes not. But the lessons he learns and which we in turn may learn with him are many.

These experiences begin at once; one event quickly following another like scenes evolving on a giant stage from a sinister plot, with the participants well versed in their respective roles. Jacob alone seems unaware that he is playing a part. He appears to be at one with the character he is portraying — an itinerant shepherd, not the son of a wealthy prince. And certainly not the representative of God, divine Mind, the Great *I AM*. There is absolutely nothing to identify him as the recipient of the human and the divine birthright, nothing to even remotely indicate that he is endowed with the blessing of the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac. He *is* literally the poor itinerant shepherd he appears to be.

The Drama of Jacob's Wilderness Experience

The Cast of Characters in the Order of their Appearance:
Jacob, Rachel, Laban, Leah

The scene is Haran. The stage is set. And the principal actor walks upon it.

And he looked, and behold a well in the field, and, lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it; for out of that well they watered the flocks: and a great stone was upon the well's mouth.— Gen.29:2.

Jacob inquired of the shepherds whether they knew Laban, his uncle.

And he said unto them, Is he well? And they said, He is well: and, behold, Rachel his daughter cometh with the sheep.— Gen.29:6.

Jacob showed his own shepherd's training in the question:

Lo, it is yet high day, neither is it time that the cattle should be gathered together: water ye the sheep, and go and feed them.— Gen.29:7.

The shepherds explained that they could not water the flocks until all of the shepherds came, because the stone over the mouth of the well was too great to be lifted by a few.

And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep: for she kept them. —
Gen.29:9.

The second principal comes upon the stage, and Jacob hastens to impress her. His unusual physical strength had already been demonstrated when, singlehandedly, he erected an altar at Bethel of huge stones. With apparently little effort, he rolled away the great stone from the well's mouth, a task usually requiring the combined strength of several men, and he watered the flock for Rachel. Only then did he introduce himself to her, after the Oriental manner, as "her father's brother, Rebekah's son."

Rachel hastened to tell her father who Jacob was, and the third principal is brought into the play. Laban, a villain within, a philanthropist without, greeted Jacob enthusiastically:

He ran to meet him, and embraced him, and kissed him, and brought him to his house.— Gen.29:13.

Laban, Rebekah's brother, was the grandson of Nahor, Abraham's brother and the great grandson of Terah — the same Terah who had taken his family out of Ur of the Chaldees into Mesopotamia, wherein is Haran. The spiritual impulse which had lifted this family out of the center of the organized occultism of the east had dwindled and waned. There is nothing in the Bible to indicate that Laban and his family knew or worshipped the God of Abraham.

Jacob unwisely told Laban all the things which had transpired at his father's house — things which caused Jacob to come to Haran. (See Gen.27:41-46; 28:1-5.) Laban, with feigned graciousness, invited Jacob to abide with them and to work with him. With shrewd Oriental insight, he was quick to see a way in which he could ob-

tain Jacob's services at no cost to himself. With diabolical cleverness he played the part of a loving relative, solicitous of his nephew's well-being. And with the subtlety of the serpent he made it appear that Jacob, not he, outlined the terms of the agreement by which Jacob would work for him — terms which bound Jacob for a time to the conditions of the Old Covenant. But let us read the words of Holy Writ and see exactly how Laban accomplished his unholy purpose:

And Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh. And he abode with him the space of a month.

And Laban said unto Jacob, Because thou art my brother, shouldest thou therefore serve me for naught? tell me, what shall thy wages be?—

Gen.29:14,15.

The conversation is interrupted as Laban cleverly brings his daughters into the well staged scene.

And Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel.

And Leah was tender [weak] eyed; but Rachel was beautiful and well favored [perfect] in form. —

Gen.29:16,17.

With the appearance of Leah, Laban's elder daughter, the fourth principal in the cast of characters in the drama is complete. The plot thickens. One can feel ominous overtones in the contract Jacob made with Laban:

And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter.

And Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man: abide with me.— Gen.29:18,19.

Laban's plan of using his daughters as bait to ensnare Jacob had worked. But why did Jacob permit himself to be imposed upon by Laban? As soon as he reached Haran, he seemed to have forgotten his communion with God at Bethel. He literally sold himself into slavery when he said, "I will serve" — the little "i" of personal sense yielding to the big "I" of human will.

Had Jacob lost sight of the fact that he was the heir of the Covenant, having the power of the Son of God? He seemed not to remember the idea of tithing that would have made him rich. And strangely enough, he laid no claim to his father's great wealth. Isaac would have paid any price to obtain for Jacob a bride from Rebekah's family. Was Jacob so mesmerized by Rachel's sensuous beauty that he lost sight of his noble heritage? It would seem so, for we read:

And Jacob served seven years for Rachel; and they seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had for her.— Gen.29:20.

From a human standpoint, Jacob's love for Rachel is beautiful. "The seven years that he served for her seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had for her." But spiritually and scientifically discerned, this very human, sensuous love blinded Jacob to his divine heritage and bound him to Rachel's father as a common laborer. *The serpent had captured Jacob's imagination.* It was as though Jacob wanted to show Rachel how much he loved her for, without a momentary reflection on the dire consequences, he agreed to serve seven years for her. He thereby bound himself to the Old Covenant and served it and its representative Laban, not just seven, but twenty years, before he awoke from its mesmerism.

How different was Jacob's betrothal from that of Isaac's. The wisdom and tenderness, generosity and love of Abraham's majestic nature were active in the preparation for Isaac's marriage. Abraham's wealth and prestige were as nothing to him if they did not bring happiness and establishment to his son. But Isaac had not provided Jacob with anything when he sent him to Haran to seek a wife. It was as though Jacob had no heritage at all. And Jacob did not draw upon his spiritual resources that would have been adequate for any occasion. Wisdom would have given Jacob spiritual insight to see through and avoid the tempter's snare. But Jacob, completely mesmerized and thereby robbed of his natural resourcefulness, walked blindly into the trap. Laban was quick to detect Jacob's lack of wisdom and resources and to use it for his own selfish purposes. Like any skilled mesmerist, Laban knew when he had his prey in his power. There was no longer any need for pretense.

When Abraham had sent presents and money to Laban and his family as a dowry for Isaac, Laban had greeted Abraham's servant with a great show of hospitality. He was impressed by Abraham's wealth and with the servant's story of Abraham's great prestige in the land of Canaan. But Laban has no love for Jacob. With apparently nothing to gain by being gracious, Laban soon showed himself in his true colors.

Jacob served Laban, without pay, for seven years that he might have his beloved Rachel to wife. At the end of the time, Jacob said unto Laban:

Give me my wife, for my days are fulfilled, that I may go in unto her.— Gen.29:21.

Jacob's Marriages

So Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a great feast — a wedding feast. But he did not give Rachel to Jacob as he had promised. Instead, he brought Rachel's elder sister Leah, and gave her to Jacob as his wife (Gen.29:22-24).

In many parts of the Orient, even today, a bride does not participate in the marriage ceremony, nor does she attend the bridal feast. After the feast she is brought heavily veiled to her husband, and he does not see her face until the following morning. And so it was at Jacob's wedding, for we read:

And it came to pass, that in the morning, it was Leah: and he said to Laban, What is this thou hast done unto me? did I not serve thee for Rachel? wherefore then hast thou beguiled me?— Gen.29:25.

Again the little "i" of Jacob's mesmerized senses was subservient. We do not hear even a whisper of his dynamic divine *Ego*, the *I AM*, that would have demanded his rights instead of meekly questioning Laban's motives. In reply to Jacob's question, Laban figuratively shrugged his shoulders and said:

It must not be so done in our country, to give the younger before the firstborn.

Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve me yet seven other years.— Gen.29:26,27.

Today one might say this was a sharp business deal. Laban got rid of both of his daughters, whom he was incapable of loving and whom he regarded as mere chattels, and at the same time he bound Jacob to serve him fourteen years, during which time he paid him no wages.

Did Jacob at this moment remember Esau's anguished cry when he learned that his brother had supplanted him at their father's side and through deceit obtained the coveted blessing of the first-born? Did Jacob feel that this punishment he was to bear was just retribution for his sin? It would appear so, for after challenging Laban and hearing Laban's justification of his act, Jacob agreed to serve him an additional seven years for Rachel.

Leah was a willing accomplice of her father. Her true sense of womanhood seems to have been overshadowed by her father's dominant nature. Leah's name, or nature, has many different meanings, some of which are: weariness, painful, languid, timid — qualities which indicate a nature subdued by a dominant personality. However, Leah's name also means *wild cow*, and suggests an independent quality which later finds expression in several encounters with her sister.

Jacob reluctantly accepted Leah as his wife, but he loved Rachel completely. The statement that Leah was hated by Jacob does not mean hatred in the English sense of the word (Gen.29:31). It means simply that Jacob's love for Rachel was whole-hearted, and there was no room in his affections for another wife.

The meaning of Rachel's name is *ewe lamb*, in the sense of being as meek as a lamb. But her meekness was not the meekness that inherits the earth, which Christ Jesus said was blessed (Matt.5:5). It was the meekness of submission to parental domination, the meekness which finds satisfaction in being the object of sensuous affection. But Rachel was Jacob's beloved. And it is sad to relate that there is no record that Rachel grew in the understanding of God, or that she comprehended the nature of the Motherhood of The Almighty and the spiritual nature of womanhood.

Jacob now has two wives, and later he has two concubines. But he is still alone in his spiritual journeying. The divine completeness, symbolized by the spiritual Marriage Covenant, was not reflected in either of Jacob's marriages. Jacob did not realize that his experience would be so completely different from the ex-

periences of Abraham and Isaac, who found their completeness in the symbolism of their human marriages. God demanded of Jacob that he find his divine completeness within himself. That is why his experience is so vitally important to all mankind, for this is what God is demanding of each one of us today.

For the space of about 20 years Jacob remained in Laban's house. During this time he exhibited no spiritual authority, and his divine adventure seemed to be at a standstill. There is no record of any spiritual unfoldment. He appeared to be enacting the role of a bondman in a melodrama. The scenes which pass before the viewer's eyes resemble a well-laid plot with tragic dimensions, rather than the accomplishment of a holy purpose — the fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham that his seed would multiply and fill the earth and be a blessing to all mankind. But regardless of the seeming, the divine plan *was* unfolding.

And then a series of happenings took place which overshadowed the previous events in the drama — happenings which, though apparently concerning only rivalry between two sisters, changed the course of history. In quick succession Jacob's two wives and two concubines bore him 12 sons and a daughter, through whom the story of the conflict between the Old and the New Covenants is told in our Bible. The curtain rises on the beginning of a new era.

The Birth of Jacob's Children

Neither of Jacob's wives reflected the qualities of the Motherhood of God. Neither seemed to possess any spiritual attributes. They were interested primarily in themselves. There was constant rivalry between them for Jacob's affections. These daughters of Laban brought forth children for their own glory. Each gave her maid to her husband that the wife might have children by the maid, thinking thus to add to her own importance in the household. Jacob permitted his wives to give names to his children — names which reflected their states of mind. The words of the Bible give a clear picture of the intense competition between the two sisters and of their rivalry to excel each other in child-bearing.

Jacob's first son was born to Leah, and she called his name *Reuben*, for she said,

Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction;
now therefore my husband will love me.— Gen.29:32.

But Leah, thinking only of her own glory, did not foster in this child the cherished qualities of true manhood. And Reuben, “unstable as water,” lost the birthright of the firstborn. Only after much tribulation did he throw off his mother’s concept of him and gain his father’s blessing which acknowledged his divine nature: “excellency of dignity and the excellency of power” (Gen.49:3,4).

Leah conceived again and bore another son whom she called *Simeon*, and said:

Because the Lord hath heard that I was hated, he
hath therefore given me this son also.— Gen.29:33.

She bore still another son and called his name *Levi*, saying:

Now this time will my husband be joined unto me,
because I have born him three sons.— Gen.29:34.

Leah loved herself more than she loved these sons, and this self-interest, self-love, and self-justification is reflected in their lives. Many years later Jacob said of Simeon and Levi, “Instruments of cruelty are in their habitation” (Gen.49:5). These sons did not reform, but their progeny were redeemed through much tribulation.

Leah conceived again and called the name of the fourth son *Judah*, and she said,

Now will I praise the Lord.— Gen.29:35.

When Leah praised the Lord instead of striving to glorify herself, she brought forth Judah, who fathered the kingly tribe of Israel through which came David and Solomon, the prophets Isaiah and Daniel, the Virgin Mary, and Jesus. To Judah was given the honored place of the firstborn because of the unworthiness of his three elder brothers; but Jacob did not give the birthright to Judah.

Having borne Jacob four sons in quick succession, Leah felt she had won the favored place in Jacob’s house, if not in his affections. But this was not true. Jacob had chosen Rachel; Leah had been

foisted upon him. And Rachel, though childless, remained first in Jacob's household and first in his love.

And when Rachel saw that she bare Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister; and said unto Jacob, Give me children, or else I die.

And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachel: and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld from the fruit of the womb?

And she said, Behold, my maid Bilhah, go in unto her; and she shall bear upon my knees, that I may also have children by her.— Gen.30:1-3.

Jacob's anger was not kindled against Rachel because she had no children but because of her attitude. Further, the Hebrew word translated *anger* in this instance means provoked, not deepseated rage or fury. In fact, the basic meaning of this word anger is sorrow, anguish. And these words better describe Jacob's reaction to Rachel's plea.

But is there another reason for Jacob's sorrow or anguish? Do his words, "Am I in God's stead," imply that Jacob knew and felt that Rachel should know that her children must be born by promise of God and not by the will of man? Jacob knew that his mother Rebekah and his grandmother Sarah had been barren. Yet they were chosen of God to bring forth the children of promise known as the seed of Abraham, children through whom the knowledge of God would be unfolded for the enlightenment of the whole world.

Did the barrenness of Jacob's beloved alert him to his own spiritual barrenness — to the fact that he was bereft of the understanding of the Almighty Motherhood of God? It would seem not. Jacob's lack of understanding of the compound nature of God as Father-Mother is evident in the fact that he had not gained the understanding of his own completeness nor found fulfillment in either of his marriages. Neither had he found dominion in his dealings with Laban.

Like Sarah, Rachel yielded to the custom of the land and gave her maid Bilhah to her husband that, by adoption she might have children. But unlike Sarah who never adopted Ishmael nor claimed him as her own child, Rachel did claim Bilhah's child as her son. And she called his name *Dan*. And Rachel said,

God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice,
and hath given me a son.— Gen.30:6.

Bilhah's name means simple, unconcerned, stupid. It is thought-provoking that her child's name, or nature, became synonymous with the serpent — with animal subtlety and deceit. (See Gen.49:17). *Stupidity* brings forth much evil. Being *unconcerned*, or *simple-minded*, permits one to be easily influenced by the carnal mind and led astray. Dan, in whom the animal nature prevailed, is the only one of Jacob's twelve sons whose name is not mentioned in the sealing of the twelve tribes of Israel in the Book of Revelation (Rev.7:4-8). The type of mentality typified by Dan, which does its evil work in such a way that others are blamed, never repents for wrong doing, hence never finds redemption.

Rachel's human plan by which she would have a son was not in accordance with the divine plan, that she would bring forth the son who would inherit the birthright of his father Jacob. But Rachel had not yet stopped competing with Leah, for we read that Bilhah, Rachel's maid, bore Jacob a second son and Rachel called his name *Naphtali*. And Rachel said,

With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my
sister, and I have prevailed.— Gen.30:8.

Naphtali's birth meant no more to Rachel than a victory over her sister. But Bilhah, though stupid, must have imparted to her son the love which Rachel lacked, for in years to come, Jacob said: "Naphtali is a hind let loose (in the sense of freedom); for he giveth goodly words" (Gen.49:21). Moses described Naphtali's descendants as "satisfied with favor and full of the blessing of the Lord" (Deut.33:23).

The rivalry between the sisters continued to dominate them. Not to be outdone by her sister, Leah, who had ceased bearing, gave her maid Zilpah to her husband. Zilpah bore Jacob a son and Leah, claiming him as her own, called his name *Gad*, and said:

A troop [good fortune] cometh.— (Gen.30:11, RV.)

Leah saw good fortune for herself in the birth of this child. But Zilpah, whose name means dignity, must have imparted to her son a sense of dominion, for Moses wrote of the tribe of Gad:

Blessed be he [God] that enlargeth Gad; he dwelleth as a lion [as a king] . . .

. . . He came with the heads of his people, he executed the justice of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel.— Deut.33:20,21.

Zilpah, whose name also means trickle, as dropping myrrh or perfume, bore Jacob a second son, and Leah called his name *Asher*, saying,

Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed.— Gen.30:13.

Although Leah saw in this son cause for her own self-glorification, the child's real mother saw his true selfhood and fostered it. Later Jacob described Asher's nature as yielding "royal dainties" (Gen.49:20), or as having full compensation. And it was of Asher's offspring that Moses said, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut.33:25). These words are a prophecy that Asher, his offspring, and those who think as Asher thought would have divine ability to command their experiences and spiritual comprehension to understand that God gives one strength to do all one needs to do.

As the drama of Jacob's wilderness experience continued, the daughters of Laban dominated every scene. Pride, bitterness, envy, strife — these attributes of evil seemed to blot out the light of love. And Jacob, bound by a kind of mental inertia, did not take possession of his house, nor did he command his household. *Bethel, the house of God*, seemed very far away.

There were no more children born in Jacob's house for a time. And then on a day Leah's eldest son Reuben found some mandrakes in the field and brought them to his mother. These mandrakes have since been called *love apples*. There was an ancient superstition that this fruit contained a magic love-potion that would produce fruitfulness of the womb. Both Leah and Rachel believed this superstition. When Rachel knew that her sister had the mandrakes, she begged her for them.

Rachel's anguish at being childless was genuine. Viewed in the framework of the age in which she lived, her barrenness was a reproach. She did not yet understand that the child she was to

bring forth must be born, not of the will of man, but of God. Her frantic human desire to bear children stood between her and divine fulfillment. And her envy of her sister, because Leah had four sons, blinded her to her place in the unfoldment of the Covenant. But remember, this is *Jacob's story*; and what appears as Rachel's barrenness evidences his lack of understanding of the nature and the power of the Motherhood of God.

Rachel envied Leah. But Leah also envied Rachel. This fact is made abundantly clear in Leah's scathing reply to Rachel's request for the mandrakes:

Is it a small matter that thou hast taken my husband? and wouldest thou take away my son's mandrakes also? And Rachel said, Therefore, he shall lie with thee tonight for thy son's mandrakes.

And Jacob came out of the field in the evening, and Leah went out to meet him, and said, Thou must come in unto me; for surely I have hired thee with my son's mandrakes. And he lay with her that night.— Gen.30:15,16.

So Jacob returned to Leah's tent, and she conceived and bore Jacob a fifth son, and she called his name *Issachar*. And she said,

God hath given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband.— Gen.30:18.

But Leah, still glorifying herself and claiming this son as pay for her hire, clothed him with the nature of servitude, and his generations became "servants unto tribute" in the land of Canaan before they found their dominion. (See Gen.49:15.)

And Leah conceived again and bore a son and called his name *Zebulon*, and said:

God hath endowed me with a good [a noble] dowry; now will my husband dwell with me [treat me in princely style], because I have borne him six sons.— Gen.30:20, NEB.

With the birth of this child, Leah proudly numbered her sons and claimed them as her dowry. But Zebulon and his progeny eventually broke away from this limited sense of sonship and

became known as “an haven of ships” (Gen.49:13), and gained “the abundance of the seas” (Deut.33:19).

Leah afterwards bore a daughter and called her name *Dinah*, whose name means judgment (Gen.30:21). And through *Dinah*, judgment came upon Jacob’s house at Shechem.

Leah bore Jacob two sons and a daughter after giving her sister the mandrakes, while Rachel, who had the *love apples*, remained childless. The superstition might have had power over Laban’s daughters, but it had no influence over the lives of Jacob’s wives.

The action of these characters and the bizarre events precipitated by the human will of the actors seem more like a dream-sequence enacted upon a stage than the unfolding of Jacob’s divine adventure. One wonders when Jacob will awake and exert his spiritual authority. But there is nothing to indicate that the mesmeric conditions have changed. And then we read:

And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

And she conceived, and bare a son; and said, God hath taken away my reproach:

And she called his name Joseph; and said, the Lord shall add to me another son.— Gen.30:22-24.

The phrase *God remembered* is a figure of speech — *anthropopateia*, ascribing to God what belongs to human beings, irrational creatures, or inanimate things (*Companion Bible*, Ap.6). It was not that God remembered Rachel, but that Rachel remembered God; for God is never unmindful of His children. Some idea of God as *Elohim*, the Father and Mother of all creation, who brings forth, or brings to light, in each receptive consciousness the spiritual idea of creation, dawned in Rachel’s consciousness. So powerful is *Elohim* that Rachel’s meager concept of this creative life-giving divine Principle was sufficient to break the fetters of a mortal sense of unfruitful womanhood and to take away the reproach of barrenness. Rachel’s consciousness was opened to discern faintly the idea of divine Sonship, and the son whom she brought forth — *Joseph*, whose name means increase — exemplified the divine nature of *Elohim* in abundant measure.

While the birth of Jacob’s children seemed to be more important to Leah and Rachel than to Jacob, it must be remembered that

their birth was a part of Jacob's unfoldment, revealing different facets of his nature. This was particularly true when Rachel bore Joseph. The birth of this child to Jacob's beloved, reveals that some concept of the power of *El Shaddi*, The Almighty Motherhood of *Elohim*, had come to light in Jacob's consciousness. Recall that in the unfoldment of Abraham and Isaac, it was *their* enlightened sense of the All-might of God's Motherhood that healed their wives' barrenness and gave to them the power of conception. And so it was in Jacob's unfoldment.

In *The Septuagint* there is a translation which indicates that, like Isaac and Jacob, Joseph was indeed a child of promise. Jacob acknowledged the divine origin of Joseph when, nearing his journey's end, he spoke thus of this beloved son of Rachel:

He [Joseph] who hath strengthened Israel is from
the God of thy father.— Gen.49:24.

To this spiritually minded child God gave the birthright of spiritual dominion, and Jacob acknowledged Joseph's right to the birthright of the firstborn (1 Chron.5:1,2). Jacob saw in Joseph his true firstborn, not alone because he was the firstborn of Rachel, the wife whom Jacob had chosen to mother the seed of Abraham, but because Jacob saw in this child the manifestation of the divine nature. Joseph's birth symbolizes the birth of the divine idea of Sonship in Jacob's own human consciousness, after which Jacob awoke from the mesmerism which had bound him and began to regain the spiritual concept of himself which had been revealed to him at Bethel. And immediately he began to assert his spiritual dominion. He threw off the yoke of bondage to Laban and rose above the influence of the occultism of the people of the east country (Gen.30:25).

Rachel bore Jacob yet another son after Jacob and his family returned to the land of Canaan. Soon after they left Bethel on their way to Hebron they came to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem. Here Jacob's youngest son was born. Rachel called his name *Benoni*, meaning *son of my sorrow*. But Jacob changed his name to *Benjamin*, meaning *son of my right hand*. Benjamin is the only one of his twelve sons whom Jacob named, and the only one born in the land of Canaan.

Jacob Awakes From The Mesmerism
of the East Country.

But let us return to the time of Joseph's birth:

And it came to pass, when Rachel had born Joseph, that Jacob said to Laban, Send me away, that I may go unto mine own place, and to my country.

Give me my wives and my children, for whom I have served thee, and let me go: for thou knowest my service which I have done thee.— Gen.30:25-26.

“When Rachel had born Joseph!” In Jacob's spiritual journeying the birth of Joseph was symbolic of the appearing to Jacob of the infant idea of his own divinity and of the spiritual birthright of the Son of God which was his by divine right. And this awakening roused Jacob to see that he could and should be free from Laban's domination. From the moment of Joseph's birth, Jacob began to throw off the mesmerism of Haran and to outwit the representative of occultism.

However, not all at once does Jacob assert his spiritual dominion. The idea of his divine Sonship and of the power of the Spirit of God in him had not matured sufficiently to enable him to realize his freedom immediately. He still felt he could not leave Haran without Laban's consent. It seems incredible that Jacob, the heir of the Covenant of God with man, should believe he had to beg Laban, the representative of occultism and sensuous materialism, to let him go. Imagine the incongruity and inequity of such a scene! He who had the birthright of the Son of God and in whom was vested spiritual dominion over all the earth, *bowing* to him who was a willing tool of the serpent and who had no real dominion! The representative of the New Covenant of Godlikeness subservient to the representative of the Old Covenant of godless materialism! It was as though light had been overshadowed by darkness — light begging darkness to let it shine — the divine Mind powerless before the carnal mind!

Jacob had been so mesmerized by Laban's pretense to power and so fearful of losing Rachel that he had forgotten that he, Jacob, had a Covenant with God, a spiritual agreement with the Almighty, which gave him divine authority on earth. He had

forgotten that he had the divine birthright which gave him both spiritual and temporal power — which actually made him both priest and king unto God. He had forgotten that at any moment he could have refused to be dominated by Laban. He didn't seem to realize he could have said with authority, "I am going home!" Even so, Jacob's request that Laban let him go was the first positive action he had taken to free himself from Laban's clutches. However, Laban had no intention of letting Jacob go. He was determined to keep his industrious nephew in subjection to him. With all the subtlety of the serpent, while weaving a web in which to enmesh Jacob's thinking further, Laban appeared to be asking a favour of Jacob:

I pray thee, if I have found favour in thine eyes,
tarry: for I have learned by experience [by divination]
that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.

And he said, Appoint me thy wages, and I will give
it.— Gen.30:27,28.

Laban had obtained Jacob's valuable services for fourteen years at no cost to himself and had given Jacob no opportunity to enrich himself. Jacob was not on the verge of permitting himself to be enslaved again. He confronted his uncle with the fact that Laban had little when he, Jacob, had come to him. Laban had been so poor that his daughters had to perform the task of watering and caring for his flocks. Except for the two bondmaids of Leah and Rachel, there were apparently no servants in the household — an indication of extreme poverty in the Orient. Jacob said:

Thou knowest how I have served thee, and how thy
cattle was with me.

For it was little which thou hadst before I came,
and it is now increased unto a multitude; and the
Lord hath blessed thee since my coming: and now
when shall I provide for mine own house also?—

Gen.30:29,30.

Jacob Outwits Laban

As soon as Jacob began to resist Laban, he began to express the authority of the divine *Ego*. He was learning how to say "I" and "I am" aright. Seeing that Jacob was no longer held under the spell

of mesmeric inertia which had bound him for fourteen years, Laban craftily suggested that they make another agreement. But Jacob had reason to know that Laban could not be trusted. In reply to Laban's question, "What shall I give thee?" Jacob made a proposal through which he knew he could outwit Laban.

And Jacob said, Thou shalt not give me any thing: if thou wilt do this thing for me, I will again feed and keep thy flock.

I will pass through thy flock today, removing from thence all the speckled and spotted cattle, and all the brown cattle among the sheep, and the spotted and speckled among the goats; and of such shall be my hire.

So shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come, when it shall come for my hire before thy face: every one that is not speckled and spotted among the goats, and brown among the sheep, that shall be counted stolen with me.— Gen.30:31-33.

Jacob's proposal — that Laban keep the white sheep and the black goats of the flock, while he, Jacob, would take the speckled, spotted, and ringstraked (striped) among the goats and the brown among the sheep, which were fewer in number than the natural colored ones — was so obviously in Laban's favour that Laban readily agreed to the terms of the bargain. Laban himself separated the flock according to the agreement and gave into his sons' keeping the flock consigned to Jacob. And he set three days' journey between Jacob's flock and his own. To make sure that the terms of the bargain were kept, Laban shrewdly made the following provisions: Jacob must shepherd Laban's flock, while Laban's sons would care for Jacob's herd (Gen.30:35,36). Laban quite obviously had plans of his own. But with intelligence and shrewdness Jacob out maneuvered the cunning craftiness of this man of the east country.

Having returned good for evil during the fourteen years he had served Laban, Jacob quite literally picked up Laban's own weapons and used them against him. Even the Master Christian did not advocate continued submission to attacks of evil. His admonition, "Unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other" (Luke 6:29), might suggest first, that one should not be hasty in reacting to an attack; but it may also imply that since one

has but two cheeks to turn to an aggressor, two unprovoked attacks were enough! A third attack should be answered differently, possibly by putting up an effective defense or offense. There is nothing in the Old or New Testaments which demands that we permit others to impose on us forever.

Jacob's plan of defense was on a human level. In a sense, one might say he decided to use his wits to outwit Laban. Even so, Jacob proved that intelligent human planning was sufficient to triumph over the deceit and cunning craftiness of occultism. The words of the Bible tell the full story:

And Jacob took him rods of green poplar, and of the hazel and chestnut tree; and pilled [peeled] white strakes in them, and made the white appear which was in the rods.

And he set the rods which he had pilled [peeled] before the flocks in the gutters in the watering troughs when the flocks came to drink, that they should conceive when they came to drink.

And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted.

And Jacob did separate the lambs, and set the faces of the flocks toward the ringstraked, and all the brown in the flock of Laban; and he put his own flocks by themselves, and put them not into Laban's cattle.

And it came to pass, whenever the stronger cattle did conceive, that Jacob laid the rods before the eyes of the cattle in the gutters, that they might conceive among the rods.

And when the cattle were feeble, he put them not in: so the feebler were Laban's, and the stronger Jacob's.— Gen.30:37-42.

This method of animal husbandry was common practice in the ancient East. A shrewd shepherd could produce any kind of flock he chose. And Jacob was a shrewd shepherd. While Jacob seemed to be fighting fire with fire, and certainly he was using methods that we today would consider more than questionable, yet it must be remembered that this was the ancient Orient where it was considered wise and necessary to outwit a dishonest opponent. Jacob knew that Laban was his adversary who had to be defeated or he, Jacob, would be a bondman the rest of his life.

Jacob claimed the flock which he produced. However Laban drove a hard bargain. In the East there was a law that if any of the flock be killed by a wild animal, the shepherd must produce a part of the animal which had been killed as proof, or else pay for the missing one. Laban required that Jacob bear the loss of such of the flock. Laban also demanded that Jacob pay for any of the flock that was stolen. And during the six years after making the agreement which gave Jacob his wages in sheep and cattle and goats, Laban changed Jacob's wages, or method of payment, ten times (Gen.31:7,8,36-41). But through it all Jacob increased in strength, "and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses" (Gen.30:43); and in time, he took possession of his own flocks. Having learned the necessity of being alert to the deceit and fraudulence of occult thinking and acting, Jacob began to find his dominion in the land of the people of the east country.

Laban's sons began to be envious of Jacob. They claimed that Jacob had taken their father's gain, whereas Laban had had no gain when Jacob came to him. Laban finally realized that Jacob was outwitting him at every turn, and that his own crafty methods were not accomplishing his deceitful purposes — that of so stripping Jacob of possessions that he would have to remain with him and serve him yet further. Laban was not poor at this time. Jacob had taken good care of his flocks and had brought great increase to him. But Jacob's gain was greater.

Laban was roused against Jacob. But Jacob also had been roused against the things for which Laban stood, so roused in fact that he was able to hear the warning that the time had come for him to leave the land of the people of the east. This was the first time since coming into Haran that Jacob had thrown off the influence of occultism sufficiently to hear God's voice clearly. We read:

And the Lord said unto Jacob, Return unto the land
of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with
thee.— Gen.31:3.

This is the first time since leaving Bethel that Jacob heard and responded to the message of the Great *I AM*. The divine promise Jacob had heard when leaving Bethel was reiterated: "I will be with thee." The *I AM* had always been with him. But his mesmerized senses had not been conscious of the divine presence. Now,

awake and alert, he had risen to a new dimension of thought where he could hear the voice within him giving him, or making plain to him, the right idea of what to do. He was in the field with the flocks when the *I AM* gave him the idea of right action, and he did not even return to Laban's house for his family. He sent for them.

Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field unto his flock,

And said unto them, I see your father's countenance, that it is not toward me as before; and the God of my father hath been with me.

And ye know that with all my power I have served your father.

And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me.

And if he said thus, The speckled shall be thy wages; then all the cattle bare speckled: and if he said thus, The ringstraked shall be thy hire; then bare all the cattle ringstraked.

Thus God hath taken away the cattle of your father, and given them to me.— Gen.31:4-9.

Jacob then told his wives of the dream he had in which the angel of God spoke to him, demanding that he lift up his eyes — his spiritual vision and his expectation — so that he might see the way in which to gain his dominion over Laban:

And the angel of God spake unto me in a dream, saying, Jacob: and I said, Here am I.

And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee.— Gen.31:11,12.

Then Jacob told Rachel and Leah of God's command that he leave Haran immediately and return to his promised land. God said:

I am the God of Bethel, where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me: now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred.— Gen.31:13.

The divine *Ego*, Supreme Being, identified Himself to Jacob thus: "*I AM* the God of Bethel." When Jacob responded, "Here am I," or *Here I am*, he identified himself with the *I AM*. For the first time, the *God of Bethel* became to him, as to future generations in all time to come, *the God of Jacob*. The full force of the power of the vision which had inscribed its message in his sleeping thought at Bethel came to him again when he was roused out of apathy and fear. The understanding of the divine ever-presence and of his oneness with that presence — Immanuel — or God-with-us — came to Jacob, not as a power afar off, but as spiritual power within himself. He felt the dominion of Spirit, the kingdom of heaven, within. This new-old understanding lifted him to see the present truth of the words he had uttered at Bethel: "The Lord is in this place!" *This place*, the place where he was, no matter where that place seemed to be located in time and space — *there* was God, *there* was good, *there* was dominion! *For wherever man is, God is!* Omnipresence — presence of Mind.

The inspiration of the vision aroused in Jacob a divine energy. He began to feel the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, moving in him, impelling him to positive right action. No longer was he subservient to Laban. No longer was he bound by the belief that he could not move without Laban's consent. No longer was Jacob afraid. He knew he was living and moving in the presence of divine Mind, not in the dimension of thought in which Laban exerted power. He was no longer on Laban's wave length, no longer under Laban's influence.

No outward change had taken place that caused Jacob to be released from bondage to Laban. In the words of the Apostle Paul, Jacob had been "transformed by the renewing of his mind, so that he could prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God" (Rom.12:2). He was now acting under divine directions. The *I AM* was at work in him as a powerful spiritual force. The bondage of the Old Covenant, in which one mind could control and influence another, had yielded to the dominion of the New Covenant, wherein spiritual thinking and scientific knowing, even Omniscience, gives one spiritual authority.

Rachel and Leah were ready to go with Jacob, for, said they:

Is there yet any portion or inheritance for us in our father's house?

Are we not counted of him strangers? For he hath sold us, and hath quite devoured also our money.

For all the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours, and our children's: now, then, whatsoever God hath said unto thee, do.—
Gen.31:14-16

These words reveal yet another side to Laban. He did not love his daughters. They were to him no more than negotiable property. The accumulated bitterness of the years welled up in Rachel and Leah as they willingly turned away from Laban and his unloving, unjust, selfish practices, to go with Jacob to his country. The rivalry and jealousy which had separated the sisters was healed, and they were as one in their decision to accompany their husband away from their father's house.

Then Jacob rose up, and set his sons and his wives upon camels;

And he carried away all his cattle, and all the goods which he had gotten, the cattle of his getting, which he had gotten in Padan-aram, for to go to Isaac his father in the land of Canaan.— Gen.31:17,18.

Like the prodigal son in Jesus' parable — "When he came to himself he said, . . . I will arise and go to my father" (Luke 15:17,18), Jacob came to himself, and his first thought was to go to his father, to Isaac, and to his father's house. May we not see in Jacob's impulse to return to his human father the spiritual desire to return to his Father-God and to Bethel, to the place where God had revealed to him the power of the divine presence, which Jacob called "The house of God and the gate of heaven?" (Gen.28:17).

To go to the Father is to ascend to the consciousness of our divine origin and of our original perfection as the sons and daughters of God. *This* was now Jacob's purpose, and he began immediately this phase of his spiritual journeying. The moment Jacob's thought began to ascend to his Father-God there was awakened in him the idea of husbanding and fathering his family. He was quick to put thought into action. He took his family out of Laban's house — out of the house of godless materialism, away from the devastating influence of occultism, and set his course for Bethel — typical of the house of God.

Jacob wisely refrained from telling Laban of his plans. Jacob "stole away unawares to Laban the Syrian" (Gen.31:20). Or, as one

translation has it: "Jacob outwitted Laban." It is always wisdom to be wiser than serpents. Jacob had learned what constitutes the wisdom of the serpent and with scientific precision he outwitted the Syrian and escaped from the snares that had been laid for him.

The spiritual power and wisdom which Jacob now utilized were part of his birthright of dominion on earth. Through failure to utilize this power and wisdom he had, for too long, been a captive of his own ineptitude, a dupe of occultism, and a bondman to Laban.

When Jacob's earthly sphere of action seemed dark and void of heavenly harmony, the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, or Comforter, moved upon the waters, or elements of his thinking, in accordance with the divine pattern of action in the original statement of the Covenant of Godlikeness (Gen.1:2). And this divine impulsion gave him power and authority to act wisely and decisively and to correct his course. We might say, in astronomical language, that the apparent malfunction in his thinking had been corrected by *Headquarters*, and he was once more in the right orbit, functioning properly, and going forward in his divine adventure. The forward thrust of his flight was sufficient to neutralize the drag of material resistance which pursued and tried again to capture his imagination.

And so Jacob's escape from the land of the people of the East — from the deadening influence of occultism — and his return to clear scientific thinking was a triumphant journey, which is, in very truth, the journeying of us all. Jacob's footsteps were human, but his journeying was spiritual. The promise of the New Covenant had been fulfilled:

Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.— Acts 1:8.

Out of the Wilderness

So Jacob left Haran and Laban and the land of the people of the East country, and gathering new energy with every step,

He rose up, and passed over the river, and set his face toward the mount Gilead.— Gen.31:21.

The river is the *Euphrates*, about three days journey by caravan from Haran. This river was the symbolic as well as the actual boundary of the area known as the land of the people of the East country. Crossing this river was, for Jacob, a spiritual milestone. For in the allegory of Jacob's journeying, he had left behind the occult influences of the East. One might have thought that the final curtain had fallen on the drama of Jacob's wilderness experience. But another scene quickly unfolds.

Three days after he had departed it was told Laban that Jacob had gone; and Laban gathered his brethren and his sons and pursued after him, moving swiftly on camels. Jacob was traveling with a large caravan — his wives, his children, his menservants and womenservants, and his great flocks and herds. Even so, it was seven days before Laban was able to overtake Jacob at Mount Gilead, a distance of about 350 miles in a direct line from Haran and about 25 miles east of the Jordan River (Gen.31:22,23). We don't know why Jacob took the route east of the Jordan River instead of the Caravan Route of the Fertile Crescent. But Jacob was moving under divine impulsion and under the protection of the Spirit of God, and his human footsteps were but the outward appearance of his spiritual journeying.

The night before Laban reached Mount Gilead, God spoke to him in a dream and said:

Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.— Gen.31:24.

This phrase is a Hebrew idiom meaning, *Restrain your feelings*. Laban was intent on capturing Jacob and all that were with him. But the Word of God restrained him, and disguising his real intent, he approached Jacob with a show of hurt feelings and sadness: Jacob had left without telling Laban he was going! This accusation brought forth no response from Jacob. So Laban tried another approach. He accused Jacob of having stolen his daughters. But Laban probably remembered that Jacob had served him 14 years, without wages, for his daughters, so he again changed his tactics. With a great show of emotion, he said that he would have sent Jacob away "with mirth and with songs, and with tabret, and with harp." This was sheer nonsense, for Laban had no intention of ever letting Jacob go — Jacob was too valuable to

him. Still there was no response from Jacob. Again Laban changed his attitude and chided Jacob, "Thou hast done foolishly." (See Gen.31:26-28.)

Realizing that nothing he said made any impression upon Jacob, Laban began to feel his disadvantage. He tried to frighten Jacob: "It is in the power of my hand to do you hurt." But Laban remembered that the God of Jacob had warned him to restrain his feelings; and Laban had come to have great respect for the God of Jacob. So he feigned to understand that Jacob's haste in departing was "because thou sore longedst after thy father's house." Not having been able to rouse Jacob sufficiently to get a response of any kind from him, Laban then accused Jacob of stealing his household gods. (See Gen.31:29,30.)

Jacob's answer concerning his reason for leaving Haran without telling Laban was frank and brief:

I was afraid: for I said, Peradventure thou wouldest take by force thy daughters from me.— Gen.31:31.

His answer to the accusation of theft was short and terse:

With whomsoever thou findest thy goods, let him not live: before our brethren discern thou what is thine with me, and take it to thee.— Gen.31:32.

Laban himself made the search. He went into Jacob's tent, into Leah's, into the tents of the two maidservants, into Rachel's, "but he found them not." However, Laban had not lied when he said that someone had taken his household gods. Rachel had taken the images, though Jacob knew it not. She hid them in the camel's furniture, and sat upon them. When her father searched her tent she feigned illness saying she could not arise.

These gods, or teraphim as they were called, which both Laban and Rachel cherished, were family gods and symbolized family beliefs and traditions which were so deeply embedded in Rachel's consciousness she could not give them up, "although Jacob had taught her to despise such worship of those gods" (*Josephus.*) Laban continued his search. We may easily imagine his frantic desire to find the images, not only because he cherished them, and because, according to Hurrian law, possession of them ensured title to Laban's property, but also because he needed to substantiate

his accusation against Jacob. "But he found them not." (See Gen.31:33-35.)

Jacob then gave his full attention to the business of settling his score with Laban. In words which formed a fitting climax in the melodrama depicting the conflict between the power of the divine Mind and the alleged power of the carnal mind, Jacob shattered all of Laban's hopes of ever again taking possession of Jacob's mind. The accumulation of twenty years of injustice, deceit, imposition, and fraud welled up in Jacob's biting denunciation of Laban and of all that Laban represented:

And Jacob was wroth, and chode with Laban: and Jacob answered and said to Laban, What is my trespass? what is my sin, that thou hast so hotly pursued after me?

Whereas thou hast searched all my stuff, what hast thou found of all thy household stuff? set it here before my brethren and thy brethren, that they may judge betwixt us both.

This twenty years have I been with thee; thy ewes and thy she goats have not cast their young [have not miscarried], and the rams of thy flock have I not eaten.

That which was torn of beasts I brought not unto thee; I bare the loss of it; of my hand didst thou require it, whether stolen by day, or stolen by night.

Thus I was; in the day the drought consumed me, and the frost by night; and my sleep departed from mine eyes. [As a shepherd, Jacob was required to be with the flock day and night.]

Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times.

Except the God of my father, the God of Abraham, and the fear of Isaac, had been with me, surely thou hadst sent me away now empty. God hath seen mine affliction and the labour of my hands, and rebuked thee yesternight.— Gen.31:36-42.

Laban, amazed that Jacob knew that God had rebuked him and knowing that he was defenseless against Jacob's accusations, was completely unnerved. His disadvantage was evident in his blustering reply to Jacob:

These daughters are my daughters, and these children are my children, and these cattle are my cattle, and all that thou seest is mine: and what can I do this day unto these my daughters, or unto their children which they have born?— Gen.31:43.

Laban tried frantically to take possession of Jacob's mind and to repossess Jacob's substance by making a show of authority mixed with indignation. But Jacob was not impressed. Finally Laban tried cunningly to bind Jacob to him by a covenant. He said:

Now therefore come thou, let us make a covenant, I and thou; and let it be for a witness between me and thee.— Gen.31:44.

Jacob agreed to make a covenant with Laban, but with spiritual authority, Jacob made the conditions of the covenant and took complete charge of the preparations for ratifying it.

And Jacob took a stone, and set it up for a pillar.
 And Jacob said unto his brethren, Gather stones; and they took stones, and made an heap: and they did eat there upon the heap. [This was the custom in the ancient East when making a covenant.]
 And Laban called it Jegar-saha-dutha: but Jacob called it Galeed [Gilead].— Gen.31:45-47

The two names by which Jacob and Laban called the pillar mean *a heap of witness*. *Jegar-saha-dutha* is the Aramaic of Syria, Laban's language, and *Galeed (Gilead)* is the Hebrew of Jacob's language. Jacob's spiritual senses were alerted. Knowing the crafty way in which Laban could turn anything to his own advantage, Jacob did not permit the Syrian name for the place to stand. And so we read:

Therefore was the name of it called Galeed.— Gen.31:48.

Mizpah

But that is not all. The name of the stone on which the covenant was made is called *Mizpah*, which means:

The Lord watch between me and thee, when we are absent [hidden] one from another.— Gen.31:49.

Mizpah has come to have a tender meaning — a meaning which has long been very precious to loved ones who are separated from each other. But the basic meaning of *Mizpah* is: *A place of separation; to keep rigidly apart.* In the Hebrew idiom *Mizpah* means: *Don't put your foot over this line! Or, Stay on your own side of this line!* To Jacob and to Laban, *Mizpah* meant: "The Lord will watch over both parties of this covenant to see that they keep their bargain — that they will not cross over this line of demarcation — even when they cannot keep one another under observation." Thus Galeed, or Gilead, as it came to be known, became a boundary over which Jacob and Laban and their descendants might not pass with any intent to harm one another.

Symbolically, Jacob found at Galeed, or Mizpah, the place of separation, or line of demarcation, between the occult mind with its many and devious methods of accomplishing its purposes, and the divine Mind, which reveals to mankind the Christ way, the spiritual way of accomplishing all good. Having made this separation, Jacob stayed on the right side. He walked with God in the Christ way, and was never more found using the methods of the carnal mind to accomplish his divine purpose. The *I AM* had taken over. No longer did the little "i" of a personal mortal sense of self bow before the aggressive abortive ego of occultism.

The Spirit of God had "divided the waters from the waters," and placed "the firmament" of spiritual understanding between good and evil, between the divine Mind and the carnal mind — a line of demarcation which could not be crossed. (See Gen.1:6-8.)

And Laban departed, and returned unto his place.— Gen.31:55.

And he stayed in his place! Never again did he attempt to encroach upon Jacob's dominion. And the curtain falls with finality on the last act of the melodrama of Jacob's wilderness experience. And it did not rise again!

And so the Second Day, or second period of spiritual unfoldment of the New Covenant, revealed in the first chapter of Genesis, which began for Jacob when he reached the borders of Haran, has come to its dramatic fulfillment.

As Jacob departs from Haran and the Second Day of his spiritual journeying ends, we may hear the Spirit of God reminding him: "Let there be a firmament of spiritual understanding in the midst of the waters, or elements of your consciousness, to make the distinction between thoughts emanating from God, which are spiritual and Godlike, and thoughts proceeding from the carnal mind, which are mortal and material. Then on your ladder of life only angels, God's thoughts, ascend and descend."

The second period of unfoldment is typical of wisdom and understanding unfolding in individual consciousness, which enables one to divide the waters above the firmament from the waters below the firmament — to draw a line of demarcation between the spiritual and material, between the scientific and superstitious, between the clear day of Spirit and the darkness of occultism, between the thoughts of the divine Mind and the suggestions of the carnal mind. (See pp.45-46.)

"God called the firmament Heaven." In the Hebrew, the word translated *firmament* mean *expanse*. The firmament came to be thought of as the visible arch of the sky. But the ancient Hebrew knew the firmament as the infinite expansion of thought, or comprehension of the Infinite. The prophet Isaiah urged:

Lift up your eyes to the heavens and look upon the
earth beneath.— Isa.51:6.

Figuratively, lift up your spiritual vision, your scientific senses, and look at your earthly experiences through the lens of heaven, the firmament of Infinity, rather than through the lens of the finite corporeal senses and the keyhole of self; and you will find the kingdom of heaven within you — you will find the firmament of spiritual understanding which enables you to make the separation between what is good and what is delusive. And this is what Jacob began to do.

And the evening and the morning
were the second day.
(Gen.1:8.)

Thus ended the second period of Jacob's divine adventure.

Chapter XXXVIII

JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

THE THIRD PERIOD

Mahanaim

As Jacob (still led by the Spirit of God), leaves Galeed and Mizpah, the curtain rises on the Third Day, or third period of unfoldment of his Covenant with God. In his experience at Mizpah Jacob learned that the only kind of covenant or agreement one can make with evil and its representatives is one of complete separation — to agree to disagree. Having learned this lesson in the school of hard experience and hope deferred, he was ready for the next step in establishing his Covenant with God.

And Jacob went on his way.— Gen.32:1.

The mighty Spirit of God within him was a divine influence impelling him ever forward and upward in *The Way of Holiness*, establishing a spiritual right of way for him, a way in which he could walk in perfect safety (Isa.35:8). This spiritual highway was and is a straight and narrow way of scientific thinking and of strict adherence to the spiritual facts of being which had been and continued to be revealed to him. It was the way of “yea, yea and nay, nay” — no halfway measure, no middle ground (Matt.5:37). It was the way our Master trod. It is the way each one of us must tread sooner or later if we would reach the high goal of spiritual maturity and dominion and experience the harmony of heaven on earth. The terms of the Covenant remain forever the same: “Walk before me and be thou perfect!” Walk ever conscious of the divine presence and be complete and active in expressing Godlikeness. Walk ever mindful that *I AM* your I am, your divine *Ego*, the very “I” of your being. Identify yourself aright by learning how to say *I am*, and you will walk in the way of holiness and be perfect. Jacob was learning this mighty lesson. Consequently a larger, more dynamic sense of his divine authority was unfolding in him.

The Angels of God's Presence Meet Jacob

As Jacob went on his way, walking with God, mindful of God's presence — of God-with-us — the *I AM* —

The angels of God met him.

And when Jacob saw them, he said, This is God's host; and he called the name of that place Mahanaim.— Gen.32:1,2.

This is God's host, or God's army! Jacob had met this angelic host before. In the vision at Bethel, at the beginning of his spiritual journeying, he saw the angels of God — God's host — ascending and descending the ladder which stood upon the earth, whose top reached unto heaven (Gen.28:12). This vision had assured Jacob of God's presence with him at all times and revealed the way in which he must walk as a *step upon step* of spiritual ascendancy (pp. 423-427). Now he receives the same assurance. God's host of spiritual ideas, the angelic army of heaven, came to usher Jacob into the third period of unfoldment of the Covenant of Godlikeness — into the realization, or higher understanding, of his oneness with God and his agreement with all that is good. Was the angelic host visible to the eye? We do not know. But the presence of this army of heavenly ideas was very real to Jacob. Their appearing symbolizes the appearing in Jacob's consciousness of a host of right ideas of what to do and how to do it as he approached the borders of the land God had promised to give him and his seed. Recall the gathering together of God's ideas in the Third Day:

And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.

And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:9,10.

In metaphor, the gathering together of the waters under the heavens unto one place is typical of the gathering together of the elements of thought into the focal point of ideas. The dry land is symbolic of the appearing of absolute substantial formations of thought — specific, definite ideas as distinguished from the vast

elements of divine Mind and its infinite reservoir of ideas. The third period also reveals the fact that the dry land brings forth the green growth upon the earth after his kind, each yielding fruit, whose seed is in itself (Gen.1:11-13). The seed within itself is typical of the vitality of each idea which, embodying the divine power to propagate and grow, brings forth fruit, or fruitage, after its own kind, in obedience to the law of ever appearing creation — creation which is always like the Creator.

God's host of angels coming to meet Jacob at Mahanaim is symbolic of God's holy thoughts coming into the focal point of ideas in his consciousness. At Galeed, or Mizpah, he had made a definite separation between good and evil; he had triumphed over evil's emissary and proved the power of good over evil. The natural and inevitable outcome was that good flowed into his consciousness in abundant measure — angel thoughts came rushing to meet him. And by the law written into the divine command, "Let the dry land appear," the infinitude of good resolved itself into definite concrete forms of thought which, like angels, led him into positive right action — gave him specific ideas of what to do and how to do it.

The first idea which came to Jacob was that of being reconciled with his brother Esau. It is natural, according to the divine precepts, that this should have been Jacob's first thought in this third period of spiritual unfoldment of the divine nature. For the harmonious relationship between God and man is reflected in the harmonious relationship between man and man. The first commandment of the New Covenant is: Be perfect in love for God and love for man. Our love for our fellow man is the yardstick by which we may measure our love for God. Jacob was seeking his holy relationship with God; therefore it was natural that he should seek a loving relationship with his brother. At Bethel Jacob had glimpsed something of the wondrous tender relationship between God and man, but the deep meaning of this holy relationship had not matured in him. The Spirit of God impelled him to take the step of first being reconciled with his brother. Then the footsteps leading to his reconciliation with God would follow naturally. Christ Jesus gave to all mankind a pattern of right action for those who would seek and find God and feel the tender divine ever-presence. In the *Sermon on the Mount* the Master declared:

Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;

Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.— Matt.5:23,24.

Jacob remembered that Esau had much against him. He knew he could not fully renounce, or lay upon the altar, a mortal concept of himself and thereby find a closer relationship with God until he corrected the wrong he had committed against his brother. He knew he must make a covenant of peace with Esau. He hastened to put thought into action. He sent messengers to Esau in the land of Seir, which is Edom — the country southeast of Canaan and below the Dead Sea — where Esau pastured his large flocks and herds. (That Jacob knew exactly where Esau was indicates that there had been some communication between Jacob and his family during the years he was in Haran — he had not been completely cut off from them.) Jacob's messengers brought Esau word that his brother had left Haran and was returning to the land of Canaan. Jacob had also instructed his servants specifically concerning the words with which they should greet Esau:

Thus shall ye speak unto my lord Esau; Thy servant Jacob saith thus, I have sojourned with Laban, and stayed there until now:

And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find grace in thy sight.— Gen.32:4,5.

The salutation *my lord* is a deferential greeting, a salutation of obeisance from a younger to an elder brother, from a servant to his master, from a subject to his king. Jacob thus acknowledged Esau as the heir of Isaac and as the head of his clan and signified his willingness to leave with God the bestowal of the dominion of his birthright. He was learning that his was a spiritual birthright, not a material one, and that God would bestow it upon him when he was spiritually prepared to receive it. That time was fast approaching.

Jacob's messengers returned to him with the message:

We came to thy brother Esau, and also he cometh to meet thee, and four hundred men with him.—
Gen.32:6.

Great fear overtook Jacob, but his fearful thoughts were not God's angel thoughts. They were mortal thoughts that sought to crowd out God's angel host of right ideas. They were thoughts based on his previous experience with Esau, not on his present experience with God. They were based on his knowledge of Esau's proclivity for quick and vigorous physical action and of Esau's threat, some twenty years before, to kill him. Jacob's fear of Esau was great, yet he did not change his course or attempt to flee. God's angel thoughts directed him to take a few simple precautions to protect those who were with him in the event Esau's intent should be vindictive and destructive. He divided the people and all his flocks and herds and camels into two bands, saying:

If Esau come to the one company, and smite it, then the other company which is left shall escape.— Gen.32:8.

Jacob Turns to God in Prayer

Having taken these simple precautionary measures, Jacob looked away from the material circumstances and turned to God in prayer:

O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:

I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands.

Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he smite me, and the mother with the children.

And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude.— Gen.32:9-12.

This is the first record we have of a prayer of affirmation and petition — affirmation of God's presence and power, of gratitude for good already received; petition for deliverance from evil and for fulfillment of God's promises. It is significant that Jacob first

acknowledged the Almighty as the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac, thus identifying himself with the first two aspects of the Trinity: the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, and the nature of divine Sonship. He also identified himself with the God of Bethel who had promised, "I will be with thee in all places whither thou goest." The God of Bethel is the God of Jacob, the Interpretive aspect of *Elohim*, which reveals the holy relationship of God and man to the human consciousness. In Jacob's apparently simple acknowledgment of God, he identified himself with the Trinity. He humbled himself before the threefold nature of the Infinite and thanked God for His mercy. He acknowledged God, *Elohim*, as the source of the increased substance which had come to him — increase which began with no possession but his shepherd's staff and which now included such abundance of possessions that he divided it into two bands, or companies. Jacob then asked God to deliver him from the hand, or power, of Esau. And finally, he identified himself with the Covenant promise — even that promise which God had made to him at Bethel — that his seed would multiply and fill the earth.

Jacob was praying for assurance of the presence and power of the Almighty, the Great *I AM*, who had inscribed its dynamic message in his sleeping consciousness at Bethel. He had felt the presence and power of the divine *Ego* in his confrontation with Laban — power which enabled him to say *I, I am, and I will* with divine authority, which overruled the abortive ego Laban expressed. But in the coming confrontation with Esau his feeling of guilt robbed him of confidence. And he reached out for confirmation of the presence of the Great *I AM*. How would the Almighty defend him from punishment at Esau's hands — punishment he feared that he deserved?

Jacob's prayer to *Elohim*, God, in whom the holy Trinity is embodied, was not answered in words, but in ideas, in angel thoughts from God's host. He would send his brother a present. This idea was a good one, for Esau, being wholly materialistic in his thinking, would be more impressed by Jacob's wealth than by his spiritual gain. Hence, the action nearest right under the circumstances was for Jacob to send Esau some evidence of his increased substance. Esau's show of strength was to be met by a show of strength which Esau would understand and respect. This was the first step in preparation for the meeting Jacob greatly

feared. *Step upon step*, other ideas would unfold as he listened for and heeded God's host of angels that accompanied him.

The fullness of God's giving to Jacob is revealed in this third period of his divine adventure. Some indication of how great was his substance — his fruitage — may be seen in the size of the flock sent to his brother:

Two hundred she goats, and twenty he goats, and
two hundred ewes, and twenty rams,
Thirty milch camels with their colts, forty kine, and
ten bulls, twenty she asses, and ten foals.—
Gen.32:14,15.

Some idea of the orderliness of God's ideas which came to Jacob may be seen in his instruction to his servants to group this large herd in droves. Each drove was shepherded separately — “a space betwixt drove and drove.” Jacob sent the droves before him to meet Esau, and he commanded the foremost, saying,

When Esau my brother meeteth thee, and asketh
thee, saying, Whose art thou? and whither goest
thou? and whose are these before thee?

Then thou shalt say, They be thy servant Jacob's; it
is a present unto my lord Esau: and, behold, also he
is behind us.— Gen.32:17,18.

So the present was sent before him, with the assurance that he himself would follow to meet his brother face to face. What to do then would be told him. The presence of God's angel host assured him that right ideas would come to him as he needed them.

Having dispatched the present to his brother, Jacob prepared to lodge with the company (Gen.32: 19-21). But there was to be no rest for him that night. Before Jacob met his brother, he was to meet a mighty representative of the Trinity of God's presence. Sensing that an event of great moment was upon him, and knowing that he must face this moment alone with God,

He rose up in the night, and took his two wives,
and his two womenservants, and his eleven sons,
and passed over the ford Jabbok.

And he took them, and sent them over the brook,
and sent over that he had.— Gen.32:22,23.

The Hebrew meaning of the word *Jabbok* reveals something of the mental action which took place within Jacob himself after sending his family and possessions over the brook. *Jabbok* means a pouring out, an emptying. Figuratively, *Jabbok* was a great spiritual milestone in Jacob's experience, for it was at the ford *Jabbok* that Jacob literally emptied himself of the false stimulus of the forbidden fruit of the knowledge of both good and evil and claimed good alone as the only power. Or, rather, God's army of angelic thoughts, right ideas, flooded his whole body of consciousness and flushed out the mortal, mesmeric, fearful, latent thoughts that lay hidden in his unconscious thought, or sub-conscious mind. Jacob was being prepared for the climax of his divine adventure. Here, as in the third day of creation, when the dry land appeared, the soil was prepared for the seed, and the earth brought forth grass, herbs, and trees bearing fruit, so it was at the *Jabbok*, Jacob's third period of unfoldment, that he weeded out the tares from his thinking and thus prepared his consciousness for the precious seed of divine ideas that was to bring forth good fruit in his earthly experience. And so the third period of Jacob's divine adventure had accomplished its divine purpose.

And the evening and the morning
were the third day.
(Gen. 1:13.)

At the *Jabbok* the Third Day, or third period of Jacob's footsteps of spiritual ascendancy, came to its communion. But unlike the other periods, with a definite distinction made between them, the ending of the Third Day blends into the beginning of the Fourth Day — as twilight blends into night. And as in the original Covenant of Godlikeness, recorded in the first chapter of Genesis, the new Day begins with the evening, with darkness. This darkness is not, however, the blackness of despair. It is the darkness which accompanies the renunciation of a mortal sense of life, the darkness which precedes the dawn of the meridian light of divine unfoldment.

Let's pause for a moment to be sure that we are not thinking of Jacob's story as merely a narrative about someone who lived several thousand years ago. Unless we see and hear his experiences as subjective, as *God's message to us today*, telling us

how to use the ideas in Jacob's unfoldment in our own experience, they are like sounding brass or a tinkling symbol. In the degree that we identify ourselves with his unfoldment, we become a part of his divine adventure.

Chapter XXXIX

JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

THE FOURTH PERIOD

PENIEL

The Darkness That Preceded the Dawn

The *evening* and the *morning* of Jacob's Fourth Day, or fourth period of unfoldment, were so different one might find it difficult to believe that the morning of this Day was the outgrowth of the evening. But it was so! The darkness at the beginning of this Day was the darkest period in Jacob's life. But this starless night precedes the brightest Day of his divine adventure. Fear of meeting Esau appeared to be the cause which precipitated the mental darkness that almost overwhelmed him. This fear was so great that it forced him to turn unreservedly to God in prayer. God answered his prayer, but the divine answer was not what the human Jacob expected. Instead of feeling a quiet sense of confidence that all was well, Jacob felt a mighty force surging within him — a force so irresistible it compelled him to say, in substance, what Jesus said the night before the crucifixion: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt" (Matt.26:39).

The Battle Between the Two Covenants

At the Jabbok the battle between the two Covenants was about to be fought in Jacob's own body of consciousness. The two records of Creation in Genesis 1 and 2 are about to part company in Jacob's spiritual ascendancy. He was to learn that his encounter with Laban was as nothing compared with the battle now before him. He was to discover that the real enemy with which he must now contend was a material, personal concept of himself! He must subdue this mortal sense of selfhood, the will of the flesh, which seems to have a mind and a will of its own, with power to act as

though it were an entity apart from God. He must realize that his only reason for existing was to know and do the will of God and fulfill his divine mission. The terms of the Covenant never change: *Walk before me and be thou perfect* (Gen.17:1). He was to learn that he could not serve two masters (Matt.6:24); that he could be in agreement with only one authority, that only one Covenant could stand in him.

Jacob was to win this battle — a victory that would propel him into the experience that was to be the climax of his divine adventure — not the end, but a summit from which a whole new life was to unfold.

In his prayer at the ford Jabbok, Jacob prayed to *the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac* (Gen.32:9). In the allegory of Jacob's spiritual journeying, his prayer reveals to us that he had risen to comprehend in some measure the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, known throughout the Bible as *the God of Abraham*, and the nature of the Son of God, of divine Sonship, known as *the God of Isaac*. Jacob had touched the borders of his Covenant relationship with Deity. He was ready for the full revelation of the third aspect of the Trinity, which had been imparted to him in the dream-vision at Bethel. His awakened consciousness was ready to comprehend the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, which makes known to the human consciousness the knowledge of God and of the Son of God and their relationship to each other — the power which transforms the human with the divine, causing the mortal to put off mortality and be new-born of Spirit. This third revelation of the divine nature of our triune divine Principle is known throughout the Bible as *the God of Jacob*. And *the God of Jacob* — known to Jacob as *the God of Bethel* — is the power of the Spirit of God in man which leads this soldier of God into the climax of his divine adventure.

Jacob's New Birth

Jacob was ready for the experience in which his dream-vision at Bethel was to come alive in him. He was to see God *face to face*. He was to discover his spiritual identity in God's likeness, be born again, and win his new name. The spiritual illumination which radiated from that holy experience was to become sun, moon, and

stars to him (Gen.1:16). But the battle with self had not yet been won, and the travail was portentous. We read:

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a
man with him until the breaking of the day.—
Gen.32:24.

The word *alone*, from the Anglo Saxon *an one* and the ME *al one*, means *all one*. Symbolically, the duality, or double-mindedness, which had constituted Jacob's consciousness, causing him to give power to both good and evil, had been dissolved. Literally and symbolically he was alone — at one with God and single-minded!

The *man* who wrestled with Jacob was not a corporeal being, but a visible manifestation of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God — a representative of the Trinity who came to Jacob, as he had come to Abraham, to usher him into the climax of his divine adventure. This holy visitant wrestled *with* not *against* Jacob. He came to help Jacob in his struggle with a mortal corporeal concept of himself — to help him overcome *the strong man* (Matt.12:28,29) — the strong carnal mindedness which claims to hold each individual in bondage to a carnal, material sense of life. This is the warfare every individual must wage sooner or later, and it is wise not to evade coming face to face with this carnal nature by delaying the battle.

The Hebrew word '*abaq*, translated *wrestle*, comes from a primitive root meaning to float away as vapor; to bedust; i.e. to grapple; to influence. This word carries the meaning of an attempt to rise against tremendous odds above the dust. It is not used in the same sense elsewhere in the Bible. It is completely different from other Hebrew words indicating a physical struggle or wrestling.

The Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, which had been gaining ascendancy in Jacob's consciousness, had become dominant in him, demanding that he wrestle with and overcome — rise above — a mortal sense of himself as made of the dust of the ground and subject to the carnal mind. This demand is voiced in the words of the Apostle Paul:

Put off the old man . . .
Be renewed in the spirit of your mind . . .

Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.— Eph.4:22-24.

The travail of Jacob's new birth was upon him!

And when he [the representative of the Trinity] saw that he prevailed not against him [the strong man], he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.— Gen.32:25.

In this, as in many other Bible verses, the meaning of the original Hebrew text is needed in order to understand the context of the passage. The Hebrew word *kaph*, translated *hollow* in the above verse, means power, from the curve in the hand. Because *kaph* is associated with *hand*, symbol for power, it came to be used for power. This word is translated *hollow* only in Gen.32:25. The Hebrew word *yarek*, translated *thigh*, means: to be soft; the generative parts; the seat of life. Here we have an occurrence of euphemism — the substitution of an agreeable or inoffensive word for one that is harsh, indelicate, or offensive.

The divine messenger touched the hollow (*kaph*) of Jacob's thigh (*yarek*), symbolically putting his finger on the thing in Jacob's thinking that was binding him and keeping him from seeing the light, or radiance, of his spiritual selfhood and his divine nature. The meaning of the Hebrew words in Genesis 32:25 indicates that the stumbling block in Jacob's thinking was sensuality — not only sex-sensuality, but a whole sensuous concept of life.

The representative of the Covenant must be spiritually minded. He must walk ever conscious of the divine presence. He must have the Mind that is God and see the spiritual nature of everything in God's universe. The things of the Spirit must be more important to him than sensuous affection, material possessions, and a powerful mortal mentality. Except for the night-vision at Bethel twenty years before, when he had felt the divine presence very close to him, and later in a brief moment when he had lifted his thought above the gross materialism of Haran long enough to hear the divine warning to leave Laban's house, Jacob had not really shown any signs of spiritual mindedness. There is no record of any communion with God after he left Bethel until, in his extremity, he humbly kneeled in prayer at the ford Jabbok. It is true he had been

under a mesmeric occult spell during the years he had been a member of Laban's household, an influence which had dulled his senses and kept him from being aware of God's presence and power. But recall it was his sensuous attraction to Rachel that had weakened his spiritual sensibilities, caused him to forget the God of Bethel, and made him a hostage under Laban's influence. In his wrestling with the angel at the Jabbok there still seemed to be in Jacob a hard core of material resistance to giving up a sensuous concept of himself, an unyielding sinew of carnal mindedness — a problem which each one of us must wrestle with and overcome at some time.

From the events which followed we see that Jacob's wrestling — '*Abaq* — his effort to rise against tremendous odds — was both a mental and a physical struggle. The mental nature of the wrestling is evidenced in the demand for a complete change in Jacob's nature. The physical nature of the wrestling is seen in the fact that Jacob's thigh was out of joint. He was in the grip of a power he could not withstand. So strenuous was the experience that it produced an upheaval in mind and body, wrought a change in Jacob's physical and spiritual nature, and transformed the whole structure of his consciousness. Then came *the breaking of the day*. We read:

And he [the divine visitant] said, Let me go, for the day breaketh.— Gen.32:26.

The Hebrew word *alah*, translated *breaketh* (and also translated *breaking* in verse 24), is from a primitive root meaning to ascend, to mount, going up, and is used only in these verses. The light of the Christ, which God called Day (Gen.1:5), was dawning in Jacob's consciousness. And in this spiritual dawning, he began to see himself in a new light. His regeneration was at hand. But the victory was not yet accomplished. The new understanding must be more than an intellectual concept; it must transform his whole body of consciousness.

The representative of the Trinity, seeing that Jacob had discerned the error within himself which needed to be corrected, and that the light of spiritual selfhood had gained ascendancy in him, said, "Let me go, for the day breaketh." This statement reveals the fact, not at first apparent, that Jacob was holding on to the

angelic visitant, not realizing that the revelation — the light which dawned so wondrously — was *within himself*.

And he [Jacob] said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.— Gen.32:26.

Jacob's nobility is revealed in the fact that he would not let go of the experience, painful though it might be, until he found the blessing, or divine benediction, which seemed to be hidden from him. It was not enough that the light of spiritual understanding should dawn in him. He must see clearly the full-orbed blessing in the experience. He would not let go of the experience until it came to its communion, its fulfillment, in him — until the lesson in the experience exalted him and transformed his whole body of consciousness, thus to become the dominant influence in his life.

Jacob had glimpsed the great fact that every experience, no matter how afflictive, includes a blessing for man — a blessing from God. He learned also that the physical overcoming of a problem is not sufficient to bring forth the blessing. Unless a spiritual victory is won, the blessing in the experience does not become apparent, and one does not truly rise above the mental nature of the problem. He learned, as must we, that unless the mental nature of any problem is corrected, the problem will continue to reappear.

When Jacob said he would not loose his hold on his benefactor "except thou bless me," the visitant asked:

What is thy name?— Gen.32:27.

This question alerted Jacob to the fact that his blessing was linked to his name, or nature, and was not something apart from or outside himself. In other words, the blessing was not to be acquired but unfolded. Hence the importance of the question, "What is thy name? Or, *What is thy nature?* When Jacob remembered that his name means: *heel-catcher, supplanter*, he was ready to supplant this material name and sensuous mortal nature with his new name and divine nature.

In answering this soul-searching question, the spiritual meaning of Jacob's name — *supplanter* — came to light. His was to be the task of *supplanting* the old mortal nature with the divine nature, of replacing the old concept of man with the new idea of man, of giving up human will for the divine will, of resolving domination

into dominion. In other words, Jacob's mission in life was to be that of demonstrating the power of the Holy Spirit to transform the human with the divine in every least and great detail of his experience, and so give us an exemplification of the transfiguring and transforming power of the Spirit of God operative — at work — in human consciousness.

Jacob's New Name Israel

Ancient records, recently discovered, reveal still another meaning of Jacob's name. It is a derivative of *Jacob-el*, meaning God follows, i.e. rewards — a meaning of the name which had been lost sight of or forgotten. In acknowledgment of Jacob's understanding of the grand lesson he had learned and of the transformation of his character, the messenger of the Holy Trinity proclaimed:

Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.— Gen.32:28.

The name *Israel* has several meanings: A prince prevailing or having power with God; God rules; Perseverer with God; Soldier of God. The change of Jacob's name to *Israel* is proof positive that his nature had been changed — transformed. He is no longer Jacob the supplanter, but Israel, a soldier of God, who triumphs and has power with God and with men — one who rules as God commands.

The Israel-nature, having princely power with God and with men, wears the metaphorical crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek — priestly power to command the experiences of his people. Having prevailed over a mortal nature in himself, Israel has power with God — power to prevail over everything unlike God on earth, power to prove that "with God all things are possible" (Matt.19:26). Israel also has power with men — power to be majestic — mighty and gracious in all dealings with mankind. The Israel-nature in each one of us has the divinely royal dominion of heaven on earth.

The change wrought in Jacob was so catalytic that it might well be called his new birth, for he had truly been born again. His

wrestlings with a mortal material sense of self might be likened to birth throes through which the immortal spiritual sense of life was brought forth. In the words of the Apostle Paul, Jacob had put off the old man with his deeds and had put on the new man, the new divine nature. He had begun life as the new man.

Jacob was eager to know the name of the holy visitant who had revealed to him his divine nature and had proclaimed his new name. In answer to his question,

Tell me, I pray thee, thy name —

The heavenly messenger replied,

Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?
And he blessed him there.— Gen.32:29.

“Surely you must know who I am” (*Dummelow, p.37*). Yes, Jacob knew the name, or nature, of the divine presence — *I AM!* This messenger of the Covenant, this voice of the Holy Trinity, was the Almighty *I AM* which had found a response in Jacob and had become his own conscience — the powerful presence of the divine *Ego*, which humbled him and brought his thinking into harmony with Divinity. The power of this Almighty Presence was so great that it broke up the material basis of Jacob’s previous thoughts of himself and released the spiritual energy of his divine nature. The vitality of this divine energy was a spiritual force, so powerful that it took possession of Jacob’s thinking — his whole body of consciousness — and scattered, or dissipated, the darkness of material selfhood. The little “i” of personal sense and the big “I” of human will were silenced, ruled out of Jacob’s consciousness. God’s Almighty name, *I AM*, prevailed and produced in Jacob a dynamic individuality that made him both Priest and King unto God on the earth.

And he blessed him there! *There* — where the Almighty nature of the Great *I AM* became Jacob’s own mind or ego. *There* — at the point of recognition and acknowledgment of the divine power which restored his soul. *There* — the blessing of God, the blessing of the Covenant of Godlikeness, dawned in Jacob’s consciousness, even that blessing which gives man dominion over all the earth. *There* Jacob began to realize the real meaning of his new name

Israel, perseverer with God, who is worthy to prevail, a divinely royal prince having power with God and with men.

With the changing of his name, Jacob realized at last that he had been chosen to be a prince of God. Now he knew that he was destined to fulfill a divine purpose. He had overcome the mortal nature which had kept him from exercising the dominion of his birthright. The battle between the two Covenants had been fought and won. The recording angel in Revelation might well have been echoing the message of Jacob's angelic visitant when he wrote:

To him that overcometh I will give a white stone, and in the stone a new name written. . . . And I will give him a crown of life.— Rev.2:17,10.

I Have Seen God Face to Face As In a Mirror

The *place* where Jacob received his new name was holy ground within himself — in his own body of consciousness. This place could never be located in time and space. It is good that there is no material shrine to commemorate the spot where Jacob wrestled with the angelic visitant. No material location should be hallowed as the place for overcoming a mortal sense of self. This place must always be found within individual consciousness. Jacob gave the place a name which identifies it with God's kingdom — in the spiritual dimension of thought:

And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.— Gen.32:30.

PENIEL — God-appearing face to face, as in a mirror.

PENIEL — Where each one learns, as did Jacob, that what God is, I am, by reflection.

PENIEL — Where the *there* of perfect Being becomes the *here* of perfect reflection.

PENIEL — Where God's name, the divine nature, is written in our foreheads and inscribed indelibly in the very fiber of our mind, or conscience.

PENIEL — Where each one is literally born again and receives his new name Israel — a soldier of God who has prevailed over a mortal material concept of himself, put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man — the new spiritual concept of himself, expressing the image and likeness of Divinity.

PENIEL — Where the New Covenant of Godlikeness comes to its communion, and each one wears the divinely royal crown of spiritual dominion.

PENIEL — Where each one hears the divine benediction: As a prince hast thou power to rule as God commands, in heaven and on earth — spiritually and humanly.

The lesson of Peniel, the fourth period of Jacob-Israel's unfoldment, was literally sun, moon, and stars to him, the meridian light of his divine adventure. At Peniel the light of transformation shined on him and rent the veil of a material personal sense of himself. The old man, the old material concept of himself, was put off, and the new man, the new spiritual concept with its wondrous divine nature, was put on.

In Jacob's exclamation, "I have seen God face to face," we see that the divine nature had become so illumined in his consciousness that he saw its holy origin. It was as though the Holy Spirit held before his gaze a mirror in which he could see himself as a mirror-likeness of his divine Principle, reflecting the nature, the character, of Divinity. And by the power of reflection, he was transformed into the divine likeness — Godlikeness. Or, in the words of the Apostle Paul, he was "changed into the same image." In this *mirror* Jacob discovered the law of reflection which enabled him (and us) to declare with divine authority: *because God is, I am!* In the words of St. Paul:

We all, with open face, beholding as in a glass [a mirror] the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord.— 11 Cor.3:18.

If we seem to see only "baffling reflections" in the mirror which the Holy Spirit is ever holding before us, it is because we have not

matured spiritually. We see "through a glass darkly." But the Apostle assures us that the time will come when we will see ourselves whole and complete and see reality face to face. (I Cor.13:9-12.)

Gerald Warre Cornish, in his very original translation of St. Paul's words, wrote:

All that is partial, imperfect, incomplete must have an end, but Love will never fail. In that perfect day of Love we shall see face to face, we shall know then as now we are known, and though now we see faith, hope, and love, these three, abiding in us, the greatest of them is Love.— 1 Cor.13:9-13.

The perfect day of Love! This is the day in which we see God face to face. And this was the day in which Jacob saw God face to face. Jacob had learned to love — to love God and all that is good — and this Godlike Love included love for man and for all that God has made. At Peniel the nature of divine Love and the light of spiritual being, of Godlikeness, shined so brightly that the shadows of mortal selfhood with its hates, envies, fear, jealousies, greeds, limitation, and sensuality were swallowed up in the radiance of divine reflection.

The understanding of God and of man's relationship with God which came to him at Peniel, became to Jacob *the light of the world*, symbolized by the sun, moon, and stars of the fourth period of the Covenant understanding. This spiritual enlightenment, "which God set in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth," illumined the pathway of this soldier of God and "ruled over the day and over the night, and divided the light from the darkness" — giving him spiritual light by which to see, to view every circumstance and condition before him. (See Gen.1:14-19.)

Who is the God whom Jacob saw face to face at Peniel? Who but *Elohim*, the Triune divine Principle of the universe. In the very beginning of our Bible we learn that the name *Elohim* defines the nature of Deity as the all-inclusive Creator, the Father and Mother of the universe including man, the All-in-all God whose creation is very good. The name *Elohim*, translated *God*, in the *King James Version of the Bible*, is a uni-plural noun. This holy name, though rendered in the plural, does not imply more than one God. Rather, it defines the All-inclusive One in His inherent threefold nature — three aspects of the divine nature which reveal the fun-

damental character of *Elohim*: a Creative aspect, a Self-revealing aspect, and an Interpretive aspect. Or, as Christ Jesus expressed it: As Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit — the Trinity, or divine completeness! (See *Scofield*, p.3, Note 1; Matt.28:19.)

At Peniel God revealed to Jacob this divine nature of the Godhead, or Divinity. And Jacob-Israel comprehended in some measure the threefold nature of the Infinite known throughout the Bible as *The God of Abraham, The God of Isaac, and The God of Jacob* — because in the lives of these three patriarchs the three aspects of the divine nature were illustrated, or exemplified.

In this fourth period of Jacob's divine adventure, the revelation of the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of the Creator of the universe and man came to light in his consciousness. The nature of God as a loving Parent whose Love embraced him, no matter where his human footsteps might take him, was written in him. In this revelation he saw that he must express this aspect of the Creator — the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim* — as Abraham had done.

In this fourth period of unfoldment of the divine nature, Jacob also discovered his spiritual nobility as the child of God, the Son of the Great King, possessing a divine heritage. In the words of Christ Jesus, "All things that the Father hath are mine" (John 16:15). In this discovery Jacob saw that he must express the qualities of divine Sonship, as Isaac had done.

In this fourth period of divine unfoldment, the descent of the Holy Ghost, the divine energy of Spirit, was so dynamic it transformed his whole body of consciousness. This divine power, or force, embraced his human life in the divinity of spiritual life — in the human and divine coincidence — and bestowed upon him his new name, Israel — a prince ruling as God commands. He felt and responded to the demands of the Covenant God made with Abraham: "Walk before me and be thou perfect." Or, in the words of the Apostle Paul: "Walk in the Spirit [live your whole life in the Spirit], and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh [you will not satisfy the desires of your lower nature]." (See Gen.17:1; Gal.5:16, JBP, NEB.)

The Peniel demand upon Jacob was that he *be* the exemplification of the holy relationship of God with man. That he not only ex-

press the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, God, but that he also walk with one hand in God's and the other in humanity's, thus expressing the nature of the Son of God. In this way he would show forth in his human experience the power of the Spirit of God in man to transform and transfigure the human with the divine.

Peniel became to Jacob-Israel the keystone of the arch of the structure of his life. This metaphorical keystone crowned his building, his whole life. The success of our divine adventure depends on this keystone. In it is a cohesive force or law — the law of the human and divine coincidence which bonds our humanhood with Divinity and holds us firmly in our heavenly relationship with God, even while supporting our ministry on earth.

As we go forth from our Peniel — from our struggle with and victory over trials and tribulations through which we are forced to give up a mortal, personal view of ourselves — the light of Peniel shines on us. And we gain new spiritual views, not only of ourselves, but also of everyone and everything in the world. And in the words of the Apostle Paul, who had his own Peniel experience on the Damascus Road when the heavenly light shined on him, we discover a whole new world and find in truth that all things are become new. (See Acts 9:1-18; II Cor.5:17, NEB, JPB.)

At Peniel the Fourth Day, or fourth period of the unfoldment of the Covenant relationship with God, came to its communion in Jacob's consciousness. At Peniel he reached the zenith of his divine adventure

And the evening and the morning
were the fourth day.
(Gen.1:19.)

At Peniel the Covenant of Godlikeness, God's holy Covenant with man, was written into the very fiber of Jacob's whole body of consciousness. This Covenant became to him a Covenant of Blessing — the Covenant of the blessed Godlikeness of man. So vital did this period of unfoldment become to Jacob-Israel, so necessary to his own spiritual progress, that, many years later, the last act in the drama of his human experience was to invoke the Covenant blessing on his twelve sons. But in these blessings he warned them of the stubborn carnal nature of a mortal which must be overcome.

He unmasked the specific sin in each one of them which, if not overcome, would hinder the unfoldment of the divine nature and shut them out from the blessed dominion which the Covenant of Godlikeness bestows on the faithful. (See Gen.49:1-28.)

Chapter XL

JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

THE FIFTH PERIOD

As He Passed Over Peniel
the Sun Rose Upon Him.
(Gen.32:31.)

A New Day Dawns

The experiences Jacob encountered in his divine adventure are waymarks in his spiritual unfoldment, in his *step upon step* on “the ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached to heaven” — the ladder seen in his vision at Bethel, where the way was revealed in which he would reach the summit of his divine adventure and gain the dominion of the New Covenant. On this ladder Jacob had seen “the angels of God ascending and descending.” Above the ladder he had seen “the Lord,” who identified Himself as “the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac.” (See pp. 426-427; Gen.28:12,13.)

At Peniel Jacob reached the top of the ladder of heaven. He was accompanied all the way by the *ascending angels* of God's presence. And he saw God *face to face*, in fulfillment of the angelic vision at Bethel.

As Jacob “passed over Peniel” he metaphorically began the descent of the ladder, the *descending angels* accompanying him. This descent was not a coming down in the sense of losing spiritual altitude. With the angels of God's presence he descended the ladder to fulfill his divine mission — to bring some understanding of his heavenly experience to earth. He came down, so to speak, to express to mankind the love God had revealed to him — to embrace the human with the divine, to show in his earthly experience the power of the Spirit of God to transform the human with the divine. He came down the ladder of heaven to show us in his own life how to put off the old man, the mortal nature, with its deeds,

and to win and wear our new name — *a prince or princess ruling as God commands.*

In a word, God caused Jacob-Israel to show us in his own experience not only how to climb the ladder of life which reaches heaven, where we see God face to face, but also, in the radiance of this revelation, to show us how to descend the ladder — how to maintain a perfect balance between the ups and downs of our human experience, thus making the revelation of Peniel practical in our earthly experience.

As Jacob-Israel “passed over Peniel” a new Day dawned in his divine adventure. The momentum of the fifth period of unfoldment began to stir within him. A whole new approach to life began to unfold in his consciousness. “The fowl of the air” — typical of spiritual ideas soaring “above the earth in the open firmament of heaven,” and “great whales” — typical of mighty ideas moving effortlessly in the currents of spiritual thought, which the waters, or elements of divine Mind, “brought forth abundantly” — these “moving creatures,” described in the Fifth Day, or fifth period of unfoldment of the New Covenant, figuratively point to the fact that Jacob had begun to be *moved* by higher ideals and by thoughts of divine power — qualities of his new name and divine nature. (See Gen.1:20-23; pp. 61-67.)

The mighty movement of the elements of divine Mind, symbolized by the great moving creatures which the waters brought forth, was impelling him forward, at first slowly, then more swiftly and surely. But now we note that he moved “haltingly,” for the “hollow of Jacob’s thigh was out of joint,” because the sinew of his thigh shrank when he “wrestled” with the angelic visitant at Peniel. (See Gen.32:25,30,31.)

The statement that Jacob *halted* as he passed over Peniel has both a physical and a metaphysical connotation. Jacob went *haltingly* in his demonstration of the power of his new name *Israel* — *one who triumphs with God.* Literally, Jacob was staggered by the magnitude of the revelation which had come to him at Peniel and of its universal application. *Physically*, his lameness was a constant reminder of the conditions of the Covenant: “Walk before me and be thou perfect.” *Metaphysically*, it was a reminder that he must never attempt to walk in mortal self-determination, in the arrogance of a selfhood apart from God. Jacob could walk

only as he leaned on God, on the supremacy of Spirit, and walking thus, he could walk triumphantly everywhere.

In his spiritual victory over a mortal, carnal sense of himself, Jacob learned a great truth which has since become a proverb, namely: He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city. (See Prov.16:32.) He learned that *he who would have dominion over all the earth must first have dominion over himself*, and from this focal point of self-control, his dominion would expand to encompass his entire sphere of action.

Spiritual observation reveals that Jacob's journeying (like our own) seemed to fluctuate between the dominion of the divine nature, revealed in the New Covenant and indicated in the name *Israel*, and the limitations of a material concept of existence, portrayed in the Old Covenant and indicated in the name *Jacob*. Having divinely royal power is one thing. Exercising it is another, as Jacob learned, and as each one of us must learn. Our divine nature never changes, but we demonstrate its dominion and exercise its spiritual authority in our human affairs in varying degrees — in exact proportion to our *expression* of the divine nature.

And so it was with *the prince who had power with God and with men*, who had wrestled with and prevailed over a gross material concept of himself, who discovered his divine nature and won his new name. He went forth from Peniel to demonstrate — now fast, now slow, now confidently, now hesitantly — the power and dominion of *Israel* in his human, or *Jacob*, experiences.

Jacob did not proclaim his new name *Israel* as he went forth from Peniel. Instead, he sought *to be Israel!* To those who knew him, he was still Jacob. But it was obvious to all that a new dimension had been added to his character — divine authority! He was ready for the first test of his Peniel unfoldment, the test that would prove to him and to us the power of his new name, his divine nature — *the dominion of Israel in Jacob!* The light which rose upon him at Peniel — the radiance and glory of his divine nature — was upon him as he went forth to meet his brother.

The Brothers Meet

And Jacob lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold, Esau came, and with him four hundred men.

And he divided the children unto Leah, and unto Rachel, and unto the handmaids.

And he put the handmaids and their children foremost, and Leah and her children after, and Rachel and Joseph hindermost.

And he passed over before them, and bowed himself to the ground seven times, until he came near his brother.— Gen.33:1-3.

With the vision of Peniel upon him, Jacob-Israel ordered his household intelligently and lovingly. Trusting God completely, he did not lift a finger humanly to assert physical dominion over his brother, nor did he attempt to outwit Esau. He was through with mortal, material ways and means of accomplishing any purpose. God's way was the only one for him, and he walked unerringly in it. He went forward alone and gave Esau the obeisance due a ruler, which Esau had become in Edom in the land of Seir. Kneeling before his brother, Jacob apparently was waiting for Esau to make the first move. But in reality Jacob was waiting for God to reveal the way in which he must walk.

This was a tense moment. The two brothers had parted as enemies. Esau had sworn to kill Jacob when next he saw him. Also, Esau apparently had all the advantages, for he was armed and accompanied by a large force of armed men, while Jacob was accompanied only by his family and his household servants and shepherds. But were these really all that accompanied Jacob? No! God's host of angels — the army of heaven — accompanied him on his way. *This unseen company held the balance of power.* Jacob-Israel had with him an innumerable company of God's angels, or thoughts of God's presence, and *these* won the battle between the brothers before it was fought, simply by supplanting warlike and fearful thoughts with thoughts of love. We read of the immediate effect of this holy action:

And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept.—
Gen.33:4.

Jacob did not have to tell Esau his new name. The prince who had power with God had power also with men. Esau felt this divine power and was moved by the love, tenderness, and humility which Jacob felt and expressed. Esau seemed not to remember that this

was the brother he had threatened to kill. But was this the brother Esau had known twenty years before? No! The *old man* had been put off and the *new man*, God's man, had been put on. Esau saw this new man and responded to the divine nature which Jacob expressed. Or rather, Jacob's new understanding of the all-inclusiveness of the divine nature reached out and enfolded his brother. They were one!

Esau then turned to the great company with Jacob, and Jacob brought them forward and presented them to Esau. The order in which Jacob had placed his wives and children and the order in which he presented them to his brother showed Esau plainly that Rachel and Joseph were first in his heart:

Then the handmaidens came near, they and their children, and they bowed themselves.

And Leah also with her children came near, and bowed themselves: and after came Joseph near and Rachel, and they bowed themselves.— Gen.33:6,7.

Esau then questioned Jacob concerning the drove of cattle, sheep, goats, and camels which he had met on the way, and Jacob replied:

These are to find grace in the sight of my lord.

And Esau said, I have enough my brother; keep that thou hast unto thyself— Gen.33:8,9.

“I have enough my brother.” Esau had found his dominion and his substance. Though his was a material kingdom, he had enough — all he wanted. There was no envy in him. But Jacob was insistent that Esau accept his gift:

I have Seen Thy Face As Though
I Had Seen The Face of God

And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

Take, I pray thee, my blessing that I have brought to thee; because God hath dealt graciously with me,

and because I have enough. And he urged him, and he took it.— Gen.33:10,11.

“I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.” Jacob had seen God face to face, and he saw his brother’s face in the same mirror of spiritual reality. *He saw Esau as twin to Israel.* He saw all things in the holy light of Peniel, in the radiance of the divine nature. He saw all being as one — one all-inclusive whole, at one with, in accord with, the Creator. He saw all things as they really are, as God made them and as God sees them. And this spiritual, scientific view acted as a law of perfect and harmonious adjustment in his human affairs. And so there was nothing but peace between the brothers — their reconciliation was permanent.

Esau asked Jacob to accompany him to Seir and urged that they begin their journey immediately, with Esau leading the way. Although Jacob had humbled himself before his brother, his clear thinking commanded the situation. Even as he could not go in the way of human badness with Laban, so he could not go in the way of human goodness with Esau. Jacob had made his peace with each of them. But *his* way was the way of *divine* goodness. He could walk in no other, even though that way might seem strange to others. Through his new name Israel — *God commands* — God had written His law in Jacob-Israel, and Jacob had no choice but to follow God’s plan.

Josephus writes that Esau desired to take Jacob to Hebron to see their father Isaac. Had Jacob’s journey been merely the return of a son who had been away from home for twenty years, it would have been natural for him to accompany his brother to see their father. But Jacob’s journeying was a spiritual journey, and he must reach Hebron — the city typical of Abraham’s Covenant with God — in the way of God’s appointing. There were other footsteps of spiritual unfoldment and establishment which he must take, and he must take them *step upon step* at God’s direction, in accordance with the vision which had come to him at Bethel.

Jacob excused himself from accompanying Esau on the plea that his cattle were with young and his children would not be able to endure the journey. Esau offered to leave some of his men with Jacob to help him. However, Jacob wisely declined human over-

sight of his spiritual footsteps, knowing that he must find his way alone with God. In declining Esau's offer, he said:

Let me find grace in the sight of my lord.—
Gen.33:15.

Jacob's words to Esau, uttered at their parting, might well have meant: "Please try to understand that I do not mean to appear ungracious in not going with you in the way you have planned, but I must go in the way of God's appointing." Jacob's new name Israel — *God commands* — crowned the meeting between the brothers with love. The divine nature triumphed. In the presence of love, there was no clash of human wills. Without dissension, each went his own way.

So Esau returned that day on his way unto Seir.
And Jacob journeyed to Succoth.— Gen.33:16,17.

In this glorious fifth period of his divine adventure, the prince who had power with God and with men proved that Israel had gained the dominion over Jacob, that the divine nature had triumphed over a mortal nature, and that Jacob-Israel exercised spiritual authority on earth.

As Jacob went forth from his meeting with Esau, impelled by the irresistible movement of the fifth period of his spiritual unfoldment, his thoughts began to expand, to comprehend in some measure, the magnitude of his divine adventure. Like the magnificent moving creatures that have life, described in the Fifth Day in Genesis — typified by great whales of the sea and the winged fowl of the air, unrestricted in their spheres of action — Jacob's thoughts began to move, to progress out of former limits. Not only had he seen God face to face at Peniel. He had also seen his brother's face in the light of his relationship with God. His Peniel experience had established in him two great laws, voiced later by Moses and Christ Jesus as "the two great commandments in the law" (Deut.6:5; Lev.19:18; Matt.22:36-40):

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,
and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

With divine authority the Master Christian declared:

There is none other commandment greater than these.— Mark.12:31.

Even before these commandments were written on tables of stone they were written “in fleshy tables of [Jacob’s] heart, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the Living God” (II Cor.3:3).

Love for God and love for man! These laws, embodied in the momentum of this great period of unfoldment, became to Jacob the very law of life itself and bore him safely and triumphantly to the consummation of his divine adventure. No longer did he fear an outward foe. The dominion of Love was within him.

And so the Fifth Day of Jacob’s divine adventure was gloriously fulfilled. For in this fifth period of spiritual unfoldment he discovered that his Covenant with God was a Covenant of Love which included a Covenant of peace with his brother, and by extension, a Covenant of peace with all mankind.

And God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:21.

And the evening and the morning
were the fifth day.
(Gen.1:23.)

In the degree that we are governed by the two great Commandments in the law — love for God and love for man — our divine Israel-nature will over-rule our human Jacob-nature. And our Israel-nature will have power with God and with men — power to commune with God face to face, power to prevail over everything unlike God in ourselves and on earth, power to be majestic, mighty, gracious, and loving in all our dealings with mankind. We may progress quickly or slowly in this holy way. But in the exact proportion to our expression of the divine nature, we will wear the metaphorical crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek — we will have priestly power as a spiritual leader and shaper of ideals, and princely power to command our own experiences. The Israel-nature in each one of us has the divinely royal dominion of heaven on earth — dominion which enables us to rise into the unrestricted atmosphere of the spiritual dimension, to express the freedom of movement typical of the magnificent moving creatures of the fifth

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period of unfoldment, to move out of former limits, and to demonstrate the infinitude of our divine being.

As we go forth in our divine adventure, let us pray for the humility and love that impel us to say silently to each one we meet and to each one on whom our thoughts rest:

I have seen thy face as though
I had seen the face of God and
thou wast pleased with me.
(Gen.33:10.)

Chapter XLI

JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

THE SIXTH PERIOD

The House of Jacob

As Jacob-Israel journeyed from his meeting with Esau, with the spiritual radiance of Peniel still upon him, the sixth period of his divine adventure began to unfold. The Spirit of God which had moved upon the waters, or elements of his consciousness, at Peniel had revolutionized his concept of himself, of his family, of everything in his world. He had figuratively put on the new garment of his divine nature. The meaning of his divine mission came alive in him. And with confidence he went forward into a period of establishment.

The sixth period of unfoldment of the New Covenant unfolds in two distinct patterns. Startling events separate the beginning and the end of this period. It is of utmost importance that we see how Jacob-Israel masters these events and continues on his spiritual journeying.

Succoth

But now let's accompany him as he goes forth from his meeting with his brother.

And Jacob journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle: therefore the name of the place is called Succoth.— Gen.33:17.

Succoth is described as a magnificent highland site east of the Jordan River, not far from the ford Jabbok and Peniel. Certainly this period in Jacob's life was a high point in his spiritual unfoldment, as he went out to demonstrate the dominion of his divine nature Israel. For the first time in twenty years he was within

sight of the land that was to be his inheritance and that of his seed. But he was not yet ready to enter that land. He needed to pause in his spiritual journeying that the new ideas which had been born to his consciousness might mature in him. Further, he needed to pause that his family might rest, that his young children might grow up, and that the young of the flock might be strengthened. Still further, he needed to pause because his individual journeying had become also the journeying of *the House of Jacob*. Before going into his promised land to possess it, he must first establish his house. And so at Succoth, meaning booths, he built houses for his large family and attendants and made booths or huts for his cattle, thus establishing a more permanent sense of home than the tents he had used as temporary shelter during his journey from Haran.

At Succoth Jacob began the business of building and establishing *the House of Jacob* — in centuries to come to be known as *the House of Israel*. The vision which had come to him at Bethel, typical of the House of God, or consciousness of the divine completeness, was revived in Jacob's thought. And in the metaphor of his spiritual journeying, he sought to build his house to honor the God of Bethel.

At Succoth Jacob gathered together his spiritual forces — the spiritual ideas which had been revealed to him in the first five periods of spiritual unfoldment. The gathering together of his cattle and other domestic animals into safe dwelling places and his care for the young of each species of his flock is typical of the activity of the living creatures of the sixth period of unfoldment in Genesis — the cattle, the creeping things, and the beast of the earth — and their place in the unfolding of the divine plan. Recall that in the beginning of the Sixth Day in Genesis God said:

Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.

... And God saw that it was good.— Gen.1:24,25.

How long Jacob remained at Succoth we do not know. There is no Biblical record of his sojourn in this place except for the building of houses for his family and servants and booths for his cattle. However, having established a permanent type of dwelling in Succoth we may assume that his stay there was an extended

one. The size of his retinue and the number of houses needed to shelter them indicates that Succoth was a sizeable settlement.

During his stay at Succoth Jacob's eleven sons grew to be young men. His flocks and herds increased greatly. He who had left his father's house with no possessions, was returning to his homeland with great abundance of good. This material evidence of good, however, was very small compared with the divine good which enriched his consciousness. Jacob's new name Israel was still new to him. And in the metaphor of his journeying, his stay in Succoth was a period in which he learned to wear his new name and to feel the power of his divine nature, a period in which the ideas that unfolded at Peniel began to mature in his consciousness.

When Jacob went forth from Succoth with his large retinue, his destination was Bethel, typical of the House of God. Recall that the influence which had literally propelled Jacob out of Haran had been the appearing of the God of Bethel in the night vision, demanding that he arise and return to the land of his kindred (Gen.31:13). Bethel was the place of his first communion with God, the place where his divine adventure had begun. Bethel was also the place where the sixth period of his divine adventure would come to its communion in his consciousness — where the unfolding of his individual spiritual journeying would be fulfilled.

The Spiritual Journeying Of the House of Jacob Begins

But when Jacob left Succoth he did not go to Bethel. Instead of turning south when he entered the land of Canaan and going straight to his destination, he journeyed west. And the spiritual unfolding of the sixth period in his journeying seemed to stop momentarily. But this is not really so. What appear to be retrograde steps for Jacob are actually the first footsteps in the unfolding drama of the House of Jacob. From this time forward, Jacob's unfolding and that of his sons coincide, as had the unfolding of Abraham and Isaac and of Isaac and Jacob.

Shechem

And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem,
which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from

Padan-aram; and pitched his tents before the city.— Gen.33:18.

To understand Jacob's deviation from the course set for him by wisdom, it must be remembered that the chronology of events in his life is now typical also of the journeying of his sons, and not his alone. At this time the unfolding panorama of Jacob's adventure must be viewed as the footsteps of the House of Jacob and not the House of Israel.

As we view the events now appearing on the horizon, it is evident that Jacob was not thinking of himself as *Israel*, nor did *Israel* command his house. We might think this strange after his spiritual transformation at Peniel. But how often have we been exalted by a spiritual experience that should have completely transformed our lives; yet we have gone out from that experience into the world and immediately have begun to act like mortals, instead of going forth to express the new concept of ourselves and the spiritual authority which our divine nature commands. So it was with Jacob.

Nothing is to be gained by judging Jacob's actions as we might judge those of an ordinary mortal. Had Jacob been a prodigal son going home after a long exile, he would have hastened to Hebron to see his father Isaac and his beloved mother Rebekah. But in Jacob's life is written the allegory of the footsteps of mortal man in his step upon step of spiritual ascendancy in the understanding and demonstration of his divine nature. Jacob's experiences and those of his sons are typical of the experiences of all mortals, depicting the intense struggles, or wrestlings, of humanity in its attempt to rise against tremendous odds above the dust, above the earthward gravitation of materialism, sensualism, mesmerism, and other isms of the carnal mind.

What was the attraction which drew Jacob and his house to Shechem? It may have been that Jacob wanted to establish a name for himself in Shechem as a first step in claiming the land of Canaan as his inheritance. It also may have been that his sons wanted to go there to see the great city and to participate in its sensuous pleasures. In the second millennium B.C. Shechem was one of the chief cities of Canaan. It was strategically situated at the juncture of the main commercial highways in that part of the world. Further, Shechem is located on the water-summit of the land. Streams

issuing from the numerous springs there flow down the slopes of the valley, spreading verdure and fertility in every direction. The whole valley was filled with gardens and orchards of all kinds of fruits, watered by fountains which burst forth in various parts and flowed in refreshing streams. (See *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary*.)

Shechem must have looked like a Garden of Eden to Jacob and his family. Certainly they responded to the siren call of materialism within the city. Whatever might have been the apparent attraction which drew them there, the subtle reason for going to Shechem instead of to Bethel was that Jacob had not yet discerned the spiritual nature of his inheritance. At Bethel, the beginning of Jacob's spiritual journeying, God had revealed to him the spiritual nature of the universe and his dominion therein. Jacob could not possess this land materially. The promise was that wherever he was he had spiritual authority, for God was with him. But the fulfillment of this promise depended on his understanding of the basic truth that because God, Spirit, possessed the land, it was spiritual.

The beginning of one's dominion in any land is to gain the spiritual concept thereof. God had promised Abraham possession of all the land he saw in its spiritual nature. Further, God had commanded Abraham to arise and walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it, claiming it spiritually. This Abraham did. (See pp. 251-252; Gen.13:14,15,17.)

In God's promise to Jacob at Bethel concerning his possession of the land may be heard an echo of God's promise to Abraham. In substance, God said: "You cannot possess this land materially; only what you understand of the spiritual nature of the universe is yours. Arise and walk through the land with this holy concept of it in mind; explore the length, breadth, depth, and height of this holiness, or spiritual wholeness, and the land will be to you a holy land and a possession forever." Jacob seemed to have forgotten this. Further, Jacob had not apparently learned that in any divine adventure, absolute obedience to divine directions is essential. But remember: Jacob's divine adventure is now typical also of the spiritual journeying of his sons, *the House of Jacob*. And it would appear that Jacob was letting his sons lead him instead of commanding the experiences of his house.

Have we not seen in our own time this mistaken concept of giving children too much freedom before they have matured suffi-

ciently in wisdom and experience to direct their own footsteps aright? While in Shechem, Jacob's actions seem to be those of a man who does not know he has a Covenant with God. But his footsteps are typical of the first faltering steps in the spiritual journeying of *the House of Jacob*.

We have heard of Shechem before. Recall that Shechem, in the plain of Moreh, was the place of Abraham's first encampment after coming into the land of Canaan (Gen.12:6,7). As previously stated, Shechem (Sichem) means shoulder-burden and Moreh means soothsayer. Figuratively, Abraham had passed quickly through the mental states of feeling that he was carrying a burden in his great spiritual adventure, and he had not yielded to the tempting suggestion that he use soothsaying or occultism — the power of the carnal mind, or human will power, used by the so-called wise men of his day — to accomplish his divine purpose. Seeing in Shechem a city in which the Canaanites and their pagan practices were firmly established, Abraham did not spread his tent there. There was nothing in this spiritually minded man to respond to the sensuous attraction of Shechem. Although he did not tarry in this place, either mentally or physically, he did built an altar there. At Shechem Abraham put down his first stake in the land of Canaan, claiming it in the name of his God, the Creator of the universe. He made no attempt to claim the land physically. His altar said mutely: *This land belongs to God, to Spirit!* He then moved swiftly on, seeking "a city which hath foundations" — a city in which he could worship his God without interference from the godless materialism and paganism of the land.

Now Jacob has come to Shechem, and the Canaanites, with their sensuous practices, are still in the land. Shechem — a city of sensuality and lust, a city of soothsaying and enchantments, a city of physical beauty and material wealth — exerted a hypnotic influence on Jacob and his house. Unlike Abraham, Jacob did not pass quickly through this city, or state of mind. He did not throw off the mental atmosphere of the land. *Instead, he and his family settled there and began to think and act like the Shechemites.*

When Jacob went forth from Peniel to meet Esau, who had come with four hundred armed men, he went forth humbly as Israel, a prince prevailing with God. He ordered his house aright and went before them with the power of the Holy Spirit upon him. And he triumphed! But when he went to Shechem, instead of go-

ing forth humbly as the prince who had power with God and with men, he went forth proudly with banners flying, like an oriental prince, to Shalem, a city of Shechem. With his large retinue — his four wives, his many children, his maid servants and men servants, his shepherds, his great flocks and herds — “Jacob pitched his tents before the city.” This phrase, in the Hebrew idiom, means that “Jacob laid seige to the city,” or that “Jacob showed his strength to the city of Shechem.” In so doing the prince of God came face to face with the prince of Hamor in an encounter which threatened to discredit Jacob’s whole mission.

What was Jacob’s real strength? It was the spiritual power of his divine nature Isra-el — a prince reigning with God. Jacob’s strength was the power which comes to man when he lets God command his thoughts and acts. But was this the strength Jacob showed to Shechem? No! He yielded to the mesmeric suggestion that he take possession of the land which God had promised him for an inheritance by a show of great temporal power and by a display of material possessions. In a sense, when Jacob pitched his tents before the city of Shalem, he literally walked into the second chapter of Genesis and laid seige to the garden of Eden. It is plain that he planned to stay in this garden spot, for we read:

And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem’s father, for an hundred pieces of money.— Gen.33:19.

Hamor, a Hivite, was prince of the land in which Shechem is situated. The Hivites, supposed to be descendants of Noah through Canaan, the son of Ham, had occupied this area of Canaan for many centuries and were firmly established there. That Jacob intended dwelling in this land is evidenced in his purchase of a parcel of ground — how large we do not know, but large enough to spread his great tents and to pasture his vast herds.

Jacob’s Well

At Shechem Jacob dug a deep well. The well, which is about eight or nine feet in diameter and eighty-five to one hundred feet in depth, has been in constant use, even to this day. Its water is

still sweet and pure. It was at this well that Jesus asked the Samaritan woman for a drink. Here the Master gave to her and to the world the mighty lesson of the living water of life (John 4:5-14).

Jacob's Altar

After commanding the attention of the Shechemites by spreading his great tents before the city, buying the parcel of ground where he had pitched his tents, and digging a deep well, Jacob sought to establish himself by making an outward show of piety:

And he erected there an altar, and called it Elohe-Israel.— Gen.33:20.

Following Abraham's example, Jacob put down his first stake in the land of Canaan at Shechem and thereby took title to the land. But unlike Abraham, Jacob did not erect his altar to God. Instead of claiming the land in the name of *Elohim*, the triune divine Principle of the universe, he claimed it in the name of *El-elohe-Israel*, thus declaring that *El*, the God who knows all, is the mighty God of Isra-el, alone!

There was no excuse for Jacob to carve his new name on a stone, pillar, or altar. He knew better than to take the glorious holy name, the *I AM*, the divine nature of the Infinite — the plural of majesty — to himself alone. In erecting this altar Jacob was, in a sense, glorifying himself and separating himself from the power of the threefold divine nature. The Trinity cannot be fragmented in our lives. When we say *I* or *I am*, thus identifying ourselves with the *Great I AM*, the full power of the Trinity speaks as the very *I of our being*. If we attempt to say *I*, *I am*, *I will*, without some realization that the Father is speaking through the Holy Ghost as the Son, we are pitifully incomplete and impotent.

By boldly proclaiming that God is *the God of Israel*, the prince of God unwisely challenged the prince of Hamor. The inscription on Jacob's altar was an affront to the Shechemites. They rightly interpreted its message: Jacob was declaring that his God was the only God, thus challenging the power and authority of the Shechemites' gods. Great wisdom, humility, and spiritual strength are needed to enable one to challenge gross materialism,

paganism, and sensualism and to come out of the encounter unscathed.

If Jacob had come to Shechem as both priest and king, emulating the royal priesthood of Melchizedek, he would have exercised spiritual authority in that land. Further, he would have been spiritually alert to detect the fact that Shechem was not ready for Israel. He would have heard the inner voice of wisdom — wisdom voiced by the Master Christian centuries later to his disciples in all ages:

Into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

And when ye come into an house, salute it.

And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it not be worthy, let your peace return to you.

And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.— Matt.10:11-14.

Jacob had begun too soon to spread his tent — to show his strength. And the strength he displayed at Shechem was not spiritual strength. Hence it could be challenged. And challenged it was! In Shechem Jacob confronted an enemy as old as the serpent in the garden of Eden. This enemy — the carnal mind with its sensuality and lust — sought to overthrow Jacob's dominion.

Again, remember that what is now appearing as Jacob's unfoldment is also the beginning of the unfoldment of the House of Jacob. And the scenes we are now approaching are dominated by the action of a daughter and two of his sons. While these three were the instruments through which the tempter sought to overthrow Jacob and discredit his divine mission, there is no evidence that his other sons attempted to exercise any spiritual influence on their brothers. It would appear that these children had been allowed to wander afield in a mistaken sense of freedom. Either they had not felt or had not responded to parental discipline. They lacked spiritual strength, hence they were vulnerable, impressionable, and subject to outside influences. But before judging them harshly, remember that in the metaphor of their journeying, we see the journeying of mankind in their passage from a material sense of existence to the spiritual understanding of their Covenant

relationship with God, good. However, the events that are now before us should serve as a warning to parents who neglect the spiritual education of their children.

Let us read from the Bible the account of the unholy experience which forced Jacob to rise again to the spiritual heights of Peniel, to command the experiences of his house, and to demonstrate the power of his divine nature — to *be* Israel. Let us see how his daughter Dinah and two of his sons, Simeon and Levi — three of Leah's children — were caught in the snare of sensuality, animality, intrigue, and cruel vengeance.

Dinah and the Prince of Shechem

Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bare unto Jacob, went out to see the daughters of the land.— Gen.34:1.

It seems strange that Dinah, a young girl, should have gone out unaccompanied in a strange land. Either Leah was lax in her supervision of her daughter, or Dinah was a headstrong young woman who rebelled against parental authority.

And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her, and lay with her, and defiled her.—Gen.34:2.

In Jacob's spiritual journeying Shechem and Hamor appear as the unholy influence of the Old Covenant, the sensuous, subtle guile of occultism, seeking to ensnare Jacob and his house through the wiles of sensuality and the cunning cleverness of the occult mind.

Shechem had taken Dinah to his house and kept her there, and we read:

And his soul clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel.

And Shechem spake unto his father Hamor, saying, Get me this damsel to wife.— Gen.34:3,4.

It is interesting, even thought provoking, to note that Shechem's sensuous nature had sought to defile "Dinah the

daughter of Leah" (Gen.34:1), but his better nature loved "Dinah the daughter of Jacob" (Gen.34:3), and desired her as his wife.

Hamor saw in Shechem's love for Dinah an opportunity of gain for himself. With cunning craftiness he laid his plot, and, like some sinister spider, he wove a web in which he hoped to capture Jacob and all that he possessed. With oriental charm, Hamor approached Jacob "to commune with him" (Gen.34:6). The Hebrew word translated commune means to arrange, to subdue. The latter meaning is preferred in this instance in the light of further happenings. Shechem himself seemed not to be a part of Hamor's intrigue, but his sensuous nature made him an accessory after the fact.

Jacob made no reply to Hamor's plea that Dinah be given in marriage to Shechem. He had already learned that Shechem had defiled his daughter, but instead of acting decisively as a father, he waited until his sons were come out of the field where they tended the cattle. The record states that "Jacob held his peace until they were come" (Gen.34:5). Strange!

Why did not Jacob immediately command the situation? Why did he not act with the authority of the prince of God who had power with God and with men? Why did he seek the immature judgment of his sons? Could it have been that Jacob was testing his sons' spiritual understanding? Could it be that he hoped to see them triumph in this very difficult situation through divine wisdom and judgment? We do not know. What is evident is that the sons of Jacob did not express the divine nature. They did not even express human intelligence. Neither they nor Jacob rose to the stature and dominion of Israel. Their anger dominated the scene.

And the sons of Jacob came out of the field when they heard it: and the men were grieved, and they were very wroth, because he [Shechem] had wrought folly [immorality] in Israel in lying with Jacob's daughter, which thing ought not to be done.—

Gen.34:7.

Their indignation was just. Hebrew women were given more freedom than other women of the Orient. Nevertheless, their virtue was cherished and hotly defended. It was natural that Dinah's brothers were grieved and very wroth, because Shechem had

brought shame upon their house. The force of their indignation was not lost on Hamor. He hastened to suggest a union between Jacob and himself, sealed by a marriage between Jacob's daughter and his son (Gen.34:8). And he subtly suggested a closer relationship between Jacob's whole family and the land.

Hamor and the Shechemites Plan The Amalgamation of the House of Jacob

Make ye marriages [ties of affinity] with us, and give your daughters unto us, and take our daughters unto you.— Gen.34:9.

Hamor implied that this union would be a kind of open sesame to the family of Jacob in the land of Shechem:

And ye shall dwell with us: and the land shall be before you; and trade ye therein, and get you possessions therein.— Gen.34:10.

Shechem, sensing his father's plan, sought to bring the question back to himself and Dinah:

And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

Ask me never so much dowry and gift, and I will give according as ye shall say unto me: but give me the damsel to wife.— Gen.34:11,12.

We read that Shechem was more honorable than all the house of his father (Gen.34:19). He quite probably saw in Dinah a loveliness and graciousness not found in the women of his land, and he greatly desired her. He was willing to do anything and to give everything he had that he might have her as his wife. Hamor knew this and used the knowledge for his own selfish purposes.

Israel did not take possession of the interview with Hamor. And *Jacob, the old man*, did not detect the subtle intent of the serpent to bind him and his house to the Old Covenant through marriages and alliances with the descendants of Ham and Canaan. He appeared not to be aware that the whole affair between Dinah and Shechem was an attempt of the carnal mind to unite the Old Cove-

nant with the New in a counterfeit of the spiritual Marriage Covenant. Jacob seemed mesmerized by a kind of inertia. He permitted two of his sons — immature, hot headed, and grossly material in their thinking — to handle this explosive situation, when wisdom and spiritual maturity were so sorely needed.

Simeon and Levi Plan the Utter Destruction of the Shechemites

There is no indication that Simeon and Levi, Dinah's full brothers, sensed Hamor's plan to swallow up the house of Jacob. While apparently intent on avenging their sister's honor, they cruelly planned action as unholy as that planned by Hamor:

They answered Hamor and Shechem deceitfully.—
Gen.34:13.

Matching subtlety with subtlety, deceit with deceit, craftiness with craftiness, Simeon and Levi pretended that they could not "amalgamate with them" (*Septuagint*) — could not give their sister in marriage to Shechem, nor could they give other daughters of their household in marriage to the men of Shechem because the Shechemites were not circumcised (Gen.34:13-17). The Old Covenant of circumcision, which counterfeits the Covenant of Godlikeness, posed as the defender of spiritual womanhood against the Old Covenant of sensuality, which openly opposes the Covenant of Godlikeness! It is little wonder that a casual perusal of this story confuses rather than enlightens the reader.

Simeon and Levi, defenders of the covenant of circumcision, had little if any concept of spiritual goodness. Under the guise of defending their sister's honor and virtue, they planned utter destruction of the Shechemites. But where were Hamor and Shechem at this time? What were they doing while Simeon and Levi plotted against them? They were plotting against Jacob and his whole house.

And Hamor and Shechem his son came unto the
gate of their city, saying,

These men are peaceable with us; therefore let
them dwell in the land, and trade therein, for the land,

behold, it is large enough for them; let us take their daughters to us for wives, and let us give them our daughters.

Only herein will the men consent unto us for to dwell with us, to be our people, if every male among us be circumcised as they are circumcised.—

Gen.34:20-22.

“These people are peaceable.” The Hebrew word translated peaceable is *Shalem*, which means not only peace, but also complete, whole. Hamor greatly desired the peace which came from the spiritual completeness, or wholeness, indicated in Jacob’s new name Israel, which Jacob had unwisely proclaimed to the heathen Hivites upon entering their land. Hamor did not want spirituality, but he greatly desired the prosperity and well-being, which were the outcome of Jacob’s understanding of God.

It is as though Hamor said to the men of his land: “These people are whole, complete, independent, prosperous. They are peaceable and unsuspecting. Trade with them and get what they have, for you know the power of mental manipulation that will enable you to get the best of every trade in which you engage. Marry their daughters and give them your daughters — there is no surer way to subdue a people and to bring them to your way of thinking than through making marriages with them.” The house of Hamor fully intended to completely swallow up the house of Jacob. Hamor showed his hand in his final words to the men of his country:

Shall not their cattle and their substance and every beast of theirs be ours? only let us consent unto them, and they will dwell with us.— Gen.34:23.

In other words: “Let us appear to be in agreement with them and yield on this one point; for after all, by so doing, we shall put them off guard, and we shall take everything they have — their cattle, their substance, and every beast of theirs will be ours.” So all the males in Hamor’s land agreed to be circumcised.

Jacob seemed to have disappeared from the scene. He did not express the Fatherhood of God by commanding the situation. Instead, like many loving, indulgent human fathers, he gave his sons authority they had not earned. Neither did Jacob express the wisdom of the Motherhood of God. But this is the story of the sons of Jacob, Jacob’s House. And Simeon and Levi, undisciplined by

El Shaddi, the Almighty God, stooped to such inhuman action in their anger and revenge that our sensibilities recoil at the contemplation of it.

And it came to pass on the third day [after the men of Shechem had been circumcised], when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.

And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out.

The sons of Jacob came upon the slain, and spoiled the city, because they had defiled their sister.

They took their sheep, and their oxen, and their asses, and that which was in the city.

And all their wealth, and all their little ones, and their wives took they captive, and spoiled even all that was in the house.— Gen.34:25-29.

Jacob's horror, when apprised of what Simeon and Levi had done, was followed by fear for himself and for his house — not alone for his human household but for the House of Israel. As cruel as were the actions of Simeon and Levi, Jacob knew that the horrible vengeance wreaked by the representatives of occultism would be worse, and he saw the possible destruction of his whole mission.

And Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, among the Canaanites and the Perizzites, and I being few in number, they shall gather themselves together against me, and slay me; and I shall be destroyed, I and my house.— Gen.34:30.

But Simeon and Levi, arrogant and unrepentant, answered with self-justification:

Should he deal with our sister as with an harlot?— Gen.34:31.

Jacob's rebuke of his sons may seem mild, but he did not forget their heinous crime. In years to come, Jacob was merciless in condemning their cruelty, and he had no blessing for them:

Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall [they wantonly hamstrung oxen].

Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.— Gen.49:5-7.

There is every indication that Jacob had expected the city of Shechem and the area surrounding it to be the place where he would see and demonstrate the power and dominion of his divine nature, Israel. So certain was he of this that he had dedicated his altar to *El-elohe-Israel*, thus claiming the land in the name of the God of Israel, and at the same time proclaiming to one and all that his name was Israel. But Jacob seemed to have lost sight of the fact that God commands Israel. He talked like Israel, but he acted like Jacob. Hence his experiences were Jacob experiences. He expressed neither spiritual nor temporal power in Shechem. Failing to command his own house, he failed to command his experiences in that land.

When Jacob went forth with the light of Peniel shining upon him, he was Israel, and Israel commanded the meeting between him and his brother Esau. Had Jacob come to Shechem as Israel, the representative of the Trinity, had he erected his altar to *Elohim*, the triune divine Principle revealed as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob — he would have come with divine authority of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek. He would have reigned over his own house as both priest and king, commanded both the spiritual and secular experiences of his family, made his spiritual authority felt in the land. And he would have had dominion there. But the spiritual majesty of his divine nature *Israel* was not expressed.

Where Art Thou, Israel?

When Jacob was in Succoth, the sixth period of his spiritual journeying had just begun. God had called him to return to Bethel, to the place of his first communion with God, where the pattern of

his divine adventure had been revealed to him in a night vision. At Bethel the fulfillment of this vision, the revelation to his conscious thought of the divine completeness, awaited him. At Bethel the sixth period of his step upon step of spiritual ascendancy — the understanding and embodiment of the threefold divine nature indicated in the Trinity — would come to its communion in his consciousness and experience.

In the metaphor of Jacob's journeying, when he left Succoth and went to Shechem, instead of going directly to Bethel, as God had commanded him, he literally walked out of the first chapter of Genesis, typical of the unfoldment of the New Covenant, and into the second chapter, where he found himself surrounded by the conditions of the Old Covenant. The violence which erupted at Shechem leaves little doubt that the entire experience there was the outcome of the adversary's plan, superimposed upon the divine plan that Jacob had been following.

Jacob had not completed the lesson contained in the first part of the sixth period of his divine adventure. He had not guided his house spiritually. His part in the unfoldment of this period was to lead his sons into the understanding of their divine nature, to instruct them in the spiritual power and authority of Israel, so that through this divine nature in them, God would command all their experiences. Why? Because the Children of Israel were God-ordained to bring to the world the written Word of the power and presence of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob — the threefold divine nature of the Infinite. They had no choice but to fulfill that mission, no matter how they might falter on the way.

Spiritual maturity is the goal toward which every parent must lead his children. There is no record that any of Jacob's family had been touched by the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of God had not moved upon the waters, or elements of their thinking. Jacob's unfinished task was to lead them into the understanding of their Covenant with God, to teach them the meaning of his experiences at Bethel, Haran, Mizpah, Jabbok, Peniel, and Succoth, and to lead them to Bethel — into the divine consciousness typical of the House of God. But before doing this he himself must express spiritual maturity, indicated in his new name Israel, revealed to him at Peniel.

God's Covenant with Jacob, revealed at Bethel and established at Peniel, was a Covenant of spiritual blessing in which he discovered that the threefold divine nature revealed in the Trinity was his own divine nature through which the *Ego*, the *I AM*, expressed itself. The demand of this Covenant was that Jacob recognize and demonstrate the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God in his own individual experience, and that he lead his sons into the same understanding through the idea of divine Sonship. In so doing he would fulfill his mission — that of letting his life exemplify the power of the Holy Spirit, the divine power which reveals the relationship of God and man to the human consciousness and regenerates and transforms the human with the divine.

At Succoth Jacob had exemplified, in some measure, the nature of the Fatherhood of God in establishing his house and in caring for, or husbanding, the human needs of his family and his large retinue. However he did not comprehend the nature of God's Motherhood, *El Shaddi* — the tender but powerful nature of the Almighty, which, like the eagle, spreads Her wings and covers Her children with Her feathers and carries them on Her wings until they are able to use their own. Hence he had not yet grasped the compound nature of God nor the completeness of his own divine nature Israel, expressing the divine compound nature. What was the obstruction or resistance within Jacob which hid from him this divine completeness and kept him from growing to spiritual maturity?

The divine completeness had been exemplified in the experiences of Abraham and Isaac through their marriage covenants, symbolic of the spiritual Marriage Covenant — the union, or oneness, of the compound nature of *Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother. Through their marriages both Abraham and Isaac found a sense of completeness, each partner supporting the other. In this way both the masculine and feminine qualities of *Elohim* were expressed in their lives. But Jacob, with two wives and two concubines, had not found a sense of completeness.

It is not strange that neither Leah, Zilpah, nor Bilhah had brought to him a sense of fulfillment, for they were not wives of his choosing. It might seem strange that he had not found his completeness in Rachel. But this beloved wife, for whom he had permitted himself to be led into bond service to her father Laban, was

not spiritually worthy to come into the Covenant relationship with Jacob; for though he knew it not, Rachel still kept the teraphim, the gods of Laban. Rachel was idolatrous! Her father's gods bound her to the Old Covenant of materialism and paganism. Her mind was fettered by family traditions and superstitions and by mental haziness, the mist of the Old Covenant, which occult thinking produces in the minds of mortals who do not resist it. (See Gen.2:6.) Hence, she could not find her place in the New Covenant. This was Jacob's burden! He was alone in his spiritual journeying. Jacob still thought his completeness lay in Rachel. But Rachel was not like Sarah and Rebekah, who went side by side with their husbands in the unfolding of the Covenant of Godlikeness.

Jacob's human love for Rachel was so great and so sensuous that it blinded him for a time to the spiritual fact that the Covenant at Peniel was his real marriage covenant wherein and whereby God had wedded him to the compound divine nature. He had not yet learned or been willing to acknowledge that this divine nature included the qualities of both the manhood and womanhood of divine Love, and that this compound nature reflected the dominion of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim* — even the divine completeness.

In recognition of this divine union *Elohim* bestowed on Jacob his new name, *his marriage name, Israel*. In this name is embodied not only the divine completeness reflecting the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, but also the all-embracing nature of divine Love which enabled him to embrace mankind in the divine nature and to transform the human with the divine, thus exemplifying in some measure the office of both priest and king — the dominion of heaven on earth.

Because Jacob had been so convinced that his completeness lay in Rachel, he did not fully comprehend the momentous significance of Peniel. Hence, he did not yet wear his spiritual marriage name, Israel. He went haltingly in the soul-shaking revelation of his divine completeness. But he was to rise to the majesty of man expressing the fullness of God's power and presence. He was to gain the idea of his divine completeness which would give him spiritual authority over his house. God now commanded him to shake off the dust of Shechem and to arise and go up to Bethel.

Although Bethel is south of Shechem and one would ordinarily speak of going down to Bethel from Shechem, note that God com-

manded Jacob to go *up* to Bethel — to ascend to that state of consciousness in which the glorious sixth period of his divine adventure would come to its communion.

And God said unto Jacob, Arise, Go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother.— Gen.35:1.

Often it takes a crisis in our lives to force us to listen for and to follow divine directions. So it was with Jacob. He was sufficiently roused by the massacre at Shechem to break through the mental miasma which had shackled his thinking and to hear the voice of God speaking clearly and distinctly: “Go up to the understanding which marked the beginning of your spiritual journeying and dwell there — abide in the holy concept of God, of yourself, of your fellow man, of your world, and of your mission in life.” It was as though the voice of *Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother, demanded: “Take your young men to Bethel, the House of God, into the temple, or consciousness, of the Most High, and teach them the lessons I have taught you; and do it quickly. Bring them into line with the divine Principle!”

God commanded Jacob to build at Bethel an altar unto *Elohim*, not to *El-elohe-Israel*. This was a command to build within his own consciousness an altar to the triune divine Principle of the universe, who revealed to him the majesty and might of the threefold nature of the Infinite as his own divine nature. The Great *I AM* had spoken! And Jacob heard! There was instant response in him to the divine demand.

At God's Command, Israel Takes Charge of the House of Jacob.

God further demanded that Jacob take his whole house with him in his spiritual ascent up to Bethel, up to the House of God, up to the consciousness of God, good. There was to be no more wandering afield in uncharted paths. In his willingness to be obedient to the divine Mind, Jacob was immediately in command of the situation. With the spiritual authority of the *I AM*, he commanded his household and all that were with him:

Put away the strange gods that are among you,
and be clean, and change your garments.— Gen.35:2.

Not only did Jacob command his household, but “all that were with him.” Remember that now Jacob had the responsibility of the families of the men of Shechem whom Simeon and Levi had murdered. He unfalteringly accepted this responsibility.

At his command, “all the strange gods which were in their hands” were brought and laid before him” (Gen.35:4). It was at this time, according to *Josephus*, that Jacob discovered the teraphim — the household gods of Laban which Rachel had brought from her home in Haran. These images, or teraphim, were the gods of Terah, Abraham’s father, “who went after other gods” (Josh.24:2), and were so named *tera-phem* for him. Terah’s gods were kept by his son Nahor, and through him they became Laban’s household gods. These images were a relic of ancestor worship. They represented the mesmeric hold which family beliefs, traditions, and superstitions seem to have upon mortals.

The prophet Ezekiel referred to these gods when, centuries later, he warned the descendants of Jacob against the strategy of the king of Babylon, the enemy of the land of Israel. The prophet told them that this aggressor would use two methods by which to captivate them and lead them into captivity: He would come with the sword and he would come using divination, mental manipulation. Ezekiel said that the king of Babylon would make his arrows bright, but that he would consult images, teraphim, meaning that he would search out the superstitions, traditional beliefs, and family gods of the people he wished to capture, and through what he found by this method, he would lead them into captivity. (See Ezek.21:21,,RV.) These images are definitely linked to magic, soothsaying, witchcraft, and the like. In a sense, they are comparable to good luck pieces, to charms, and to so-called holy or blessed objects supposed to give the possessors some special dispensation or protection. But they are a link to idolatry, and as such they were and are condemned by God. . . . And Jacob knew this!

Although Rachel had come to know something of the God of Jacob, she clung fast to the teraphim which she had taken from her father’s house. They were to her a kind of touch-stone, an amulet to ward off danger, an image through which to pray. But

they were a link to gross idolatry and an open door to the magic, soothsaying, mental manipulation, witchcraft, and malpractice of occultism. For these images, or teraphim, were symbols, devices, figures, or tokens used in divination through which to cast a spell or incantation to bewitch or bedevil the clear thinking of mankind. These heathen devices, the images, and other idols which Jacob's people possessed — all unknown to Jacob — had acted as magnets through which Jacob's house had responded to the magnetism, materialism, and sensuality of Shechem. This unholy influence had drawn Jacob and his house out of their course and far afield from the holy way of God's directing.

No mention is made of Jacob's emotions when he discovered that his beloved Rachel had in her possession the teraphim, the gods of her father, which Laban had accused Jacob of stealing. Jacob's all-absorbing love for Rachel had blinded him to her human weaknesses. She had contributed nothing to his spiritual completeness. The fact that she cherished the teraphim indicates to us that for her there had been no spiritual journeying. She had not cast off her earth weights, hence she could not rise with her husband in the understanding of God, nor could she walk with him in the holiness of his Covenant with God.

But Jacob was not to be deterred in his spiritual journeying. A marvelous sense of divine authority had come to him, and he began immediately to exercise righteous dominion over his people. He became both father and mother to his flock. He demanded of them obedience and filial respect. He began to minister to their spiritual needs. He literally and symbolically took them by the hand. And it mattered not whether they were willing or unwilling, he led them in the way of God's appointing, in the way of his divine adventure, which was ever upward to the fulfillment of the Covenant of Godlikeness.

Jacob had reached the spiritual stature of manhood indicated in the title *Priest and King*. Through his willingness to express the authority of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, he had found his nobility as the Son of God wherein he reigned as the spiritual and royal head of his house. The majesty of the divine nature, which had been revealed to him at Peniel, had crowned him with dominion. Now he was exercising that dominion. With priestly authority he took charge of the spiritual education of his

people. He commanded them to give up, not only the strange gods — the idols and images which they had cherished — but also the beliefs and customs of the land, which were indeed strange (alien) to God. He demanded that they “be clean and change their garments.” He insisted upon cleansing both mind and body. The people of his house must be clothed with holy thoughts and with the robes of righteousness.

Jacob further demanded that his people give him “all the earrings which were in their ears” (Gen.35:4). The earrings of the Canaanites were worn superstitiously as charms and were often inscribed with magical formulas. Jacob permitted his people to keep nothing through which the superstitions, idolatry, pagan beliefs, and mesmerism of the land might make subtle claims upon them. He demanded that both the mental and material knowledge of occultism, the images of idolatry, and the amulets and charms of the sorcerers be left in the land of their nativity and not be brought unto Bethel. Jacob took all the idolatrous things which his people possessed and buried them under an oak tree in the dust of the grove of Moreh. This was a natural place for their burial, for Moreh means soothsayer. Jacob consigned to dust the influence of the soothsaying of the land. (See Gen.35:1-4)

Having cast out the idolatry from his house, Jacob rose up and left behind the city of Shechem, dropped the burden from his shoulders, indicated in the meaning of Shechem — *shoulder-burden* — shook from his feet the dust of Moreh, and thus *broke the spell of the soothsayer*, the witchcraft of the land, and neutralized the stupefying influences of occultism, indicated in the meaning of the name Moreh.

The Spirit of God had moved forcibly upon the face of the waters, had stirred the elements of his thinking, and caused him to shake off the unholy influence which had seemed to possess him. His spiritual enthusiasm, like the current of a mighty river, overflowed the hiding place of occult influences, tossed off the mental and material debris, and flowed effortlessly over the obstructions. Sweeping all before him, Jacob surged forward in obedience to his God, with the power of the fifth period of unfoldment cresting to the fulfillment of its purpose — that of propelling him into the climax of the grand sixth period of his individual divine adventure.

Fortified with the spiritual strength of the priesthood of God, Jacob commanded his people with the royal authority of a prince of God who has power with God and with men:

Let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went— Gen.35:3.

No longer did Jacob consult with his sons as to a course of action. No longer did he permit them to choose their own immature way. He gathered them all together into the majesty of his own understanding of God and of man's relationship with God and took them to Bethel. Symbolically, Jacob took his whole house with him into the House of God. He gathered them into the fold of the Covenant of Godlikeness and lifted them to the level of his own understanding and demonstration of the Omnipresence, Omnipotence, and Omniscience of *Elohim*.

God is Omniscience

Omni, from the Latin *omnie*, meaning *all*, denotes that some action or quality has unrestricted range. Science, from the Latin *scio*, means *to know*. Hence Omniscience is all-knowing — the All-knowing divine Mind. What power is indicated in true knowing! To know God as Omniscience is to know the unrestricted range of the action and quality of the divine Mind, the Great *I AM*.

At Peniel Jacob came face to face with Omniscience, the All-knowing Mind that is God. In this revelation he discovered the law of reflection and realized this scientific fact: because God is, I am! The law of reflection is the law of Godlikeness. This law enabled him to go forth from Peniel as Israel. He expressed the dominion of the Great *I AM* as the very "I" of his being. He thought, spoke, and acted with the divine authority of Omniscience, the All-knowing Mind. By the law of reflection, he knew what to say and do in his encounter with his brother. He knew how to provide for his large retinue at Succoth. He was the new man, the Godlike man. But after leaving Succoth, he seemed to have lost sight of who he really was. His Israel nature was dormant, and his dominion was proportionally diminished.

But now the Great *I AM* again commands him. And the "I" of his being responds. Again he speaks and acts with the authority of Israel, one who reigns with God. He has left the Garden of Eden. He has walked out of the second and third chapters of Genesis, where the serpent and the tree of knowledge of good and evil had tempted him. He is again on the high road in his divine adventure, in the spiritual dimension, where Israel reigns as God commands.

For a brief span, Jacob's understanding of the unrestricted range and operation of Omniscience, the All-knowing Mind, the *I AM*, was so powerful, so infinite, so all-encompassing, that the science, intelligence, or knowledge of God, good, flooded the minds of his people, wiped out the influence of the false knowledge of occultism with its soothsaying and enchantments, and silenced everything that opposed the knowledge of God, good. At last Jacob had become the kind of spiritual scientist Abraham was. He spoke with the divine authority of the Great *I AM*, which could not be denied or disobeyed, and moved to wrest his people from idolatry and to bring them into the Covenant of Godlikeness, into the knowledge of God, good. The spurious fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and its influence had been destroyed, and the wondrous wisdom and knowledge of Omniscience, the all-knowing Mind, became to him the tree of life. (See Gen.2:9; Prov.3:13,18; Rev.22:1,2; Ps.1:1-3.)

Centuries later two of Jacob's descendants, the prophets Isaiah and Habakkuk, saw that the time would come when Omniscience, or the knowledge of God, would fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. They saw the knowledge of both good and evil, or what the serpent knows, completely silenced by Omniscience, what God knows, or by the knowledge of God, good. (See Isa.11:9; Hab.2:14.)

To know God is the ultimatum. For to know what God is, is to know what man is by the law of reflection, the law of Godlikeness — like-God — stated in the sixth period of unfoldment of the New Covenant in the first chapter of Genesis (Gen.1:26,27). In accordance with this law, each one may declare with confidence: *Because God is, I am!*

The power of Omniscience, the All-knowing Mind, literally propelled Jacob and his house out of Shechem, away from its idolatrous influences, and lifted him back into his divine orbit of unfoldment. We see him now moving quickly to the very summit of his divine adventure. Under the impelling influence of the Spirit

of God, Jacob and his house departed from Shechem, the garden city of Jacob's metaphorical Eden.

And they journeyed.— Gen.35:5.

In this journeying we see Jacob's divine adventure sweeping forward to its fulfillment. At the same time we see the beginning of the real journeying of his house under the banner of his love. As they journeyed from Shechem,

... the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.— Gen.35:5

It was not fear of the sons of Jacob which kept the inhabitants of other cities of the land from pursuing after them and wreaking vengeance upon them for the cruel and inhuman acts perpetrated by Simeon and Levi. It was the fear of God which stayed the people. In spite of Simeon and Levi, Jacob and his house were saved because, regardless of their short-comings, God could use them as instruments to spread the knowledge of God, good, throughout the world. These were the only people of ancient times in whose lives God could write the pattern of universal divine salvation for mankind.

The knowledge of God, written in Jacob's heart, spread itself like a tent to cover his people and to deliver them from utter destruction. As a mariner is safe in his journeying because of the science of navigation, or scientific knowledge that he needs to guide his ship aright in sunshine and in storm to bring it safely to the desired destination, so Jacob and those who were with him were safe in the knowledge of God, under the mighty wing of Omniscience — the science of the knowledge of good.

Jacob Returns to Bethel and Builds a New Altar

So Jacob came to Luz, which is in the land of Canaan, that is, Bethel, he and all the people that were with him.— Gen.35:6.

Recall that *Luz* was the Canaanite name for the place of Jacob's first communion with God. He changed the name of the place to

Bethel, meaning *house of God*. He saw the meaning of the place in his spiritual journeying. After Jacob's vision there the name of the place was no longer what men called it, but what God made it.

And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el: because there God appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.— Gen.35:7.

El-beth-el — *the House of God*, or, literally translated, *God of the House of God*. This altar was dedicated to the All-knowing God, the Almighty *I AM*. And its name confirms Jacob's understanding that God's Covenant with him at Bethel was to be known as *the House of God*. Further, this name confirms his understanding that the holy agreement between God and man was to be illustrated and fulfilled in *the House of Jacob*, in the nation that was to bear his new name *Israel*.

Jacob was not tempted to carve his new name on the altar at Bethel. He claimed this land, not in the name of Israel — wonderful though that name might be — but in the name of the God of Bethel, the All-knowing Mind who knows all things. The understanding of this name, the omniscient nature of *Elohim*, had been unfolding in Jacob's consciousness. And its power was demonstrated when he took his family and all that were with him out of Shechem and away from the devastation wrought by Simeon and Levi. Rising to the full stature of Israel, he commanded the experiences of his people. They had no choice but to follow him. His understanding and demonstration of the unrestricted range and operation of Omniscience, the All-knowing Mind, expressed as Israel, his own divine nature, or being, was so powerful that it neutralized the mesmeric influences of carnal mindedness, silenced everything that opposed his spiritual journeying, and impelled him forward in the unfoldment of his divine adventure.

And now, as though to call our attention to something of vital importance relating to Jacob's divine adventure, we are told of an event far more momentous than its simple announcement might imply. We read:

But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Bethel [at the foot of the hill on which the town stood] under an oak: and the name of it was called Allon-Bachuth [the oak of weeping].—

Gen.35:8.

Deborah had accompanied Rebekah, Jacob's mother, when she left her home in Haran and journeyed to Beer-Sheba to become Isaac's wife (Gen.24:59). Whether Deborah had returned to Haran during Jacob's sojourn there and had accompanied him back to the land of Canaan, or whether she had come to meet him and had joined him at Succoth, Shechem, or Bethel, we do not know. It is not likely that she had been with him in Haran, for she is not mentioned in the presentation of those who were with Jacob when he met Esau at the ford Jabbok. Her presence with Jacob tells us that Rebekah, Jacob's mother, was no longer living, for this faithful nurse would never have left her mistress.

There is little doubt that Deborah had been Rebekah's closest confidante. Her presence with Jacob needs must speak to him of his mother and of her knowledge of God which had told her that he, Jacob, rather than Esau, would have the birthright of spiritual dominion, because in him was the willingness to give up all else that the will of God might be fulfilled in him. Deborah's presence could not but quicken Jacob's thoughts of his mother and bring to his remembrance her place in the Covenant which God made with Isaac.

None of Jacob's wives reflected the qualities of spiritual womanhood. Hence they were not at one with him in the Covenant understanding of God, nor did they symbolize his spiritual completeness. Jacob needed the comfort and strength of spiritual womanhood to guide him into the second part of the sixth period of his spiritual journeying, into the climax of his grand adventure, where his divine completeness, reflecting the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim* would be confirmed.

Deborah was a more spiritual type of womanhood than any of the women in Jacob's household. Her presence with Jacob is symbolic of the appearing in his consciousness of the tender, comforting, loving, discerning nature of the Motherhood of God, urging him, as would a mother, to put his house in order. It was as though she had come in his mother's place to remind him of God's Motherhood and its power in the unfoldment of his Covenant with God.

We have learned that the meaning of names in the Bible reveals ideas. And the meaning of Deborah's name has great significance in Jacob's spiritual journeying. The name *Deborah* is derived from the Hebrew *dabar*, a primitive root meaning: to arrange, to put in

an orderly condition, to bring about an orderly arrangement. This word is sometimes translated *bee*, from its systematic orderly instincts. From this primitive root also comes *dober*, translated *fold* and *word*, from the original sense of *daber*, a *pasture*, from its arrangement of the flock. The word *pastor* is also derived from this primitive root.

In the allegory of Jacob's life, Deborah's presence with him is indicative of the feminine influence, reflecting the divine Motherhood, appearing in his life. He took possession of his house. He demanded of them obedience and order. Further, there is every indication that an orderly scientific arrangement of the ideas that God had given him had begun to unfold in his thought. Like a mother, he gathered these developing ideas into the fold of his consciousness where they began to take form in expression. It was natural then that the systematic scientific instincts of the mothering nature of Deity began to take the lead in his spiritual unfoldment.

Deborah's passing, as it touches Jacob's spiritual journeying, evidences the fact that her work was finished, that her influence had accomplished its divine purpose. Jacob was nearing the realization that his blessed divine nature was a compound of the qualities of spiritual manhood and womanhood expressing the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*. The confirmation of his advanced understanding was at hand. We read:

And God appeared unto Jacob again, ... and
blessed him.— Gen.35:9.

God, *Elohim*, the plural of majesty, revealing the fullness of the divine nature "appeared unto Jacob" — appeared as his own mind or consciousness. This appearing tells us plainly that Jacob was ready for the fulfillment of the wondrous sixth period of unfoldment of the New Covenant. In final preparation for this grand spiritual event, God reminded Jacob of his first communion at Bethel, when the nature of the Infinite was revealed to him. Let us, with Jacob, be reminded of this holy moment.

At Bethel the Spirit of God opened the door of Jacob's thought and wrote a glorious vision of the threefold essential nature of the Triune divine Principle of the universe on the tablet of his being.

In the vision of the ladder which rested on the earth and reached to heaven, Jacob glimpsed the spiritual fact that the harmony of heaven broods over the earth and his earthly experience. The angels of God ascending and descending upon the ladder revealed to Jacob his own uninterrupted communication, or communion with God. In a sense, these angels typified to him thoughts ascending to God, divine Mind, to gain new views of heavenly harmony and descending, or coming back to him in ideas his human consciousness could comprehend. This angel system, this circulation of thoughts between God and man, is spiritual communion with the Most High.

At Bethel the Almighty had revealed to Jacob the first two aspects of the Trinity as the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and opened the door of his understanding to see his own place in the Covenant. Jacob called his new understanding of the Infinite *The God of Bethel*, because it was at Bethel that the Almighty revealed the third aspect of the Triune divine nature, the God of Jacob, thus completing the revelation and exemplification of the threefold nature of the Infinite.

At Bethel an important message was written in Jacob's sleeping consciousness. This message is now becoming clear to him, for God said:

The land whereon thou liest to thee will I give it and to thy seed.— Gen.28:13.

Recall that the promise of his possession of the land was that he understand its spiritual nature — the same promise God had made to Abraham and to Isaac:

Thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.— Gen.28:14.

North, east, south, west — the four metaphorical points of infinity — describe the boundless spiritual nature of Jacob's inheritance. The promise was that his dominion would not be confined to a material location, but that no matter where his divine adventure led him, the *I AM* would be with him and would go before him to prepare a place for him. The vision of the Almighty

standing above Jacob's ladder of life, assured him that heaven would husband his earthly experience and that of his seed. In God's promise to Jacob we discover a divine decree that is still being fulfilled; namely, that through the seed of Jacob the blessed knowledge of the triune nature of *Elohim* — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob — would spread abroad and would continue to unfold in human consciousness until it filled the earth as the waters cover the sea — until the name, or divine nature, of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost is manifested in every living thing on earth.

**God's Demand:
Stop Acting Like Jacob and be Israel!**

At this time God reminded Jacob not only of his first communion at Bethel, but also of his communion at Peniel, where he saw God face to face — saw the nature of God — and saw himself as a mirror likeness to *Elohim*. His was a likeness so bright that it outshone the old mortal concept of himself and revealed the new man and his wondrous new divine nature, Israel. The Almighty *I AM* demanded of Jacob that he know himself as Israel. In no uncertain words his Mother God demanded that he stop acting like Jacob and be Israel! Only thus could the Covenant promise be fulfilled in him — that he would have dominion in the land and that his seed would inherit the earth. The demand was that he stop wandering in the by-ways of a material, or Jacob, sense of existence. This demand was reiterated emphatically:

And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.— Gen.35:10.

The Almighty *I AM* demanded that Jacob express the completeness of his Godlikeness, indicated in the name Israel, in which the union, or wedding, of the masculine and feminine qualities of *Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother, are embodied in one individual consciousness — completeness revealed in the sixth period of the unfoldment of Godlikeness, recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. Hear the words of the New Covenant now being made manifest in Jacob's unfoldment:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion . . . — Gen.1:26-28.

The Covenant relationship between God and man is like a marriage covenant in which God promises to husband us — to care for us, to lead us, deliver us, love us. And we in turn promise to love, honor, and obey God. The nature of God as *Ishi* — husband — was revealed to the prophet Hosea when he was endeavoring to woo his people back into the fold of Godlikeness (Hos.2:16). Other prophets discerned this divine nature through which the human is embraced in the divine. God commanded Jeremiah to remind his people that in his Covenant relationship with Israel, “I was an husband unto them” (Jer.31:32). Isaiah likened the condition of the land of Israel at the time of the Babylonian captivity, when they seemed bereft of divine help, to “the reproach of widowhood.” The people thought their Covenant with God protected them whether or not they performed their part of the Covenant relationship. (See Isa.54:4-6.) The prophet reminded them that their “widowhood would be remembered no more” when they remembered that —

Thy Maker is thine husband; the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called.— Isa.54:5.

Jacob had not really comprehended the majesty of his new name. Little did he realize that Israel was his marriage name. He had not even glimpsed the deeper meaning of this name, or divine nature, which literally wedded him to Divinity, covenanted him to Spirit, caused him to be at one with the divine Mind, the *I AM*. The revelation had been beyond his comprehension, and its great significance lay dormant in his consciousness. But the tragic events which had transpired at Shechem and his deep sorrow at

finding Rachel spiritually unworthy to accompany him in his divine adventure had shocked him out of the inertia which had bound him. Now he really hears the divine demand and rises to comprehend it: "Thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name!"

It is as though God said: "You have been thinking as Jacob; hence your experiences have been Jacob-experiences. Think as Israel; and your experiences will be Israel-experiences. Dare to be Israel! Dare to forsake the material for the spiritual concept of yourself! Dare to bear the name which identifies you as the prince who has power with God and with men! Dare to express the divine completeness and spiritual authority which your new name implies! Dare to wear your marriage name which declares boldly that your humanhood is irrevocably linked with Divinity and that you are indeed wedded to Spirit!"

The demand upon Jacob was that he manifest the divine nature indicated in his new name Israel, that he let the threefold nature of *Elohim* be individualized in him.

He would thus express the nature of the God of Abraham and manifest the qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*.

In so doing he would express the nature of the God of Isaac and manifest the nature of the Son of God, the outcome of the glory of *Elohim*.

Then would he fulfill his mission as *the Messenger of the New Covenant* and express the nature of the God of Bethel, known in Scripture as the God of Jacob, and manifest the power of the Spirit of God to move upon the waters, or elements of mortal thought, banish the mist of materialism, fear, confusion, ignorance, and sin, and regenerate and transform the mortal with the immortal, the human with the divine.

Then and then only would his life be an example, or exemplification, of the power of the Holy Spirit to express the husbanding of divine Love to his people. Then and then only would he express the dominion of his divine nature Israel in his Jacob experiences.

Only twice had Jacob fully expressed the power of Israel. At his meeting with Esau the dominion of Israel was gloriously exemplified when his God-vision saw his brother as God saw him. He

expressed the divine authority of Israel when he commanded his household to leave Shechem and the idolatry and gross materialism associated therewith, and took them to Bethel. Now God reminds him that the time has come when he must *be* Israel — when, daily, hourly, moment by moment, he must express the divine completeness and the dominion indicated in his holy name, or divine nature. Jacob must feel and exercise the power of God's holy name *I AM*, embodied in his new name Israel, so that he can say "I" and "*I AM*" as God, the Great *I AM*, says it, and not take God's holy name in vain by saying, "I am afraid, I am sick, I am limited, I am incomplete, I can't express dominion." Jacob must feel the power of Israel and express the dynamic spiritual individuality which declares: "I am Godlike, I am divinely complete, I can do what I see my Father-Mother God do, because I am made in God's own image and likeness. The Bible says so!" Now, for the first time, Jacob, rising to the heights of Israel, really hears the voice of the divine Mother, *El Shaddi*, the Almighty God, speaking to him as She had spoken to Abraham and to Isaac, confirming his divine mission, revealing its universal nature, and reiterating the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness. The keynote of the sixth period of his divine adventure sounds. And the message finds a response in him, indicated in the enunciation, *I AM*.

And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed after thee I will give the land.— Gen.35:11,12.

The revelation of his divine completeness included the realization that everything in heaven and earth partakes of the divine nature and is therefore spiritual — the same revelation that came to Abraham when God commanded him to look to the north, east, south, west, and claim everything he could see in the name, or nature of Spirit. In the understanding of this glorified sense of creation the Prince of God found his divine dominion — the dominion of heaven on earth — *the Dominion of the New Covenant*.

God's command, "Be fruitful and multiply," might seem strange in view of the fact that Jacob now had twelve sons and at least one

daughter. Although this command embodies the promise that "a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins," still the spiritual connotation must needs be understood.

Recall that in the first chapter of Genesis the idea of fruitfulness is developed throughout. The command is that everything in the universe must multiply and bring forth fruit after its own kind. Through the idea of the seed within itself, the infinite nature of each idea expands in consciousness and reproduces itself in experience. Every idea that unfolds in consciousness must have its visible counterpart, or identity. God's command — Be fruitful and multiply — is a divine demand that we be fruitful in good works, fruitful in developing the ideas of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim* within ourselves, fruitful in multiplying, or increasing, in divine power, and in the understanding of the periods of spiritual unfoldment — that the earth may be replenished with the knowledge of God and His glorious creation. In proportion as this is done, we have dominion — dominion over all the earth, in every sphere, in every dimension, on every level, in all periods of unfoldment. In the degree that we are fruitful in good works and multiply, or increase, in spiritual power, we are blessed and inherit the earth and have dominion therein.

Mortals are prone to misinterpret the command, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it, and have dominion." Too often they rest supinely in the belief that this passage is a demand to reproduce the race. Often they evade the responsibility indicated therein and believe they can bring forth children in their own likeness and transfer to their offspring the burden of proof of fruitfulness, accomplishment, expansion. And so, from generation to generation, the responsibility is shelved and the dominion delayed. But those who accept this divine responsibility and are fruitful in good works, who multiply their good accomplishments, develop their talents, and subdue, or bring into subjection, every thought that opposes the unfoldment of the divine ideal — these have the promised dominion. These find that God's kingdom is come on earth as it is in heaven, and that theirs is the kingdom of spiritual dominion. Such are truly blessed in everything they turn their hands to, for their Israel-nature triumphs over their mortal-nature. They discover that their Covenant with God is a Covenant of Blessing, a Covenant of Fruitful-

ness — a Covenant of Dominion. (See chapter: THE NEW COVENANT, The Sixth day, pp. 76-77.)

That this period of Jacob's unfoldment was complete is indicated in the next statement in the holy record:

And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.— Gen.35:13.

Recall that after The Almighty God had revealed to Abraham the mighty power of the Motherhood of *Elohim*, "He left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham" (Gen.17:22). In other words, what has been revealed of the divine nature was the climax, the culmination of unfoldment. God had nothing more to say on the subject. What remained was the demonstration of the revelation.

As in Abraham's experience, so now in Jacob's, he must put into practice what had been revealed. Note that it was The Almighty, *El Shaddi*, the Motherhood of God, who demanded that Abram be Abraham and that Jacob be Israel (Gen.17:1,5; 35:10). The revelation of their divine nature and the bestowal of their new names was not enough. They must be, or live, the divine nature indicated in their new names. They must exercise the divine authority and spiritual dominion embodied in their divine nature.

Jacob's Spiritual Journeying Comes to its Communion

Having glimpsed the majesty of man reigning with God, having risen to comprehend somewhat the compound nature of his spiritual individuality, having accepted his new name *Israel* as the name which wedded him to Divinity, Jacob, at long last, came to understand that God is not only the Father of man and of every living thing, but that God is also the Mother of all. This realization brought to him the correlative realization that he himself, made in God's likeness, expressed the masculine and feminine qualities of Deity and was therefore complete. In this realization Jacob's spiritual journeying came to its communion, to its fulfillment. His Covenant with God was established in him. And in this realization Jacob's atonement was accomplished. He had atoned for his sins and had found his at-one-ment with God and with all that is good.

Recall that in Noah's experience he was required to understand the atonement — to be joined in one with Deity, with Spirit. There could be no sense of separation from God within him or his ark. Recall too, "It is atonement that keeps out the waters of judgment." It was Noah's understanding of the atonement, his conscious sense of being at-one with God, in complete harmony with Spirit, that kept the waters of judgment out of the ark and saved Noah and his house. It was Jacob's understanding of the atonement, his conscious sense of being at-one with God, wedded to Divinity, that kept the waters of judgment at Shechem from destroying him and his house. (See pp. 512-526.)

In confirmation of his advanced spiritual understanding,

Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked
with God, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a
drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.—
Gen.35:14.

The drink offering and the oil which Jacob poured on his altar was, in a sense, a communion service, sanctifying the place of his communion with The Almighty *I AM*, *El Shaddi*, his Mother God, and confirming the wondrous fact that he had been reborn — that he had been transformed by the renewing of his mind. This communion service was indeed the confirmation that the Spirit of God had moved upon the waters, or elements of his consciousness, scattered the darkness of a material sense of himself and of his world, and brought to light his divine nature. This communion service was also an acknowledgment that the struggle between the Old Covenant of godless materialism and the New Covenant of Godlikeness and spiritual perfection had been won. In the intense struggle that had been waged within Jacob's own consciousness to determine whether a dominant, material nature shall triumph in man or whether the divine nature of man shall have dominion, Israel had emerged as the victor!

Jacob's communion service acknowledged even more than this. It was an acknowledgment of his investiture as priest and king unto God — the Israel-nature reigns in the spiritual and secular aspects of life. It was an acknowledgment of Israel's appearing as the exemplar of the third aspect of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, or Spirit of God, which makes plain to the human consciousness the relationship of God to man and regenerates and transforms the

old mortal concept of man with the divine likeness, the new concept of man. Further, Jacob's communion service was a quiet, humble, holy acknowledgment that the Sixth Day, or sixth period of unfoldment of his Covenant with God, the climax of his divine adventure, had come to its communion.

Jacob again called the name of the place of his communion with God, Bethel, or house of God (Gen.35:15), thus signifying his understanding that he himself was the temple of the living God, and that the Spirit of God dwelt in him (1 Cor.3:16). In all time to come the name *Bethel* has become synonymous with Jacob's communion with The Almighty God and with his spiritual ascendancy wherein he grew to be worthy to wear his new name *Israel*.

And so the divine adventure which began at Bethel came to its glorious communion at Bethel. The journey which had been previewed in the vision of the ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached heaven, has been fulfilled. The soldier of God had gone step upon step up the ladder, learning needed lessons in progressive footsteps of unfoldment of his divine nature and of his Covenant relationship with God. After reaching the pinnacle of his journeying in the transforming experience at Peniel, where he put off the old material concept of himself and won his new name *Israel*. he came down the metaphorical ladder to return to his starting point — not in the sense of losing spiritual altitude, but to embrace every aspect of his human life with the divinity of the heavenly experience in which he had wrestled with and prevailed over the carnal nature that had held him in a state of servitude. He thus learned a lesson each one of us must learn — that no matter how high heavenward our divine adventure may take us, we must return to glorify our earthly experience with the divinity that has been revealed to us, until our Israel-nature brings every human thought and act into conformity with the divine — until we think and act only as God commands, and thus express the dominion of the New Covenant.

The Birth of Benjamin The Death of Rachel

For a brief time after his communion with The Almighty God Jacob seemed unable to think of himself as Israel. The reason is evident in events which followed immediately after he left Bethel:

And they journeyed from Bethel; and there was but a little way to come to Ephrath: and Rachel travailed, and she had hard labour.

And it came to pass, when she was in hard labour, that the midwife said unto her, Fear not; thou shalt have this son also.

And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing (for she died) that she called his name Ben-o-ni; but his father called him Benjamin.

And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Beth-lehem.

And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.—

Gen.35:16-20.

Jacob's beloved Rachel was gone. She had not found the strength to complete the journey — either the material journey or the spiritual one. She seemed not able to rise to the stature of spiritual womanhood that would have enabled her to accompany her husband all the way in his divine adventure. After having been forced to give up the gods of her father Laban, and not being able to comprehend the God who is Spirit, the Almighty, *El Shaddi*, her Mother God, she had nothing to cling to. She had probably been crushed to discover that Jacob loved God even more than he loved her. In an attempt to perpetuate her grief, she named her son *Benoni*, a Hebrew name meaning *son of my sorrow*.

That Jacob had separated himself from emotionalism and sentimentality concerning Rachel is clearly seen in the fact that, even though Rachel, on her death-bed, had named her new-born infant *Son of my sorrow*, Jacob hesitated not to change the child's name to *Benjamin*, a Hebrew name meaning *Son of my right hand*. Benjamin is the only son whom Jacob named. From birth this child bore his new name. The Hebrew words which make up his new name are worthy of notice: *ben* — a son, as a builder of the family name, or character; and *yamiyn* the right hand, as the stronger and more dexterous. This combination of words carries the meaning: the quality which dares to be right and is strong enough to stand for right in the face of opposition.

How wise was Jacob to give to his youngest child (the only one born in the land of Canaan) his new name at birth and to cherish the divine nature which this new name embodied. Jacob's action in naming this child tells us that he had become conscious of the

powerful qualities which Benjamin's new name embodies within himself.

The loss of Rachel, so soon after Deborah's death, and possibly Rebekah's, might have been a mortal blow that would have staggered a lesser individual than Jacob-Israel. But this soldier of God had already been comforted by the revelation of his oneness with God and of his divine completeness as the expression of his Father-Mother God. Rachel's death did not bow him down in grief nor delay his spiritual journeying. The Comforter had come *with strength!* Jacob paused only to "set a pillar upon her grave," and then swept on in his divine adventure. We read:

And Jacob set a pillar upon her grave: that is the
pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day.
And Israel journeyed.— Gen.35:20,21.

"*Jacob* set a pillar upon Rachel's grave . . . and *Israel* journeyed!" And this journeying took him into the seventh period of unfoldment of his Covenant with God — into the Sabbath holiness, or full understanding, of his divine mission — the period in which he wore the metaphorical crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek. *Israel* had taken charge of *Jacob's* divine adventure!

And the evening and
the morning were
the sixth day.
(Gen.1:31.)

Chapter XLII

JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

THE SEVENTH PERIOD

The Tower of Edar

And Israel journeyed, and spread
his tent beyond the tower of Edar.
(Gen.35:21.)

Thus begins the seventh and last period of spiritual unfoldment in which Israel takes complete command of Jacob's divine adventure. Israel's first encampment was Edar. Here the towering majesty of Israel rises to heights before unknown. He looks beyond, far beyond, the confines of the land of Canaan, Jacob-Israel's material inheritance, and beholds the spiritual nature of his world and the universal nature of his divine adventure.

The prophet Micah wrote of Edar as "the tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of *Zion*" — the symbolical name for the New Jerusalem, Melchizedek's city. Further, he prophesied that "the first dominion," the Dominion of the New Covenant, "shall come to the daughters of Jerusalem" — not only to the sons but also to the daughters of the New Covenant. (See Micah 4:8.)

At Edar, Jacob's spiritual vision saw the infinite unfoldment of Israel and of the Children of Israel in all ages rising out of the mist of the Old Covenant into the clear light of the New Covenant, into God's holy Day. In God's Day there is no night — no darkness at all — no ignorance, no fear, hate, limitation, or materialism. In this holy Day the old material concept of creation, in which man is limited by matter and its finite dimensions of thought and action, is completely swallowed up in the light of God's holy Day.

In the vision at the Tower of Edar *Israel* saw the meaning of this place in *Jacob's* divine adventure. The name *Edar* means flock. Jacob saw himself as *Israel* (his spiritual individuality revealed at Peniel) as *the tower of the flock*. He looked beyond the immediate

unfolding of his mission and saw his house no longer as the House of Jacob, his physical descendants, but as the House of Israel, the new name of mankind redeemed. He saw at last the meaning of God's promise to Abraham, to Isaac, and to himself, that the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob — the seed of the woman — would inherit the earth and be called by his new name.

The unfolding collective consciousness called the Children of Israel, are the children of Jacob's spiritual experience at Peniel, when he saw God face to face and learned that his divine nature made him a prince of God who reigns as God commands and has power with God and with men — the dominion of heaven on earth, the dominion of the New Covenant. The children of Israel in every age, in every land, are those:

Who acknowledge God as their Father-Mother,
 Who thereby gain some understanding of their divine
 Sonship as the offspring of Spirit,
 And who comprehend in some measure the power of the
 Holy Spirit to regenerate and redeem a mortal sense of
 existence with the divine idea of Life — of spiritual be-
 ing.

The children of Israel are not alone the descendants of the patriarchs, as the Apostle Paul declared: "They that be of faith, the same are the seed of Abraham" (Gal.3:7). Those who are willing to give up their old material beliefs and theories which have held them in bondage to the Old Covenant, who are willing to accept and to wear their new name, their divine nature, and who are obedient to the provisions of the New Covenant, "Walk before me and be thou perfect," these are the children of Israel, the seed of the woman, the children of promise in all ages, who inherit the earth — who have dominion wherever they are.

The sons of Jacob, Jacob's natural descent, are those individuals through whose experiences we may see the way in which Israel, the new name and divine nature of every one, triumphs over every kind of evil, over every trick of the dragon, over every subtlety of the serpent, over every temptation of the tempter, over every argument of the adversary, over every accusation of the accuser.

In the beginning of Israel's journey as "the tower of the flock" — he spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar — he men-

tally saw the dominion of Israel spread beyond the immediate vicinity of his dwelling, beyond the range of his mortal vision to the New Jerusalem, to St. John's vision of the Holy City. From the watch tower of Omniscience, he looked far and wide into the infinite expansion of the unfolding of the periods of spiritual ascension which await the seed of Abraham, the children of Israel — the seed of the woman. (See Gen.4:25.)

The echo of God's words to Jacob at Bethel at the beginning of his spiritual journeying came to Israel at the tower of Edar:

And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all families of the earth be blessed.—

Gen.28:14.

Recall that Abraham's vision of the spiritual nature of the universe had enabled him to see his possession of the land extending to the north, east, south, and west — symbolically, to the infinitude of the metaphorical compass points of the spiritual universe. Having thus indentified his heritage spiritually, Abraham had dominion in all the earth, in whatever land he dwelt. He saw this dominion extending to all those who identify their earth and their earthly experience with heaven. God had commanded Abraham to walk through the land, in the length and in the breadth of it — to explore and seek to comprehend the spiritual nature and the infinitude of his universe. This Abraham had done. God had also promised Abraham that his seed, those who thought as he did, would inherit this land, this understanding of the spiritual nature of the universe, and have dominion therein. (See pp. 282-287; Gen.13:14-17.)

Now Jacob-Israel has come into the understanding of the spiritual dimension of his world and of the dominion which this understanding bestows. In the seventh period of his divine adventure he envisions this understanding spreading abroad, continuing to unfold in the earth, and blessing all families of the earth. He had spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar. Through the majesty of his spiritual understanding of the triune nature of God and of man's unchanging relationship with God, Israel saw all creation gathered into the sanctuary of the spiritual dimension, into the

fold of the New Covenant of God with man. This Covenant is in truth a Covenant of Blessing to all families of the earth.

Recall that God had said to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob:

In thee and in thy seed shall all nations (all families) of the earth be blessed.—

Gen.22:18; 26:4; 28:14.

The first time the word *blessed* appears in the Bible, and probably the first time the word is used in all literature, is in the fifth period of unfoldment of the New Covenant, when God blessed the great moving creatures which the waters brought forth and the fowl that fly in the open firmament above the earth (Gen.1:22). In the sixth period God blessed man, His image and likeness — male and female — with fruitfulness and dominion (Gen.1:26-28). And in the seventh period God blesses the seventh, or Sabbath Day, and sanctifies it (Gen.2:3).

A brief review of this unusual word *bless* in the unfoldment of the divine nature will serve to accentuate its power and its importance in the lives of the patriarchs and in our own time.

The hebrew word *barak'el*, translated *blessing*, carries the meaning of prosperity, of going forward, of prospering, and of being divinely favored. The Hebrew word *barak*, translated *bless*, has many different meanings: to grant divine or heavenly favor; to hallow or consecrate; to make holy; to make successful in spiritual happiness and temporal concerns; to magnify and increase; to praise or glorify. In numerous instances the thought of God's blessing is linked with expansion, increase, multiplication, fruitfulness, prosperity — as in Gen.1:22,28, "Be fruitful and multiply."

God's blessing takes off human shackles and sets us free to move in the heavenly freedom of the power of the divine nature, blessed with spiritual happiness and temporal prosperity. God's blessing enables us to be fruitful in good works — to multiply, or demonstrate, the infinitude of everything our thoughts rest upon.

The command, "Be fruitful and multiply," demands that we develop our talents, faculties, functions, qualities, abilities, and possibilities; that we permit no idea to remain stillborn or undeveloped; that we strive to develop ideas that come to us until they bear fruit — until they come to fruition and expand into expression in our experience; that we bring to light, or make visible,

all the hidden or latent qualities of each idea. The command also demands that we let each idea and element of creation expand our thought so that we may comprehend the infinitude of everything God has made. For every idea which comes to us is infinite and its development is also infinite. Throughout the Bible the idea of fruitfulness, spiritual and material prosperity, and well being is repeated again and again as an integral part of God's blessing — the continual unfoldment of good, with never any depletion or lack.

The blessing of fruitfulness and multiplication, of prosperity and increase, of well being and divine favor cannot unfold in a consciousness in which a material sense of creation prevails, for it is the nature of materialism to restrict and confine our thinking. We need to return to the very first chapter in the Bible, to the beginning of all unfoldment, and re-affirm and re-consecrate ourselves to the primal fact that God, Spirit, created heaven and earth; hence, both are wholly spiritual — creation like the Creator. We need also to remind ourselves often that God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good — therefore it *is* good.

This understanding was the basis of Abraham's dominion. It became the basis of Isaac's dominion. And now this understanding has become the foundation for Jacob-Israel to build upon as the tower of the flock. Jacob had glimpsed the wonder and power of the understanding of the spiritual nature of creation at Bethel. But now this understanding enables him to see his mission extending far beyond the material confines of the land of Canaan. His thoughts did indeed spread abroad and touched the borders of the heavenly consciousness, of which the Holy City is typical. He was now ready to complete his divine adventure, ready to go to Hebron, Abraham's foursquare city. He was ready to be Israel! Yet he lingered at Edar.

The Biblical record indicates that although Jacob had attained the spiritual stature of the tower of the flock and had spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar — had looked beyond that moment, beyond that age, beyond that land, and had seen the continuing unfoldment of Israel in all the earth — he continued to dwell in that land. He continued to abide in the contemplation of the infinite expansion of the divine nature, forgetting for the moment that there was other work for Jacob to do. Jacob had twelve sons who must be properly launched in their divine adventure. And in

the language of our day, we might say that Jacob had quite a problem. None of his sons appeared to be following in his spiritual footsteps.

In the order of the Biblical narrative, the next event on the horizon of Israel's journeying comes as a kind of shock. Jacob's sons seem determined to bring disgrace and discredit to Israel's journeying. Although all of his sons had not been involved in evil doing, the action of a few had given these sons a bad name. The first record we have of them after they reached maturity was at Shechem when Simeon and Levi, two of Leah's children, cunningly planned and ruthlessly executed the slaughter of the Shechemites, because the son of the ruler of Shechem had defiled their sister Dinah. And now we read:

And it came to pass, when Israel dwelt in that land,
that Reuben went and lay with Bilhah his father's
concubine.— Gen.35:22.

Bilhah was a Syrian who had been Rachel's maidservant. Rachel had given Bilhah to Jacob to wife so that she, Rachel, might have children by her. Bilhah's name denotes her nature as silly, simple, foolish, stupid, an easy prey to sensuality and a natural channel for it. Her elder son Dan, whom she had born to Jacob, came to symbolize the serpent which bit the horse's heels, thus causing the horse to throw the rider backwards but escaping detection by causing the horse to be blamed for the rider's fall (Gen.49:17). She was probably stupid enough to believe that through Reuben she could gain a position in the household which was denied her as Jacob's concubine. There is no further record of her, indicating that she lost her entity in Jacob's house.

Reuben was Jacob's firstborn. This brief account of him and his material journey disposes of him as a claimant to the birthright of the firstborn. Reuben's lack of trustworthiness was not a matter of deliberate sin but an indication of his nature which Israel later described as "unstable as water" (Gen.49:4). The only previous record we have of Reuben reveals a promiscuous knowledge of sex, but it also reveals a jealous love for his mother Leah and an ambition for her place in Jacob's affections. Recall that Reuben, when a lad of less than twelve years, went out into the field and gathered mandrakes, or love apples, for his mother, that she

might partake of the magical potion supposedly contained therein — a potion which, it was superstitiously believed, would produce fruitfulness in the womb. (See Gen.30:14-21.)

Historically, the incident of Reuben and Bilhah is of no interest to us. But what does it mean in Israel's journeying? That it has an allegorical connotation is plain for, after a statement of the facts of the case, the Biblical record declares:

And Israel heard it. Now the sons of Jacob were twelve.— Gen.35:22.

What is the relation between these two statements? Simply this: Israel realized that his spiritual journeying must overshadow the footsteps of the sons of Jacob. That, sooner or later, the divine nature must embrace the human, or mortal, nature of each one of them. That, sooner or later, Israel would prevail and the sons of Jacob would be called by his new name — the Children of Israel.

The mention of Reuben's transgression and the recount of Jacob's sons may seem to be an interruption in Israel's journeying, but this is not so. In its allegorical sense, the statement, "Now the sons of Jacob were twelve," means that what is recorded of their progress or lack of it is heard by Israel — that their actions will always be judged by Israel, that they cannot act as do others without swift divine accountability. This statement also tells us that the story of the redemption of mankind is to be told through the history of these twelve sons; and that the divine governmental perfection, of which the number twelve is the symbol in Hebrew literature, is to be revealed through their many and varied experiences. (See Gen.35:23-26.)

Jacob's Sabbath Rest In Hebron

And Jacob came unto Isaac his father, unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned.— Gen.35:27.

Note that it is Jacob, not Israel, who came to his father Isaac. The record of Israel's journeying is quiet for a time, while Jacob journeyed on to Hebron, to complete the seventh period of his divine adventure in Abraham's city.

When Jacob began his spiritual journeying, Isaac was living in Beer-Sheba. We do not know when Isaac moved from Beer-Sheba, the city typical of the Covenant of divine Sonship, in which he learned that God cares for man no matter where he is and causes even his enemies to be at peace with him. But his presence in Hebron indicates that Isaac too had been journeying spiritually during Jacob's absence. He had progressed in his divine adventure and had reached *Mamre* (strength), the same is *Arbah* (*Kirjath-Arba*, city of four), which is *Hebron* (spiritual alliance), Abraham's foursquare city, typical of "the city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Heb.11:10). Isaac's alliance, or Covenant with God, had at long last come to its communion. And in this exalted consciousness of his alliance, or oneness with God, in which he, like Abraham, expressed God as Father-Mother, Isaac welcomed his son.

After nearly thirty years of spiritual development, Jacob's divine adventure brought him to Hebron, the City of the Covenant God made with Abraham. And he, like Abraham and Isaac, knew the city by its holy name, *kirjath-Arba*, the fourfold city, symbolic, in some measure, of their foursquare understanding of the fourth dimension of Spirit, a spiritual dimension of thought which transcends a finite, material concept of man and the universe. Through periods of orderly spiritual unfoldment, exemplified in his journeying, Jacob has risen in the understanding of his Covenant relationship with God, the Covenant of Godlikeness, the Covenant of divine Blessedness.

The record stating that "Jacob came unto Isaac his father unto Mamre, unto the city of Arbah, which is Hebron, where Abraham and Isaac sojourned," tells us that Jacob has come into the same understanding of God and of man's relationship with God that Abraham and Isaac attained; that he had progressed in his divine adventure and, like Abraham and Isaac, had come to the realization that his Covenant with God is a Covenant of spiritual allegiance, of absolute fidelity to the Creator.

Jacob's abode in Hebron tells us further:

That he had grown to that spiritual stature of manhood which expresses the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*, which Abraham, in his exemplification of the Trinity, expressed.

That he understood the nature of the Son of God, true Christliness, or love of God and man, which Isaac, in his exemplification of the Trinity, expressed.

And that he now fully understood his own place in the Trinity — the exemplification of the Holy Spirit of God, the power of the Almighty, to move upon the waters, or elements of mortal thought, thus to transform the human with the divine and to bless mankind in whatever period of unfoldment they might be.

Jacob brought his house, his whole family, unto Isaac in Hebron, into the consciousness of divine Sonship, which Isaac exemplified — into the knowledge of God's loving care for His people, into the realization of their Covenant with God. In so doing he was founding a nation, though he knew it not — a nation that would be known by his new name, *Israel*, a nation that would be called *the people of the Covenant*; and that through this nation would come one who would be the Redeemer of all mankind, the Exemplar of the Trinity in whom would be individualized the threefold nature of the Infinite, the one who would show mankind the way to express the power and dominion of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob — the man Christ Jesus.

In bringing his sons to Hebron Jacob was, in a sense, foretelling the glorious fact that after much tribulation his sons would be redeemed and come into the Holy City, into the holy consciousness of their relationship with God. In this prophecy he was also foretelling that all mortals, like his sons, would find their redemption in the Trinity — through the power of God, the Son of God, and of the Holy Spirit. And that sooner or later, all mankind would find their redemption from a mortal sense of existence in the Trinity and learn that they too have a Covenant with God.

At the beginning of Jacob's divine adventure God had made a promise which has now been fulfilled:

Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of —

Gen.28:15.

In his step *upon* step of spiritual unfoldment, Jacob had learned that whether he was going up or down the ladder of life, the

Almighty *I AM* was with him, monitoring all his experiences, leading him step upon step, and keeping him within the fold of the Covenant, in the sanctuary of his relationship with Divinity. He learned that the divine ever-presence was indeed Immanuel, God-with-us, which gave him power to be Israel — to think, speak, and act with the divine authority of the Great *I AM*. This soldier of God has fully exemplified his mission as the exemplar of the third aspect of the Trinity — the power of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, to redeem mortals from mortality, to show them how to be born again, how to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, how to lay off the mortal sense of themselves and of their world, and to put on the new man, the Israel nature, how to say with divine authority, “*I AM* Godlike, like my Father-Mother God.”

And now God has brought Jacob as Israel to Hebron, the City of the Covenant, and to the triumphal conclusion of his divine adventure. And in this seventh period of his spiritual unfoldment, we see that the three essential aspects of the triune divine Principle, revealed in the Trinity, and known throughout the Bible as *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*, have been fully exemplified.

Hebron was the crowning glory of Jacob’s divine adventure, the “Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord” (Matt.25:21). His mission as the messenger of the Covenant, his exemplification of the third aspect of the Trinity, is complete. And so he *rested* in the Seventh Day of his divine adventure.

The sun never goes down on this holy day. *The Sabbath has no evening and morning.* (See pp. 90-91.) The unfolding of this period is one of development of the ideas revealed in all the periods of unfoldment and is not progress toward new revelation. The Sabbath Rest of the seventh period is really fulfillment, in which the kingdom, the power, and the glory of the new heaven and new earth are fully developed in individual consciousness — a day in which we are fully cognizant of our Covenant, or alliance, with God, a day in which the Trinity comes to its communion in our consciousness. In this holy day we walk with God in the world described in the first chapter of our Bible, in the kingdom of heaven on earth, in the dominion of the New Covenant.

We do not know how long Isaac and Jacob dwelt together at Hebron — probably about twelve or thirteen years. Dwelling together in this city, or holy consciousness of man's Covenant with God, of which Hebron is typical, they must have touched the heights of spiritual communion with the Infinite. It is sad that we do not have a written record of their spiritual sojourn in Hebron, such as the one we have of St. John on the Isle of Patmos, recorded in the Book of Revelation. Certainly they, like the beloved John, saw and heard things unknown to the finite material senses, things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, things that had never entered into the heart of man (1 Cor.2:9).

“Remember the Sabbath Day to Keep It Holy”

(Ex.20:8.)

In Jacob's divine adventure we find a unique example of the redemptive power of the Spirit of God active in human consciousness. In the spiritual journeying of this soldier of God, we see how mankind is to be redeemed from a mortal sense of existence and led, step upon step, into the spiritual concept of themselves and of the world.

No matter what our particular mission in life may be, sooner or later our divine adventure will lead us through periods of spiritual ascension into the seventh period of unfoldment of our Covenant with God. In this holy period, the realization of the threefold nature of *Elohim* comes to its fulfillment in our lives. Be our progress fast or slow, each one will at last come face to face with the demand of the seventh period of unfoldment — the demand that we consecrate our Sabbath Day to the holy work of understanding the nature of the triune divine Principle of man and the universe and make practical in our daily lives the transcendent truth revealed in the Trinity, namely —

That God is the Father and Mother of man and the universe;

That man is the beloved child of God, made in His likeness, embodying the compound nature of the masculine and feminine qualities of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*.

And that through the power of the Holy Spirit, this understanding, revealed to human consciousness, transforms the human with the divine.

If we consecrate our Sabbath Day to this holy work, its divine influence will permeate and govern all the days of our week. We will become conscious of living in the spiritual dimension and will walk on holy ground. We will feel spiritual forces at work in us and all around us. We will see marvelous development of infinite capacities. And latent talents, which often seem hidden in the shroud of materialism, will give impetus to demonstration of spiritual power in every line of right endeavor.

Jacob's divine adventure is saying to everyone of us, in the words of the Apostle Paul:

You must lay aside that old human nature which, deluded by its lusts, is sinking towards death. You must be made new in mind and spirit, and put on the new nature of God's creating, which shows itself in the just and devout life called for by the truth.—

Eph.4:22-24, (NEB.)

You must lay aside all anger, passion, malice, cursing, filthy talk — have done with them! Stop lying to one another, now that you have discarded the old nature with its deeds and have put on the new nature, which is being constantly renewed in the image of its Creator and brought to know God.—

Col.3:9,10, (NEB.)

This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.— Heb.8:10.

In the degree that we are willing to be born again of the Spirit and are eager to express the divine nature — the dynamic individuality indicated in Jacob's new name Israel — we will be the new man. We will think, speak, and act as God commands. We will hold the scepter of divine authority in our hands, wear the metaphorical crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek, and express the dominion of heaven on earth. We will love and honor God absolutely. We will love our neighbor as ourselves. In this holy light of love for God and man, we will see our brother man as twin

to Israel. We will abide in God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. And we will feel and express the Dominion of the New Covenant, as did Jacob.

Chapter XLIII

THE GENEALOGY OF ESAU

The thirty-sixth chapter of Genesis is devoted entirely to the genealogy of Esau, a part of which reads:

And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle, and all his beasts, and all his substance, which he had got in the land of Canaan; and went into the country from the face of his brother Jacob.

For their riches were more than that they might dwell together; and the land wherein they were strangers could not bear them because of their cattle.

Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom.—
Gen.36:6-8.

Esau had continued to live in the land of Canaan during the years Jacob was in Haran. It is natural to suppose that he stayed in the area of Beer-Sheba where he had been born and where he had lived with Isaac and Rebekah. But Esau was a true Bedouin, "a son of the desert," and it is unlikely that he had established a permanent dwelling place anywhere, choosing rather to pitch his tents where his flocks pastured. At the time Jacob and Esau met at the Jabbok, when Jacob was returning from Haran, Esau was pasturing some of his great herd in Seir, or Edom. But he did not make Seir his home until after Jacob's return to Isaac's house in Hebron.

We do not know when Esau left Canaan to make his home in Seir, or Edom. The record implies that he took his family and all his flock to Seir shortly after Jacob's return because "the land could not bear them because of their cattle." The separation of the two brothers is reminiscent of the separation of Abraham and Lot (Gen.13:1-12). Although the reason given for the separation of Jacob and Esau, as with Abraham and Lot, was that each had such vast herds that the land could not bear them, in each instance it was the great difference in their thinking which precipitated the

separation. It would have been difficult indeed for "the land" to bear the opposing forces of two such dominant individualities with diametrically opposite philosophies of life.

Recall that Esau had married two of the daughters of Canaan, "who were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah." He had also married a daughter of Ishmael when he learned that his parents disapproved of his marriages to the Canaanite women. (See Gen.26:34,35; 28:8,9.)

The history of Esau's descendants, the Edomites, or Idumaeans as they are called, is summed up in various Bible commentaries and dictionaries. Although Jacob and Esau had made their peace, their descendants apparently did not. Throughout their history the Edomites were adversaries of the Israelites. The old feud between these two branches of the Semites was intense and never-ending.

Like Ishmael, Esau established a kingdom with a royal house. At first the rulers of Edom were called dukes (Gen.36:15-19). The first king of Edom, Bela the son of Beor (Gen.36:31,32), crowned about 150 years before the first king of Israel, is probably to be identified with "Balaam the son of Beor," whom the king of Moab hired to curse Israel (Num.22:5). There is little doubt that Hadad, or Hadar, (Gen.36:35) was the king subdued by David (I Kings 11:14-18). (See *The Interpreter's Bible*, pp.746-747.)

The Idumaeans joined Nebuchadnezzar when the king besieged Jerusalem (*Peloubet's Bible Dictionary*, p.161). When Rome conquered that part of the world, Julius Ceasar, knowing that the Idumaeans were enemies of the Jews, appointed an Idumaeon, Antipater, as procurator of Judaea, Samaria, and Galilee. In 35 B.C. Herod, son of Antipater, was crowned king of the Jews. In his latter days he decreed the death of all infants in the area of Bethlehem, where Jesus was born (Matt.2:16-18). When the Romans under Titus, besieged Jerusalem in 70 A.D., the Idumaeans joined the Jews in rebellion against Titus. They were received within the walled city of Jerusalem, but once within they proceeded to rape, rob, and kill, sparing neither priests nor populace in their orgy of blood. These traitors-at-arms received the same fate as their few surviving brothers when Rome finally took over Jerusalem. At that time Idumaea, or Edom, ceased to be. (See *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, pp.149-150.)

For many centuries after Esau left the scene, the Edomites, or Idumaeans, flourished. His kingdom was rich in materiality. But today we don't even know who Esau, or Edom, is. Esau stands for the mere man of earth (Heb.12:16,17), destitute of faith and despising his birthright because it is a spiritual thing, of value only as there is faith to apprehend it (*Scofield Reference Bible*, p.38).

PART V

JOSEPH

The New Messenger Of
The Covenant

A Man In Whom The Spirit
Of God Is.
(Gen.41:38)

Chapter XLIV

THE DOMINION OF LOVE

The Lord Was With Joseph.
(Gen.39:2)

Joseph is one of the most beloved of all Bible characters. From early boyhood the divine nature was established in his consciousness so completely that no matter where his human footsteps led him, he expressed the love, self-sufficiency, and dominion of the New Covenant of God with man. The story of his life might well be titled, **THE DOMINION OF LOVE**.

Although the word *Covenant* does not appear in Joseph's recorded history, the idea of the Covenant relationship between God and man flows through every least and great detail of his human experience. His Covenant relationship with God was never broken. His consciousness of God's presence with him nullified the code of the Old Covenant that would have held him in the bonds of servitude and caused him to wander in the ways of the carnal mind. His godliness was like a compass, always pointing to the North Star of divine guidance. This fixed star in the heavens held him on a spiritual course so that his human life, though beset with perilous winds, waves, and shoals, became a divine adventure.

In the pattern of unfoldment of the New Covenant of God with man, Joseph's life exemplifies in one figure the threefold nature of *Elohim*, revealed in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Recall that in the human experiences of these three patriarchs, the pattern of the Trinity was revealed and exemplified:

Abraham, together with Sarah, exemplified the compound nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*.

Isaac, together with Rebekah, exemplified the compound nature of divine Sonship, in which the masculine and feminine qualities of the divine Father-Mother are expressed.

Jacob exemplified the power of the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, or the Comforter, to reveal the holy relationship of God and man to the human consciousness — the power which transforms the human with the divine.

This threefold nature of Divinity was individualized in Joseph. In his life we see the power of the divine nature, revealed in the Trinity, triumphing over every adverse circumstance which befell him. Like Jesus' beloved disciple John, Joseph knew God as Love, everpresent divine Love. And although, while still a boy, he was separated from his family and his home through the envy and hatred of his brothers,

He was never separated from the Love of God.

He was filled with the Spirit of God.

And the grace of God, the radiance of divine Sonship, crowned him with spiritual dominion.

Let's review briefly the events in Joseph's early life as the Bible reveals them:

Joseph, Jacob's son, was born of Rachel in her father Laban's house in Haran, in Mesopotamia. Through trickery Laban had forced Jacob to serve fourteen years for his beloved Rachel instead of seven as promised. Laban had used every persuasion within his power to force Jacob to serve him. So mesmerized was Jacob by Laban's hypnotic methods that he continued to serve his uncle without pay, as a bond servant. But after the birth of Joseph, Jacob felt the stirring of the Spirit of God within him which changed his thinking from a sense of servitude to a sense of dominion. In Jacob's divine adventure the birth of Joseph signified the beginning of Jacob's own new birth and signaled the beginning of a whole new life for this soldier of God.

The first record we have of Joseph as he begins his divine adventure portrays him as a lad of seventeen years — an age considered to be very young in the Orient of that day. In that era a youth did not reach maturity until he was thirty years of age. We have heard nothing of Joseph during the seventeen years since his birth. We know that he was in the entourage when Jacob presented his family to his brother Esau at the Jabbok and to his father Isaac at Hebron. Now he is presented to us as though he were the firstborn

of Jacob, which his father considered him to be, because Joseph was the firstborn of Jacob's beloved wife Rachel.

The record of Joseph's divine adventure begins with an apparently simple statement concerning his father's residence in the land of Canaan. A casual reading of this statement misses the full import of the words:

And Jacob dwelt in the land wherein his father was
a stranger, in the land of Canaan.— Gen.37:1.

The passage, "the land wherein his father was a stranger," is also translated, "the land in which they sojourned." Although Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had dwelt in the land of Canaan for nearly two hundred years, they were still considered to be strangers, or sojourners, by the Canaanites, because they adhered to none of the customs of the land. Further, they continued to dwell in tents instead of building houses, as though they did not expect to make Canaan their permanent dwelling place. Although there is evidence that the tents of the patriarchs were huge, elaborate dwellings, the Canaanites considered them to be nomads. While there is no record that there was any enmity between Abraham's family and the Canaanites, there is also no indication that they became a part of Canaanite society.

The Biblical record of the generations of Jacob begins with Joseph:

These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being
seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his
brethren.— Gen.37:2.

The generations of Jacob are traced through the genealogy of all his sons. But during Jacob's sojourn on earth, the genealogy of Joseph takes precedence over that of his brethren. Why? Not only because Joseph was Jacob's most beloved son, but because, in Joseph's experience, we see the dominion of Jacob's divine nature, *Israel*, prevailing over all the vicissitudes which confronted this young man. It is natural, therefore, that the record of the generations of Jacob should begin with Joseph's spiritual unfoldment.

The passage, "the generations of Jacob," should rightly read, "the generations of Israel," or the unfoldment of Jacob's divine

nature. Israel's spiritual journeying is told through Joseph's divine adventure — a spiritual journey which took this beloved son far beyond the Tower of Edar in figure and in fact. (See pp. 541-544.) Joseph was indeed a true Israelite — a prince prevailing, or ruling, with God. But the record of the beginning of Joseph's divine adventure sounds overtones of what is to come, foreshadowing the type of resistance spiritual goodness meets in the world.

Joseph was feeding the flock with his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's two concubines, or secondary wives. The record states that "Joseph brought unto his father their evil report" (Gen.37:2). This statement has been interpreted by many to mean that Joseph made up an evil report of his brethren to bring to his father, or that he was, in the language of our day, a tattle-tale. But this is not true. The *Ferrar Fenton* translation of the Bible records: "Joseph reported their bad conduct to their father."

From what we have learned of these brothers, they were not above wrong-doing. Jacob had unhappy reasons for not completely trusting these sons. So far they had done nothing to win his trust. Very likely Jacob suspected them of some evil and sent Joseph to determine what was going on.

In a sense, Jacob made Joseph a kind of *overseer* of his flocks, a title which was given him in years to come — a title he justly earned. Joseph brought his father a report of the evil doings of his brothers, not because he wanted to put them in a bad light, but because he was required to bring to Jacob an accurate report of his flocks. While Jacob recognized Joseph's potential spiritual authority, he was unwise to give to one so young the task of overseeing his flocks. Further, Joseph was not yet ready to assert wise leadership or oversight of his brethren. Unfortunately Jacob let it be known that he preferred Joseph above his other sons. The record states plainly:

Israel loved Joseph more than all his children,
because he was the son of his old age.— Gen.37:3.

It was Israel, not Jacob, who loved Joseph more than all his children. It was Israel who recognized in Joseph the qualities of Godlikeness. Israel saw deeply into this child's character, and he

loved what he saw there. In its allegorical meaning, Joseph stood for Jacob's own higher nature Israel, which had been revealed to him at Peniel when he saw God face to face and saw himself, as in a mirror, as God's reflection. This is evident in the fact that when mention is made of Joseph and his father, it is Israel, not Jacob, who speaks. Israel loved this son of his old age. But the old age of Israel is not the old age of Jacob. The old age of Israel is his spiritual maturity which no longer has to struggle with the tempter to overcome its suggestions or temptations. It was natural for Israel to do what was right.

It is evident that Jacob's love for Joseph stemmed from his great love for his beloved Rachel. But it is clear that Israel loved this firstborn of Rachel because he saw in him a more spiritual nature than his other sons exhibited — a sense of virtue rare in those days, or in any day. He made no attempt to hide the fact that he considered Joseph to be his true firstborn. And he gave to Joseph the birthright of the eldest son because he saw in Joseph the true heir of the Covenant (1 Chron.5:2).

Israel knew that the son to whom he gave the birthright would have the double blessing of the firstborn, the Covenant blessing of Godlikeness, which would make him both priest and king to his brethren and their families when their father was no longer with them. This was the blessing of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek, revealed to Abraham. Israel thus bequeathed to Joseph both spiritual and temporal leadership, not only over his whole family, but also over his servants and herdsmen and over all who dwelt in their tents. And Joseph was worthy of that honor. Consequently Israel showered Joseph with all the rights and privileges of the elder son, making him a kind of crown prince. But Joseph was chosen of God, not of man. And his place in the pattern of unfoldment of the spiritual dominion of Seth's progeny, the seed of the woman, was established because in him the divine nature was gloriously expressed.

Israel made Joseph a coat of many colors (Gen.37:3). Joseph's coat was not a patchwork coat. It was whole cloth, all the more wonderful because the colors were woven in one piece of cloth. This coat was similar to the coats worn by elder sons, by chieftains, and by other persons of distinction. The spiritual significance of Joseph's coat of distinction is clear; it was typical of the Christly garment of righteousness. In his spiritual unfold-

ment, this gift from his father showed plainly that Israel recognized in Joseph's character the qualities of Godlikeness which made him worthy of the distinction accorded the wearer of the coat.

Could not the many colors in Joseph's coat be typical of the many beautiful facets of his spiritual character — facets which, like a prism, reflect the light of spiritual understanding and radiate the qualities of the divine nature in many colors, shades, or tones of meaning? Joseph's nature, so unlike that of his brothers, shone like light everywhere he went, causing everyone, except his brothers, to love him. However, the wisdom of giving a beloved younger son such a garment is questionable, it being usual with mankind to envy their very nearest relations their prosperity. And Joseph's brothers, filled with envy and hate, "could not speak peaceably unto him" (Gen.37:4).

Chapter XLV

JOSEPH'S PROPHEPIC DREAMS

Joseph's brothers hated him, not alone because he was their father's favorite, but also because he had dreamed a prophetic dream of his ascendancy:

And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

For, behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.— Gen.37:6-8.

There is little doubt that Joseph's brothers understood only too well what his dream portended — that he would indeed have dominion over them. They could not fail to be aware of his talents and of his physical attractiveness. Further, they must have known that their father had bestowed the birthright upon Joseph. Had Reuben or Judah, the elder brothers, been given the birthright, they probably would have honored them. But Joseph was too young to be accorded the respect due the elder son. However, their resentment toward Joseph went much deeper than this. All of them recognized Joseph's spiritual ascendancy. This they could not accept.

Joseph dreamed yet another dream, and again made the mistake of telling his brethren of it. It is unwise to show our spiritual treasures to ignorant, indifferent, critical mortals, lest "they turn and rend you" (Matt.7:6). In the second dream, as though to emphasize the vision of spiritual ascendancy revealed in the first dream and to stress the surety of the vision, it was repeated on a rising scale with different figures, designed to leave no doubt in Joseph's thought that God had shown him things that would surely

come to pass. In telling his brothers and his father of this second vision he said:

I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

And he told it to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What is this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother [his step-mother] and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

And his brethren envied him, but his father observed the saying.— Gen.37:9-11.

“His brothers envied him.” The word envy, from the Latin *invidere*, means not to see. One who envies does not see what God has prepared for him, and so he looks with envy on the good which another has. We do not envy those who have less than we have. We envy those who have what we would like to have. Joseph's brothers desired the spiritual dominion which belonged to him. But they showed no willingness to overcome hatred and envy, elements that completely separated them from the dominion of love, which was Joseph's divine authority and security.

Joseph's dreams were visions, or prophesies, of what was to come and prefigured actual experiences. Not alone was he to have ascendancy over his brethren through possession of the birthright, but even greater authority is foreshadowed. In a sense, it could not have been expected that his brothers would have felt kindly about this. Envy is a wicked thing. The brothers' vision of things to come concerned only their material prosperity. Instead of striving to reach the heights of Joseph's vision, they ridiculed his spiritual insight because it challenged their material outlook. Throughout the ages this attitude of mankind generally has hindered progress and persecuted those whose unfoldment has taken them above and beyond the common level of mortal thought and expectancy.

While Joseph's father rebuked him for telling his dream, possibly resisting the implication that he would bow to Joseph, or take second place to his son, still it should be noted that Israel observed what this beloved son had said and knew in his heart that the dreams were indeed visions which portended great ascen-

cy for Joseph. Had he known the events which were to precede that ascendancy, he would have prevented them. Certainly he could not have known that he himself would precipitate the occasion for those events.

And his brethren went to feed their father's flocks in Shechem.

And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said to him, Here am I.

And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me word again. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.—

Gen.37:12-14.

Again Israel sent Joseph in the role of overseer to determine whether or not all was well with his brothers and with the flocks. This was a role Joseph was to play in his divine adventure at home and abroad. He was, in a sense, being trained for his life work. Obviously Joseph felt no fear, nor did his father feel fear for him. Joseph must have proved his ability to care for himself many times during his brief seventeen years. But neither Joseph nor his father detected the smoldering envy which seethed within the brothers — envy so inflamed it threatened to explode into murderous hatred.

When Joseph came to Shechem he could not find his brethren.

A certain man found him, and, behold, he was wandering in the field.— Gen.37:15.

Joseph was lost, mentally and physically. The man who found him told him that he had heard his brothers say they were going to Dothan. The phrase, *a certain man*, indicates that the man was known to both Joseph and his brothers. Joseph found his brothers in Dothan, about twelve miles north of Shechem, in a field adjacent to the caravan route between Syria and Egypt.

The Brothers' Envy Exploded into Murderous Hatred

And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

And Reuben heard it, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again—

Gen.37:18-22.

Reuben reminded his brothers that "They were at all times in God's presence, and God is everywhere present; for wherever a man is there ought he to suppose that God is also." He also reminded them that they would never be able to avoid their own conscience. But his brothers turned a deaf ear to his pleading. (*Josephus*, Book II, Chap.III,par. 1, p.61.)

And it came to pass when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, his coat of many colors that was on him;

And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

And they sat down to eat bread.— Gen.37:23-25.

The picture which this account presents is incredible. The callousness of the brothers, except for Reuben, in calmly sitting down to eat a meal after casting their brother into a deep pit, is reminiscent of horror stories portraying the evil instincts of hardened criminals. And yet these brothers were all the sons of Jacob — young men who had parents who loved them, who had never known want of any kind. But their envy of a brother who outshone them in every way produced in them cruel hatred which caused them to act like sons of Belial.

Joseph must have known his brothers disliked him. But he could not have foreseen the deep-seated, vicious hatred they felt toward him. Picture him coming into the midst of his brethren and being set upon as though by robbers and thrown into a deep pit which might have had enough water in it to drown him. Those wilderness pits were often sixty to one hundred feet in depth and were used

as cisterns to store water during the rainy season. But the depth of the pit was as nothing compared with the depth of fear and confusion which must have overtaken the youth. There is no record of Joseph's thoughts at this time; but from what is known of his character we know there was no resentment in him, even though the brothers later admitted that they "saw the anguish of his soul when he besought us and we would not hear him" (Gen.42:21).

Reuben must have left the company to attend the flocks after Joseph was cast into the pit, for he was not there when the next incident in the dark drama took place. Both Ishmeelite and Midianite merchantmen — desert tribesmen — came by on their camels, going down to Egypt bearing spices, balm, and myrrh. Judah suggested that they sell Joseph to the merchantmen and not kill him, for said he,

He is our brother and our flesh. And his brothers
were content.— Gen.37:27.

Joseph Sold As A Slave

But Judah's motives were not pure. He knew that Joseph stood between him and the birthright. Judah's *Judas* nature suggested that selling Joseph for profit was a way to be rid of him without killing him. The brothers were instantly in accord with Judah's suggestion:

And they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit,
and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty pieces
of silver.— Gen.37:28.

Twenty pieces of silver! Nearly two thousand years later another beloved son was betrayed for thirty pieces of silver. (See Matt.26:14-16,36,47-50.) In one case, envy and hatred caused Joseph's brothers to sell him into slavery, that their evil nature not be rebuked by his virtue. In the other case, greed and jealousy impelled Judas, of the tribe of Judah, to betray his master, that his evil nature not be rebuked by Jesus' spiritual ascendancy. Both betrayals precipitated events which exalted the victims of hate. There was no evil in either Joseph or Jesus to respond to the hatred vented upon them. The love which they felt for one and all

made stepping stones of the evil intent of their adversaries, enabling them to rise to greater ascendancy.

When Reuben returned to the pit and did not find Joseph, he was distraught. He then sought his brothers to tell them that Joseph was not in the pit. He found them with Joseph's coat, which they had dipped in the blood of one of the goats in preparation for the lies they planned to tell their father (Gen.37:29-31). Whether or not Reuben knew what they had done is not known.

The brothers brought the blood-stained coat to Jacob and callously asked their father to identify it, implying that Joseph must have been destroyed by some evil beast. Indeed he had! By the evil, beastly qualities his brothers entertained and expressed. They said:

This we have found: know now whether it be thy son's coat or no.

And he knew it, and said, It is my son's coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.

And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days.

And all his sons and all his daughters rose up to comfort him; but he refused to be comforted; and he said, For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning. Thus his father wept for him.—

Gen.37:32-35.

Note that it is Jacob, not Israel, who mourned in sackcloth and ashes for Joseph and declared he would not stop mourning until he went down into the grave. His grief seemed to have completely robbed him of his dominion. He did not question Joseph's death, but accepted the evidence of the bloody coat as proof that his beloved son had been killed by a wild beast. At that moment, and for many years to come, Jacob was not the prince who had power with God and with men. He was a bereaved human father, mourning for the son who expressed the ascendant qualities of Israel.

Not one of his sons was moved compassionately to tell Jacob the truth. "They rose up to comfort him." What hypocrisy!

But what had become of Joseph?

The Midianites sold him into Egypt unto Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's, and captain of the guard.— Gen.37:36.

Chapter XLVI

THE GENERATIONS OF JUDAH

Joseph's story is interrupted by a detailed account of Judah's departure from the family circle and of the beginning of *The Generations of Judah*. We read:

And it came to pass at that time, that Judah went down from his brethren, and turned in to a certain Adullamite, whose name was Hirah.— Gen.38:1

We do not know Judah's reason for leaving home at that time, the time when Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers. But we may assume that he feared both his father's wrath and that of his brothers if he confessed to the evil deed perpetrated against Joseph. The fact that Joseph's story is interrupted by the account of Judah's departure from Hebron gives credence to these assumptions. Further, the record implies that in going to visit his friend Hirah, the Adullamite, Judah was seeking to establish himself apart from his family.

Adullam, a city of great antiquity, is in the valley of Elah, about ten miles northwest of Hebron. While living there with his friend Hirah, Judah married Bath-shua, daughter of Shua, a Canaanite (Gen.38:2; I Chron.2:3, RV). So far as can be determined, Judah was the first of Jacob's sons to marry a Canaanite. They moved from Adullam to Chezib, or Achzib, a town not far from Adullam. Here Judah's wife bore him three sons — Er, Onan, and Shelah (Gen.38:3-5). And so begins *The Generations of Judah*.

And Judah took a wife for Er his firstborn, whose name was Tamar.

And Er, Judah's firstborn, was wicked in the sight of the Lord; and the Lord slew him.

And Judah said unto Onan, Go in unto thy brother's wife, and marry her, and raise up seed to thy brother.

And Onan knew that the seed should not be his; and it came to pass, when he went in unto his

brother's wife, that he spilled it on the ground, lest that he should give seed to his brother.

And the thing which he did displeased the Lord; wherefore he slew him also.— Gen.38:6-10.

Here, as in other Biblical passages, when Deity is depicted as doing something ungodlike, the writer interprets God's actions from man's point of view, and explains them on the analogy of human motives (*Dummelow*, p.15; Gen.6:6). It is evident that both Er and Onan died suddenly of unknown causes, and the superstition of the age blamed the deaths on the Lord.

For a man to die without issue was tragic in the eyes of these people. And for a woman to be without male children was even more tragic. In those days, and in many countries today, women were not permitted to inherit either their father's or their husband's estate. The law which decreed that a man marry his brother's widow was ostensibly to give security to the widow, for the first son of such a union inherited the widow's first husband's estate. But the real reason for this was to perpetuate the name, or line of descent, of the dead man. The penalty which a brother faced if he refused to bring up seed in his dead brother's name was to be disgraced in the eyes of his people (Deut.15:5-10).

Judah advised his daughter-in-law Tamar to return to her father's house and wait until his youngest son Shelah grew to manhood. But, fearing that Shelah might also die, as did his brothers, Judah did not keep his promise, and Tamar remained in her father's house. Meanwhile Judah's wife died, and he went to abide for a time with his friend Hirah in Adullam. Together the two men went to Timnath where Judah's sheep were pastured and where his sheep-shearers were at work. The rest of Judah's story seems incredible and repulsive to us today. Yet in that day the events which followed were considered to be within the law — the moral law and the legal law. The Biblical record tells in detail how Tamar outwitted her father-in-law:

And it was told Tamar, saying, Behold thy father in law goeth up to Timnath to shear his sheep.

And she put her widow's garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is by the way to Timnath; for she saw that Shelah was grown, and she was not given him to wife,

When Judah saw her, he thought her to be an harlot; because she had covered her face.

And he turned unto her by the way, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she was his daughter in law.) And she said, What wilt thou give me, that thou mayest come in unto me?

And he said, I will send thee a kid from the flock. And she said, Wilt thou give me a pledge, till thou send it?

And he said, What pledge shall I give thee? And she said, Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand. And he gave it her, and came in unto her, and she conceived by him.

And she arose, and went away, and laid by her veil from her, and put on the garments of her widowhood.

And Judah sent the kid by the hand of his friend the Adullamite, to receive his pledge from the woman's hand; but he found her not.

Then he asked the men of the place, saying, Where is the harlot, that was openly by the way side? And they said, There was no harlot in this place.

And he returned to Judah, and said, I cannot find her; and also the men of the place said, that there was no harlot in this place.

And Judah said, Let her take it to her, lest we be shamed: behold, I sent this kid, and thou hast not found her.

And it came to pass about three months after, that it was told Judah, saying, Tamar thy daughter in law hath played the harlot; and also, behold, she is with child by whoredom. And Judah said, Bring her forth, and let her be burnt.

When she was brought forth, she sent to her father in law, saying, By the man, whose these are, am I with child: and she said, Discern I pray thee, whose are these, the signet, and the bracelets, and staff.

And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more.

And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb.

And it came to pass, when she travailed, that the one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.

And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez.

And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zerah.— Gen.38:13-30.

The custom of levirate marriage, presupposed here, was widespread in primitive times. The narrative of Judah and Tamar is based on primitive custom; and it presents Tamar as a clever and praiseworthy woman, who succeeds, at risk to herself, in fulfilling her responsibilities to her dead husband. (See *The Abingdon Bible Commentary*, p.244.)

Although the law states that the firstborn of such a union shall succeed in the name of the brother who is dead, this was not true in the case of Tamar's first-born son Pharez. In the genealogy he is counted as the son of Judah, not the heir of Er, Tamar's husband. Through her union with Judah, Tamar became the ancestress of Boaz, the husband of Ruth, who was the mother of Obed and the grandmother of David. Tamar is also the ancestress of the Virgin Mary and of Jesus. She is considered to be a heroine in Hebrew history because at great risk to herself, she fulfilled her responsibilities to her dead husband.

Little is known of Judah himself beyond this historical occurrence. Some time after Joseph's disappearance, he appears to have assumed the leadership of the eldest son in the family of brothers. And in time to come, the tribe of Judah gained pre-eminence over the other tribes. (See Gen.43:3-10; 44:16-34; 46:28; 49:8-10.)

Chapter XLVII

JOSEPH IN EGYPT

And Joseph? What of him?

In Potiphar's House

Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.— Gen.39:1.

Two brief accounts tell the story. One records that Joseph's brothers sold him to the Ishmeelites and that the Ishmeelites brought him down into Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh's court. The other account tells of his being sold to the Midianites, and that they sold him to Potiphar. Whether or not there was bargaining for the slave between the Ishmeelites and the Midianites we do not know. But this does not change the fact that Joseph was taken down into Egypt and sold to Potiphar, chief of Pharaoh's bodyguard (Gen.37:27,28,36;39:1).

Joseph was but a youth of seventeen years at this time. Yet Potiphar immediately saw in him one who could be trusted. We do not know how old Joseph was when Potiphar made him overseer, or chief steward, of his house, but this young man had most certainly proved himself worthy of the honor.

And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.— Gen.39:2.

The Lord was with Joseph. God, who is Omnipresence, is with everyone everywhere. But mankind generally are unaware of this divine presence. They are blinded by fear and by the belief that something material or physical is more powerful than God. Joseph's faith in God's presence caused him to be conscious of the divine presence, Immanuel, ever with him. And like Abraham, Joseph's faith in God's disposal of events never wavered.

And his master saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand.

And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

And it came to pass from the time that he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.

And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not aught he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person, and well favored.— Gen.39:3-6.

Joseph had not wasted precious moments lamenting his lot. His captivity might well have been a miserable wilderness experience, but in Potiphar's house, he continued to express the same divine nature, or godliness, that he had expressed in his father's house. As with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Joseph had no choice but to be what God had chosen him to be — the representative of the Trinity. In him the threefold nature of the Infinite was individualized, and in him the dominion of the New Covenant was exemplified.

Note that God caused everything Joseph did to prosper. How was Joseph, a slave, able to express prosperity? Because within himself he was not a slave. He still ruled his own spirit. His divinity was alive and active, enabling him to be who he really was — the child of God.

It is well here to consider the meaning of the Hebrew word *tsalach* translated *prosperity*. It means to be wise, circumspect, hence intelligent, guided unwittingly; to break out; to be good; to make profitable; to be divinely blessed.

Everything Joseph's hand touched was blessed with the same blessing wherewith he himself was blessed. Potiphar's recognition and acknowledgment of God's hand in this servant's prosperity, dominion, and well-being caused him to be receptive to the same beneficence.

There is a close relationship between the Hebrew words *tsalach* (prosperity) and *barak'el* (to bless, or blessing) Both words carry the meaning of fruitfulness. The blessing of God causes the unseen

spiritual verities of God's creation, revealed in the original Covenant of Godlikeness, to become visible.

The blessing that was upon Joseph was truly the blessing of Israel, who prevails, or reigns with God, who has the dominion of heaven on earth, and finds favor with God and with men. The blessing of God, understood, enables *us* to be prosperous — fruitful in every good thing we set our hand to.

It is of more than passing interest to note that Joseph, who had not had previous training or experience in the science and art of overseeing an Egyptian household, was, however, made overseer in Potiphar's house and over all that he had. The Egyptian recognized in Joseph the qualities of an overseer — one who takes charge, who governs, who cares for others. Joseph justified Potiphar's faith in him. He prospered in everything he did and caused Potiphar to prosper also. How did Joseph accomplish this?

Repeatedly we are told that *The Lord was with Joseph*. The realization that he was never separated from God was the keynote of Joseph's life. He lived so close to God it was natural for him to be Godlike. It was natural that the triune divine nature of *Elohim* was individualized in this divinely good man.

He was conscious of God's *power* with him — the power of the Almighty God of Abraham. This realization enabled him to express the divine authority of God's Fatherhood.

He was aware of God's *presence* with him — the presence of the God of Isaac. This realization enabled him to express the radiance of divine Sonship — Immanuel, God-with-us.

He was ever mindful of the *Omniscience* of the All-knowing divine Mind as revealed to Jacob. This realization enabled him to express supreme intelligence, the link between the human and the divine.

This threefold divine nature of the Great *I AM*, thinking, speaking, and acting as his own divine *Ego*, told Joseph what to do, showed him how to do it, and gave him the ability to prosper, or complete every task. And he did it. There was nothing haphazard about Joseph. There was in him a wondrous sense of the oneness of science and art, of knowing and performing. Joseph fulfilled the Covenant demand of the Almighty: *Walk before me and be thou*

perfect. He was completely operative in expressing the threefold divine nature. This is the demand upon each one who hopes to express the Dominion of the New Covenant — the power of the kingdom of heaven on earth.

Joseph possessed three mighty Godlike qualities: wisdom, skill, and virtue. Well has it been said:

Wisdom is knowing what to do.
Skill is knowing how to do it.
Virtue is doing it.

To better understand the spiritual power of the moral integrity Joseph expressed, it would be well to consider the full meaning of the word virtue. From the Latin *vir*, or *man*, virtue means manliness, excellence, strength, manly courage, capacity to act, active power; capacity for power adequate to the production of a given effect; energy, potency, efficacy, conformity to a standard of right; chastity, purity, integrity of character. From *vir* we have such words as vim, vigor, and vitality. The one synonym for virtue is goodness, in which all the qualities of virtue are embodied and expressed. The antonyms of virtue are: weakness, ineffectiveness, impotence, evil, sin — qualities of the evil one. (Webster)

The Greek *dynamis*, translated *virtue*, means dynamic power, force, ability, strength, capacity. From this we see that a virtuous man or woman is dynamic, individual, expressing the *dynamis*, or power, of spiritual strength, infinite capacity, unlimited ability to perform.

These meanings of the word virtue give us a vivid picture of Joseph's character. The qualities of the divine nature he expressed are highlighted in the following sequence of events in his life:

Potiphar's Wife

And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.

But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;

There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee,

because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?

And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.— Gen.39:7-10.

Potiphar's wife is typical of sensuality, the first evil by which the tempter sought to undermine Joseph's morality and strength, rob him of his virtue, and thus keep him from succeeding in his God-mission — that of exemplifying the power of the divine *Ego* in man to triumph over the abortive ego called evil.

Because Joseph was so conscious of Immanuel — God's presence with him — he saw clearly that any sin is a sin against God, the Great *I AM*. Hence he could not and would not say, "I will" to sensuality's persuasions. Further, his virtue would not permit him to sin against his master nor against his own divine nature. His virtue was both protection and defense against evil — virtue, that priceless and precious attribute of God, or quality of the divine nature, which gives man power to resist all the snares of the serpent, the adversary, the tempter.

Potiphar's wife was infuriated when he continued to reject her. She determined that he would accept her or she would destroy him.

And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into the house to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within.

And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.

And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth,

That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice:

And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out.

And she laid up his garment by her, until his Lord came home.

And she spake unto him, according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou has brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me.

And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.

And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners were bound: and he was there in prison.— Gen.39:11-20.

In Prison

Although Potiphar's wrath was kindled against Joseph, it is evident that he did not wholly believe his wife; for death would have been the punishment for conduct against the wife of a master such as that with which Joseph was charged. The prison into which Joseph was cast was not a dungeon type of jail, but a place where the king's prisoners were bound, where those awaiting trial were held until their cases were tried, after which they were either pardoned or punished by the monarch.

One might expect that Joseph would have been overwhelmed at this dire turn of events in his life. But there is no record that he succumbed to resentment toward his master's wife and no indication that his spirit was broken. Nor was he tempted to believe that God had forsaken him. *Josephus'* account of Joseph's reaction to the unjust accusation and punishment presents a record of his trust in God's disposal of events, which vividly describes the character of Israel's beloved son:

Now Joseph, commending all his affairs to God, did not betake himself to make his defence, nor to give an account of the exact circumstances of the case, but silently underwent the bonds and the distress he was in, firmly believing that God, who knew the cause of his affliction, and the truth of the fact, would be more powerful than those that indicted the punishments upon him.— (*Josephus* Book II, Chap.V, Par.1.)

Well might one ask: Why did this virtuous man have to endure the bonds of slavery? Joseph was being tested for greater works. As the possessor of the double blessing of the firstborn of Israel, he must prove that he was worthy to bear the title of the Royal Priesthood of Melchizedek and to be both Priest and King unto

God in the land of Egypt — the land which was, metaphorically, typical of the world. Further, he was being called upon to prove that Israel's divine adventure could not be aborted. And he did prove that he was a soldier of God, who had power with God and with men. And what is even more significant to those of us who are seeking to learn from his example, he proved that no matter where he was, the Love that is God shone brightly in him and embraced all those with whom he came in contact.

But the Lord was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison.

And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.

The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the Lord was with him, and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper.— Gen.39:21-23.

Again we are reminded, *The Lord was with Joseph*. The divine *Ego* was his mind. The great *I AM* was the very "I" of his being, hence he expressed intelligence, wisdom, love. In other words, Joseph continued to be Joseph. The keeper of the prison quickly saw his trustworthiness and appointed him as overseer of the prisoners. And God continued to cause everything he did to prosper.

Joseph matured spiritually with every experience. He did not bemoan his fate. Because his heart was pure, his virtue remained intact. His wisdom, intelligence, gentleness, and unselfed love were apparent to all. Well might we say: How glorious is Israel's divine adventure in Joseph's life! In him we see the divine rising above the human every step of the way! Like Jesus' wilderness experience, in which the Master Christian was, in a sense, in training to detect all the devilish ways of the carnal mind and to learn how to overcome them, so was Joseph in training for higher work. All his spiritual sensibilities were being tested. Because there was no rebellion, no resentment, no hate in him, the divine nature had its way in him and shined forth! Israel's divine adventure continued to unfold in Joseph.

We do not know how long Joseph was in prison when something occurred which promised to change the course of events in his life.

And it came to pass after these things, that the butler of the king and his baker had offended their lord the king of Egypt.

And Pharaoh was wroth against two of his officers, against the chief of the butlers, and against the chief of the bakers.

And he put them in ward in the house of the captain of the guard, into the prison, the place where Joseph was bound.

And the captain of the guard charged Joseph with them, and he served them: and they continued there a season in ward.

And they dreamed a dream both of them, each man his dream in one night, each man according to the interpretation of his dream, the butler and the baker of the king of Egypt, which were bound in the prison.

And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad.

And he asked Pharaoh's officers that were with him in the ward of his lord's house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?

And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not Interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you.— Gen.40:1-8.

Interpreter of Dreams

It was believed that only the magicians and the wise men of Egypt were capable of interpreting dreams, and none was available in the prison. Joseph commanded the attention of the prisoners by declaring with authority that the interpretations of dreams belonged to God. He asked the dreamers to tell him their dreams, knowing that God, the All-knowing divine Mind, would reveal to him the messages foreshadowed in the dreams.

The chief butler told his dream to Joseph, and said to him, In my dream, behold, a vine was before me;

And in the vine were three branches: and it was as though it budded, and her blossoms shot forth; and the clusters thereof brought forth ripe grapes:

And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand: and I took the grapes, and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand.— Gen.40:9-11.

Joseph was in tune with Omniscience, the All-knowing Mind, the Great *I AM*. And so he was able to discern the scientific interpretation of the dream quickly. To the chief butler, who was the cup bearer to Pharaoh, he said:

This is the interpretation of it: The three branches are three days:

Yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thine head, and restore thee unto thy place: and thou shalt deliver Pharaoh's cup into his hand, after the former manner when thou wast his butler.— Gen.30:12,13.

And then Joseph made a request of the butler. In this plea we note for the first time a sense of urgency in Joseph's thinking concerning his imprisonment:

Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me unto Pharaoh, and bring me out of this house:

For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon.— Gen.40:14,15.

The chief baker, seeing that the interpretation of the dream of the chief butler was good, approached Joseph:

I also was in my dream, and, behold I had three white baskets on my head:

And in the uppermost basket were there all manner of bake-meats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head.

And Joseph answered and said, This is the interpretation thereof: The three baskets are three days:

And within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head from off thee, and shall hang thee on a tree; and the birds shall eat thy flesh from off thee.—

Gen.40:16-19.

The interpretations of both dreams were fulfilled at the appointed time. It came to pass on the third day, which was

Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast unto all his servants. And as the custom was on such occasions, the king pardoned some prisoners and condemned others. He lifted up the head of the butler and the baker — released them from prison. The chief baker was hanged, and the chief butler was restored to his butlership (Gen.40:20-22).

Yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.— Gen.40:23.

If ever Joseph was to question divine justice, now would have been the time. But he did not. Joseph continued to be Joseph. Israel's divine nature, the Spirit of God, continued to govern all his thoughts and acts. Israel's dominion was literally grinding to powder every suggestion that evil could change Joseph's divine nature and cause him to think ungodlike thoughts and do ungodlike things. The spiritual self-discipline and scientific mental balance which this young man embodied and expressed kept him from reacting sensitively to the experiences in which he found himself. His virtue — the power of divine goodness in him — prevailed. His spiritual equipoise kept him in balance. Though he knew it not, these experiences were testing him for a time to come when great honor and power would be bestowed upon him, when he would need to express the spiritual equipoise of his divine nature and not be over-balanced by sudden good fortune.

Two years passed by. Two full years, in which Joseph remained in prison with no apparent hope of release. There was no one to plead his cause. No one? Ah yes! God was still with him! And God was working His purpose out in a most unique way.

Chapter XLVIII

IN PHARAOH'S COURT

And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed: and, behold, he stood by the river.

And, behold, there came up out of the river seven well favoured kine and fat fleshed; and they fed in a meadow.

And, behold, seven other kine came up after them out of the river, ill favoured and lean-fleshed; and stood by the other kine upon the brink of the river.

And the ill favoured and lean-fleshed kine did eat up the seven well favoured and fat kine. So Pharaoh awoke.

And he slept and dreamed the second time: and, behold, seven ears of corn came up upon one stalk, rank and good.

And, behold, seven thin ears and blasted with the east wind sprung up after them.

And the seven thin ears devoured the seven rank and full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and, behold, it was a dream.

And it came to pass in the morning that his spirit was troubled; and he sent and called for all the magicians of Egypt, and all the wise men thereof; and Pharaoh told them his dream; but there was none that could interpret them unto Pharaoh.—

Gen.41:1-8.

The duty of the magicians, the wise men, or astrologers at the Court of Pharaoh, was to interpret the will of the gods as shown in visions, omens, or signs in the heavens, and to guide every act of the king's life. But none of them could interpret the king's dream. And the Pharaoh was greatly distressed. (See *Dummelow*, p.40.)

And now it was that the memory of Joseph, and his skill in dreams, came into the mind of the king's cupbearer, when he saw the confusion that Pharaoh was in (*Josephus*, VIII II, Chap.V, p.65.)

Then spake the chief butler unto Pharaoh, saying, I do remember my faults this day:

Pharaoh was wroth with his servants, and put me in ward in the captain of the guard's house, both me and the chief baker.

And we dreamed a dream in one night, I and he; we dreamed each man according to the interpretation of his dream.

And there was with us a young man, an Hebrew, servant to the captain of the guard; and we told him, and he interpreted to us our dreams; to each man according to his dream he did interpret.

And it came to pass, as he interpreted to us, so it was; me he restored unto mine office, and him he hanged.

Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved himself, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.— Gen.41:9-14.

The statement, "he shaved himself," calls to mind the fact that while the Hebrews were very proud of their beards, the Egyptians never allowed hair to grow on their faces unless they were in mourning. It was necessary, therefore, for Joseph to be clean shaven and dressed in proper clothing before being brought before Pharaoh.

We have no record whether in Scripture or in other sacred writings of Joseph's feelings when he knew he was going to stand before Pharaoh. He had been in Egypt for thirteen years, and much of that time had been spent in prison. Even during the years when he was in Potiphar's house occupying an honored position, he was still a bondman, a slave. Now he was being called to interpret a dream that greatly troubled the king — a dream which confounded all the wisemen and magicians of Egypt. Joseph had no doubt of his ability to interpret the dream because he knew that the Omniscient, All-knowing Mind was with him. And so, clothed and in his right mind, Joseph stood before Pharaoh.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can interpret it: and I have heard say of thee, that thou canst understand a dream to interpret it.

And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me: God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.— Gen.41:15,16.

Joseph knew that it was not human intelligence but the Spirit of God, Omniscience itself, which saw through the dream to the truth which the dream foreshadowed. Pharaoh was satisfied with Joseph's reply and told him the dream (Gen.41:17-24). Then, with divine authority, Joseph made known to the king the scientific interpretation thereof:

The dream of Pharaoh is one: God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do.

The seven good kine are seven years; and the seven good ears are seven years: the dream is one. [Both dreams have the same significance.]

And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them are seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine.

This is the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh.

Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:

And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;

And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of the famine following; for it shall be very grievous.

And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass. — Gen.41:25-32.

The east wind which blasted the corn was a destructive parching wind from the desert which dried up the land, destroyed crops, and brought plagues of locusts and other pests to Egypt. The east wind was used symbolically and in dreams to denote devastating destructive action. The significance of the double dream, as Joseph interpreted it, was not lost on the king. He knew that the prophecy embodied in the dream was certain and would shortly come to pass.

While Joseph's spiritual vision saw in the dream a foreshadowing of things to come — great plenty followed by chaos and destruction — his scientific vision also saw the way to circumvent the plague which the carnal mind had determined against

Egypt — its people and its royal house. He saw that the great abundance which would surely come must be cherished, not squandered or wasted. Expressing the wisdom of Omniscience, Joseph hastened to give sound advice to the king:

Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

Let Pharaoh do this, and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.

And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine.— Gen.41:33-36.

Pharaoh perceived that Joseph's answer was good. All in the royal court were greatly impressed with his interpretive ability and sound wisdom. That Joseph could interpret a dream which completely baffled the wise men of Egypt astounded the whole assembly. The king knew that he must find a man to execute the plan Joseph so wisely outlined: "A man in whom the spirit of God is," "a man in whom the enduring source of inward illumination and intellectual power is expressed" (Gen.41:38; *IB, Vol.1, p. 777*). Turning to Joseph, the king proclaimed:

Foreasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art:

Thou shalt be over my house, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt.— Gen.41:39-41.

Again Joseph is made an overseer! Pharaoh's commission also made Joseph a kind of prime minister and food administrator. The king took off his ring and placed it upon Joseph's hand — a ring which bore the royal seal of authority — thus proclaiming that Joseph was invested with full power of the crown to make and execute edicts. He arrayed him in clothing of fine linen such as the Pharaoh himself wore. And he put a gold chain about his neck — a

chain which was a definite mark of rank. Through Pharaoh, God restored to Joseph the royal robe of dominion which his envious brothers had taken from him.

Pharaoh also gave Joseph the second chariot — second in importance only to the Pharaoh's own chariot. He caused everyone to bow before Joseph as to royalty and declared him ruler over all the land of Egypt, proclaiming:

Without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot
in all the land of Egypt.— Gen.41:44.

Joseph's days of preparation had been completed. He had learned the lessons of his wilderness experience; he was ready for his ascendancy. He was divinely equipped for the great task before him — a responsibility as great as the royal recognition accorded him.

Israel's spiritual ascendancy had come to its communion in Joseph's divine adventure. The climax of his spiritual journeying was at hand. The prince of God who had power with God and with men had come into his own. Pharaoh acknowledged that God was the source of Joseph's greatness. He seemed to sense that Joseph was in tune with Omniscience, All-knowing divine intelligence. The king also recognized in Joseph's spiritual ascendancy this transcendent fact: Joseph had the dominion or power which the Holy Spirit bestows on those in whom the Spirit of God is.

Pharaoh seemed to know intuitively that Joseph had the wisdom, skill, and virtue needed for so great an undertaking. He recognized that Joseph not only saw what needed to be done to save the nation; he also had the ability and the will to execute an intelligent plan. Though he knew not how to explain what he intuitively knew, the Pharaoh saw in Joseph the divine completeness indicated in the Trinity:

Man expressing the divine authority and spiritual maturity of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of God.

Man radiating the Godlikeness of divine Sonship in his humanhood.

Man being so filled with the Spirit of God he could demonstrate the power of the Holy Spirit to save a whole nation from disaster.

Truly the divine Trinity, revealed and expressed in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was individualized in the man Joseph. This beloved son of Israel had learned to think, speak, and act with the divine authority of the Son of God.

And Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt.— Gen.41:46.

Thirty years old! What a lifetime this beloved son of Israel had lived since he was seventeen, when his brothers had sold him into slavery. The thirteen years of bondage were ended. But Joseph's mind had never been enslaved. He had continued to grow in grace and had reached the goal of spiritual maturity, which St. Paul called *the fulness of Christ* (Eph.4:13). Israel's divine adventure in Joseph had risen to its first great climax!

Seest thou a man diligent in his business (skillful at his craft — NEB)? he shall stand before kings: he shall not stand before (serve) mean men.—

Prov.22:29.

Joseph's New Name

Pharaoh gave Joseph his new name, an Egyptian name — *Zaphnathpaaneah* — translated *God, the living One, has spoken*. (See Gen.41:45; *Dummelow*, p.41.) Could there be a more definitive name describing the nature of the Great *I AM!* The name also denotes *The Revealer of Secrets* (*Josephus*, Book II, Chap. VI, p.66). Joseph's new name gives us a faint idea of Pharaoh's concept of this young Israelite. His new name is not associated with any Egyptian god, but is a divinely royal name, signifying that Joseph knew secret things of God. Joseph lived so close to God he was at-one with The Almighty. He literally and figuratively imaged forth the divine likeness.

Although Joseph's new name is not mentioned again in Scripture, it is abundantly evident that the people of Egypt knew him as *Zaphnathpaaneah*, The Revealer of Secrets, the man in whom the Spirit of God is — the man in whom the Living One, the *I AM*, has spoken!

Joseph's Egyptian Wife

And Pharaoh ... gave him (Joseph) to wife Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah priest of On.— Gen.41:45.

On, or Heliopolis, city of the sun, was seven miles northeast of present day Cairo. It was the center of the worship of *Ra*, the sun god. Although Asenath was a pagan, there is no evidence that Joseph was influenced by her beliefs. This marriage probably exalted Joseph in the eyes of the Egyptians and made them feel that he was one of them. But Joseph did not forsake the faith of his fathers because of his new ties. The momentum of Israel's divine adventure continued to bear Joseph onward and upward.

Who Was This Pharaoh?

Let us pause for a moment and look into the history of the man whom God had chosen to be the instrument through whom Joseph was lifted out of servitude and elevated into his native element of divinely royal dominion. Who was this man, this Pharaoh? He was not a native Egyptian. Actually he was a cousin, many times removed, of Joseph.

Recall that in the genealogy of Shem, Noah's son, an ancestor of Joseph, we learned that Eber begat two sons. One was Peleg, who migrated to Ur of the Chaldees. The other was Joktan. Archaeological research indicates that the Joktan group went out from Akkad, their home area, and settled in what is now Saudi Arabia. Before Abraham left Ur, some of them swept across the desert, invaded Egypt, defeated the Hamite-Egyptians, and became the colorful Hyksos, or shepherd kings of that land, who later befriended Abraham. It is generally conceded that the Pharaoh who exalted Joseph was one of the Hyksos kings. The elevation of Joseph to a royal position and the welcome later extended to his kinsmen was natural at the hands of a dynasty who was Asiatic like himself, but very improbable had a native dynasty, who hated foreigners, been in power. (See *Dummelow*, p.40.)

This also explains the Pharaoh's acknowledgment of God as the source of Joseph's wisdom, and his recognition of the power of the Spirit of God in Joseph, which enabled him to interpret dreams

and to make wise decisions in government. The Pharaoh had thus acknowledged that it was not education or experience which made Joseph capable of ruling wisely, but the Spirit of God within him, inward spiritual illumination. "He recognized that Joseph, the man of prayer, could also perform." (*IB.* Vol.I, footnote p.777.) Pharaoh, though apparently a pagan, knew something of the God of Noah — Noah, the noble ancestor of both Pharaoh and Joseph — and knew that the secret of Joseph's power lay in his closeness to God, in his knowing that God was with him.

Joseph as Viceroy of Egypt

The task of overseeing all the land of Egypt was a stupendous one, requiring unprecedented wisdom, planning, directing, regulating, and the delegating of authority. It also required knowledge of planting the right kind of food for storage, building of proper and adequate storehouses, and scientific know-how in storing food so that it would not spoil. Further, an overseer must find a way to cause the people to be enthusiastic about the work they were required to do. They must be shown that in working for the preservation of the nation they were working to preserve themselves.

Seven Years of Plenty

And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

And in the seven plenteous years, the earth brought forth by handfuls.

And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: and the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same.

And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number.— Gen.41:46-49.

Pharaoh's dream and Joseph's interpretation thereof were being fulfilled. There is no record of any harvest yielding such vast increase as that in Egypt during those seven plenteous years. Joseph's spiritual vision saw the land obedient to God's command

in the New Covenant recorded in the first chapter of Genesis: "Let the earth bring forth . . . Be fruitful and multiply!" Joseph *saw* this abundance spiritually; consequently he saw it manifested humanly — the visible supply emerging from the invisible infinite spiritual source, as Jesus did when multiplying the loaves and fishes.

One fifth of the abundant harvest was carefully stored away for future use. Joseph, as food administrator, wisely stored the fruitage of the land in the cities nearest the fields where it was grown. The fruitage of the royal lands was stored in the king's storehouses. The abundance was so great that "he left off numbering, for it was without number." The government tax on the abundant harvest was not excessive. In fact, it was less than most of us pay today.

Birth of Joseph's Two Sons

And unto Joseph were born two sons before the years of famine came, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him.

And Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh: For God, said he, hath made me to forget all my toil, and all my father's house.

And the name of the second called he Ephraim: For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.— Gen.41:50-52.

"Joseph called the name of the firstborn Manasseh." The name *Manasseh* signifies forgetful. Joseph, however, did not forget his former life — the longing for his father's house, the treachery of his brothers, the false accusation of Potiphar's wife, the years of imprisonment — in the sense that all memory of it was wiped from his mind. The name *Manasseh* carries rather something of the meaning of St. Paul's immortal words:

I concentrate on this: forgetting what is behind me and with hands outstretched to whatever lies ahead I go straight for the goal — my reward the honor of my high calling by God in Christ Jesus.—

Phil.3:13,14 (JBP).

"And the name of the second called he Ephraim." *Ephraim*, the younger, signifies restored, because he was restored to the

freedom of his forefathers" (*Josephus, p.66*). The name *Ephraim* carries the meaning: "God has caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." God had caused Joseph to be fruitful in the land of his affliction — fruitful not only in good works, but also fruitful in abundance of all good, which sprang from the seed of patience, forgiveness, and love for God and man.

Seven Years of Famine

Joseph was obedient in all things to the demand of the Covenant God had made with Abraham and his seed: "Walk before me and be thou perfect" (Gen.17:1). Walk ever mindful of my presence. Be perfect — be complete. And be active in your divine completeness. See what needs to be done, and do it!

And the seven years of plenteousness, that was in the land of Egypt, were ended.

And the seven years of dearth began to come, according as Joseph had said: and the dearth was in all the lands; but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.

And when all the land of Egypt was famished, the people cried to Pharaoh for bread: and Pharaoh said unto all the Egyptians, Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do.

And the famine was over all the face of the earth: and Joseph opened all the storehouses, and sold unto the Egyptians; and the famine waxed sore in the land of Egypt.— Gen.41:53-56.

Famine was in all the lands. But in Egypt there was bread. *Joseph was there!*

Joseph's plan was not a give-away program. The people must pay for their corn, for all their supplies. This was economically sound. Not for a moment did Joseph consider making Egypt a kind of welfare state. Only at the last, when the famine neared its end, did he give, without payment, seed to plant for future crops.

Apparently the dearth was at first felt in Egypt only. But like some wild, uncontrolled contagion, the famine spread over all the face of the earth.

And all the countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn; because that the famine was so sore in all lands.— Gen.41:57.

While a famine is extensive or widespread hunger, it is important to note that the Greek word translated *famine* comes from a root meaning: to fail, to be absent, to lack. A dearth of food is a destructive evil. But a famine is basically spiritual dearth, absence of spirituality, a dire lack of spiritual food, of right ideas which nourish mind and body.

There was a famine in Egypt, the physical land in which Joseph lived. But in the divine adventure of Israel, expressed in Joseph's journeying, there was no lack. *Israel commanded!* Spiritual insight (wisdom) had detected the evil beforehand; scientific know-how (skill) devised a plan to circumvent its evil effect — devastation and hunger; and the power of performance (virtue) executed that plan with precision.

Today the *times* are demanding of us that we be spiritual overseers of our home, country, world. Well might we ask ourselves: Is my spiritual vision clear enough to foresee my own needs and the needs of my country and of my world? Am I storing up spiritual riches against the time of famine, or dearth of spirituality, which seems to be sweeping over the world? Our future and the future of our country and of our world depend upon our answer.

Like Joseph, each one of us possesses the three great divine attributes: *wisdom, skill, and virtue*. Let us never forget that while wisdom, spiritual acumen, is knowing what to do, and skill, scientific know-how, is knowing how to do it, these powerful divine qualities remain merely theoretical unless we develop and express virtue, the art of performing, or putting into practical action, what wisdom and skill know.

Even now the famine, or dearth of spirituality, is sore in all lands. What are we doing about it?

Chapter XLIX

FAMINE IN THE LAND OF CANAAN

Joseph's Brothers go to Egypt to Buy Corn

Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? [Why sit ye still?]

And he said, Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither, and buy for us from thence; that we may live, and not die.— Gen.42:1,2.

Famine in the land of Canaan was nothing new. And it was not unusual for the Canaanites to go down into Egypt to buy food in time of drought. However, this was a most unusual time. There was famine in Egypt also. Yet Egypt was able to feed the people of other drought stricken lands. Why? Because the power of Israel was there in the figure of Joseph — the power of God with man, the power of the divine *Ego* expressed as supreme intelligence in individual consciousness.

Why had not Jacob-Israel foreseen the famine and provided for it in the land of Canaan — the land flowing with milk and honey, the land which God had given them for an inheritance, the land which, in Israel's unfoldment, was typical of the kingdom of heaven on earth? Jacob's eyes were blinded by grief — grief for Joseph, the precious son of the greatly beloved Rachel. He was famished, destitute of right ideas. He had not kept alive in consciousness the vision of the spiritual nature of the land revealed in the original Covenant of Godlikeness — the land which brought forth at God's command, and not because of soil, seed, or rain. With the loss of Joseph, Jacob seemed to have lost sight of his divine nature, Israel, which has power with God and with men and has dominion over all the earth.

When the famine became sore in the land of Canaan — the spiritual and the material famine — Jacob sent ten of his sons to Egypt to buy corn. He did not permit Benjamin, the youngest, Joseph's full brother, to go with them, "lest peradventure

mischief befall him" (Gen.42:4). Benjamin, Rachel's second son, seemed to have taken the place of Joseph in Jacob's affections. Not that Jacob had forgotten Joseph, but he felt that in cherishing Rachel's son Benjamin, he was still cherishing his beloved Rachel.

Joseph's Brothers Make Obeisance To Him

When foreigners came to Egypt to buy food at this time they had to go before Joseph, who was not only governor over the land, but also food administrator and had complete charge of the distribution of food. So Joseph's brothers came to Joseph and made obeisance to him with their faces to the ground — in fulfillment of his prophetic dream in Hebron (Gen.42:6; 37:7-10). Joseph knew them, but they knew him not. Not only because he was now a grown man and not the youth they had sold into slavery, but also because of the majesty and dignity of his appearance. To those who saw him Joseph was obviously an Egyptian of highest rank.

Picture if you can this scene! Joseph was a lad of seventeen years when his brothers had sold him into slavery. Because of them he had become a slave and a prisoner in Egypt for thirteen years. Now, more than twenty years after that fateful day when they had last seen him, he stood face to face with them. Through his spiritual ascendancy he had become a ruler in the land, second only in authority to the Pharaoh. It was within his power to avenge the injustice done him. But being Joseph, this he could not do. However, he had no intention of letting his brothers off lightly. Yearning for news from home, particularly concerning his father and his brother Benjamin, he questioned them closely under the pretext that they were spies, seeking out "the nakedness of the land," to determine where Egypt's defenses might be weak. They replied:

We are all one man's sons; we are true men, thy servants are no spies.

And they said, Thy servants are twelve brethren, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan; and, behold, the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not [not alive].

And Joseph said unto them, That is it that I spake unto you, saying, Ye are spies.— Gen.42:11,13,14.

Joseph implied that no father would send all of his sons on a mission to buy food. His brothers countered with the argument that no father would send all of his sons as spies into a foreign land. This was a new experience for the arrogant sons of Jacob. Up until this moment no one had ever challenged anything they did, except for the verbal reprimand Jacob had given them when Simeon and Levi had wantonly slaughtered the Shechemites. Sons of a wealthy and indulgent father, they had come to think of themselves as above reproach by anyone. Joseph knew this. He determined to teach them a much needed lesson. Each step he now took was to bring them back to the pit at Dothan and to force from them a confession. With royal authority, he declared:

Hereby ye shall be proved: By the life of Pharaoh, ye shall not go forth hence, except your youngest brother come hither.

Send one of you, and let him fetch your brother, and ye shall be kept in prison, that your words may be proved, whether there be any truth in you: or else by the life of Pharaoh surely ye are spies.

And he put them all together into ward three days.— Gen.42:15-17.

At the end of three days Joseph released his brothers from prison. But he demanded that one of them be bound in the prison until they returned, bringing Benjamin with them.

And Joseph said unto them the third day, This do, and live; for I fear God:

If ye be true men, let one of your brethren be bound in the house of your prison: go ye, carry corn for the famine of your houses:

But bring your youngest brother unto me; so shall your words be verified, and ye shall not die.—

Gen.42:18-20.

The brothers were now convinced that God was wreaking vengeance on them because of what they had done to Joseph. They talked among themselves, not knowing that Joseph understood their words:

And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of

his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.

And Reuben answered them, saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child; and ye would not hear? therefore, behold also his blood is required.— Gen.42:21,22.

Joseph turned from them and wept. At last he had heard some semblance of repentance from his brothers for the wrong they had done in selling him into slavery. That was enough for him. He forgave them, although, of course, they had no way of knowing that he had done so. But he kept Simeon and bound him into prison to await the brothers' return.

Then Joseph commanded to fill their sacks with corn, and to restore every man's money into his sack, and to give them provisions for the way: and thus did he unto them.

And they laded their asses with the corn, and departed thence.— Gen.42:25,26.

As they journeyed toward home one of them opened his sack at nightfall to give his ass provender, and he saw his money in the sack's mouth (Gen.42:27). Visibly shaken he said unto his brethren:

My money is restored; and, lo, it is even in my sack: and their heart failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?— Gen.42:28.

When they returned to their father, they told him all that had befallen them. Then they opened their sacks and found that every man's money which he had paid for the corn was in his sack, and they were sore afraid. When they told Jacob the reason for Simeon's absence — that he had been held as a hostage until they brought Benjamin to the governor to prove that they were not spies, but had told him the truth — Jacob denounced them, saying:

Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me.— Gen.42:36.

Reuben tried to comfort his father and to assure him that all would be well with Benjamin. He promised him that he, Jacob,

might slay his own two sons if he failed to bring Benjamin safely home again. But Jacob was adamant:

My son shall not go down with you; for his brother is dead, and he is left alone: if mischief befall him by the way in which ye go, then shall ye bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.— Gen.42:38.

This was certainly not Israel speaking, but Jacob, who, because of the possibility of losing Benjamin, as he had lost Joseph, forgot that he was a prince of God, having power with God and with men. He seemed to have lost all sense of dominion. How often, under distressing circumstances all of us have forgotten our strength, our divine authority, and acted like miserable mortals instead of like the sons and daughters of God that we are.

When Jacob and his family had eaten all the provisions they had gotten in Egypt, he commanded his sons to go and buy more food. But they reminded him:

The man did solemnly protest unto us saying, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother [Benjamin] be with you.

If thou wilt send our brother with us, we will go down and buy thee food:

But if thou wilt not send him, we will not go down.— Gen.43:3-5.

And now Jacob began to think of himself as Israel, and with authority inquired of his sons why they had told the man that they had another brother. His sons replied:

The man asked us straitly of our state, and of our kindred, saying, Is your father yet alive? have ye another brother? and we told him according to the tenor of these words: could we certainly know that he would say, Bring your brother down?— Gen.43:7.

Then Judah pleaded with his father to send Benjamin in his care; for otherwise all of them would die of starvation. After much persuasion, Israel said:

If it must be so now do this; take of the best fruit in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a

present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds:

And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight;

Take also your brother, and arise, and go again unto the man:

And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother [Simeon], and Benjamin.— Gen.43:11-14.

It is evident that the land of Canaan was not completely bereft of food, for they had fruits, balsam (a healing balm), grape-honey, which was exported to Egypt, spices, myrrh, nuts, almonds — delicacies which grew abundantly in Canaan. But they did not have the staples necessary for real nourishment.

It is interesting that Israel commends his sons to the mercy of God Almighty, the nature of the Supreme Being through which the Covenant of God with man was revealed to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. For the first time Jacob is roused to remember the nature of God as *El Shaddi*, the Hebrew name for Deity which reveals the powerful but tender mother love and care of The Almighty for Her people. Jacob had been so absorbed in his grief he could not lift his thought to see or to feel the divine power which had sustained him all his life.

Although Jacob prayed that the mercy of The Almighty be shown his sons, this remembrance of the Almighty power and mercy of God did not lift his thought sufficiently to cause him to feel and to express the omnipotent power of the Almighty Motherhood of God. How like human parenthood: It can withstand any rigors, hardships, or dangers for itself; but when one of the children is in danger, fear often overwhelms thought and shuts out intelligent action.

Why did not Israel himself rise up and go down to Egypt with Benjamin and the rest of his sons and stand before the man? The record might argue that he was too old. But that is nonsense. The Spirit of God moved in Israel with divine power. Jacob, however, could not seem to throw off the weight of fatherly fear and grief. And the prince who had power with God and with man seemed to be asleep.

This should be a lesson to us all. For, like Jacob, each one of us has the power of infinite Spirit, the divine Mind, within him; each one is a prince of God, ruling with God. But we literally bury this divine power in contemplation of ourselves as mortals and thus permit problems to overwhelm us.

When the brothers, accompanied by Benjamin, returned to Egypt, Joseph saw them before they came before him to buy corn. And he commanded the ruler of his house to make ready a feast. "For," said he, "These men shall dine with me at noon" (Gen.43:16). When the men were brought into Joseph's house they were afraid and were sure that he intended to accuse them of having stolen the money they had found in their sacks. So they hastened to speak to the steward of Joseph's house and told him of the previous occasion when they had come to buy food; how, after returning home, they had found their money in full weight in the mouth of each sack. They assured the steward they did not know who had put the money in their sacks, but fearfully added, "We have brought it again in our hand" (Gen.43:19-21). The chief steward replied:

Peace be to you, fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks: I had your money.— Gen.43:23.

The steward then brought Simeon out to them and brought all the brothers into Joseph's house and gave them water to wash their feet and gave their asses provender. Then they made ready their presents for Joseph. And when Joseph came they gave him the presents they had brought and bowed themselves before him to the earth (Gen.43:24-26). Again the prophecy foretold in Joseph's dreams was being fulfilled — that his brothers would bow down before him.

Joseph immediately inquired of his father:

And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?

And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive. And they bowed their heads, and made obeisance.— Gen.43:27-28.

When Joseph saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son — now a young man of about thirty years — he inquired whether this was the younger brother of whom they had told him. Joseph was almost overcome with emotion at the sight of Benjamin. He had not seen this beloved brother since he was ten or eleven years old and could only murmur: "God be gracious unto thee, my son," before leaving the room to weep in private (Gen.43:29,30). He returned soon, however, and ordered that the meal which had been prepared for his brothers be served. Although they ate in the same room, Joseph sat by himself, "because the Egyptians might not eat bread with the Hebrews; for that is an abomination unto the Egyptians" (Gen.43:32).

Joseph had arranged the order in which his brothers sat at table according to their ages, from the firstborn to the youngest. It is little wonder that the men marvelled one at another. He personally oversaw the food set before each one of them. "But Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs" (Gen.43:33,34).

The evening was a happy one. We have no way of knowing what the brothers thought of such hospitality extended to strangers. Nor do we know whether they might have been anxious concerning the final outcome of their visit. Perhaps they thought their "presents" had softened the man's heart toward them. The record says simply that they drank and were merry with him (Gen.43:34).

As soon as the morning was light Joseph's brothers left to return to their father in Hebron. What they did not know was that during the night Joseph had instructed the chief steward of his house to fill the men's sacks with as much provisions as they could carry and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth. Further, he instructed his steward to put his own silver cup in Benjamin's sack (Gen.44:1-3). Joseph had in mind a plan whereby he would know, beyond the shadow of a doubt, whether or not his brothers had really repented of their evil doing and whether their natures had been changed. As soon as his brothers had gone out of the city, but had not yet gotten very far, Joseph instructed his steward to follow the men:

And when thou dost overtake them, say unto them,
Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?

Is not this it in which my lord drinketh, and
whereby indeed he divineth? ye have done evil in so
doing. — Gen.44:4,5.

The steward overtook them and spoke as Joseph had directed. The brothers were astounded. They were confident that there was a mistake. They reminded the steward that they had brought again the money that they found in their sacks on the previous journey. They were so sure that they were guiltless they said:

With whomsoever of thy servants it [the silver cup] be found, both let him die, and we also will be my lord's bondmen.— Gen.44:9.

The steward replied that it would be according to their words: he with whom the cup was found would be guilty and the others would be free. Each sack was searched, beginning with the eldest. In the last sack — Benjamin's — the cup was found!

Consternation filled the company. Their joy and confidence were shattered. Fear almost paralyzed them. Did they perhaps remember Joseph's short-lived joy and hope when they lifted him up out of the pit, only to learn that he was not to be delivered, but was to be sold into slavery? Was that the reason they were as one in their determination to stand by their younger brother, although they apparently believed Benjamin had taken the cup? Regardless of their reason,

They rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city.— Gen.44:13.

When they came into Joseph's house, where he was waiting for them, they prostrated themselves again to the ground before him.

And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine:— Gen.44:15.

Joseph, speaking through an interpreter, spoke as one of the wise men of Egypt, who prided themselves on *divining* the thoughts and acts of others — of knowing through divination. It was known that all Egyptians of note were trained in this art.

Judah acted as spokesman for the brothers. He declared that they knew not what to say or how to clear themselves. He then declared that he knew of their iniquity, and it was for another deed they were being punished. He said further that all of the brothers

would be servants to Joseph, not Benjamin alone, in whose sack Joseph's cup was found.

But Joseph was not through. A final test was to be made. As though making a judgment against one guilty of theft but refusing to permit the innocent to be punished with the guilty, Joseph declared:

The man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father.— Gen.44:17.

Then Judah made a passionate plea for the release of Benjamin, offering himself as a servant to Joseph instead. Judah believed that Benjamin had taken the royal cup. Hence his offer of himself to receive whatever punishment should be meted out to Benjamin reveals a quality of nobility which had not before been manifested in his character. He came near to Joseph and cried:

O my lord, let thy servant, I pray thee, speak a word in my lord's ears, and let not thine anger turn against thy servant: for thou art even as Pharaoh.—

Gen.44:18.

After calling to mind everything that had transpired between Joseph and the brothers, Judah told Joseph of the conversations between himself and his father Jacob concerning the royal command that they bring Benjamin to Egypt and of Jacob's refusal to let Benjamin go (Gen.44:19-26). Then Judah continued his plea. And in this plea Joseph learned for the first time how his brothers had deceived his father concerning his disappearance:

Thy servant my father said unto us, Ye know that my wife bare me two sons:

And the one went out from me, and I said, Surely he is torn in pieces; and I saw him not since:

And if ye take this also from me, and mischief befall him, ye shall bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

Now therefore when I come to thy servant my father, and the lad be not with us; seeing that his life is bound up in the lad's life;

It shall come to pass, when he seeth that the lad is not with us, that he will die: and thy servants shall

bring down the gray hairs of thy servant our father with sorrow to the grave.

For thy servant became surety for the lad unto my father, saying, if I bring him not unto thee, then I shall bear the blame to my father for ever.

Now therefore, I pray thee, let thy servant abide instead of the lad a bondman to my lord; and let the lad go with his brethren.

For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father.— Gen.44:27-34.

Judah at last prevailed over *Judas*. He repented and thus redeemed himself. According to *Josephus* (p.71), all of the brothers besought Joseph to let them “deliver themselves up to destruction for the preservation of the life of Benjamin.”

Then Joseph could not refrain himself before all of them that stood by him; and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me. And there stood no man with him, while Joseph made himself known unto his brethren.

And he wept aloud: and the Egyptians and the house of Pharaoh heard.

And Joseph said unto his brethren, I am Joseph; doth my father yet live? And his brethren could not answer him; for they were troubled at his presence.— Gen.45:1-3.

“I Am Joseph, Your Brother”

Picture this scene! Joseph had known his brothers and had carefully planned events leading to this moment. But his brothers had no idea he was still alive. They were both stunned and afraid! They knew not what form of punishment might be in store for them. Mayhap they recalled Joseph’s dream which foretold their coming to bow down before him. Was he, who was now second in power to the reigning monarch of Egypt, going to enslave them? Certainly his actions toward them had been strange. Suddenly they realized that Joseph had carefully planned every event so that they would appear to be guilty of theft. What was he going to do now?

Joseph did not taunt his brothers with hints of reprisal against them. He did not say, "I am Joseph, a ruler in all the land of Egypt, who can punish you." But, with loving kindness, he said, "I am Joseph, your brother."

This great and good young man, in whom the Trinity was so beautifully individualized, knew that God, Good, directed every event in his life. Hence he could see that God's hand had been leading him through what appeared to be a wilderness experience. He seemed to know instinctively that God's hand had been moving long before it was revealed. Joseph's recognition that God's purpose for him had been unfolding right in the midst of all the evil that had been perpetrated against him is underscored in his forgiveness of his brothers:

Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.

For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years in which there shall neither be earing [ploughing] nor harvest.

And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.

So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God; and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt.— Gen.45:5-8.

The Hebrew *ha Elohim*, translated God, in this passage, with the definite article for emphasis, is *The Triune God Himself* (*Companion Bible*, p.64). Joseph's use of this Triune name for God indicates that his understanding of the nature of the Supreme Being has risen to comprehend in some measure the nature of Divinity revealed in the first chapter of Genesis and exemplified in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This threefold divine nature of *Elohim*, known throughout the Bible as The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, is exemplified in one figure — in Joseph.

Joseph's recognition of his divine status as the representative of *ha Elohim*, *The Triune God Himself*, enabled him to speak with the authority of The Great *I AM*. And now, in his reunion with his brothers, he identified himself with God, with the *I AM*, *the name*

of power. In all time to come this beloved Son of God identified himself with the divine completeness and dominion of *ha Elohim, The Triune God Himself.* Truly, this All-knowing, All-inclusive, Great *I AM* is *The God of Joseph.*

Now, with divine authority, as spiritual leader and temporal ruler — authority indicated in the royal priesthood of Melchizedek which he expressed in such abundant measure — he commanded his brothers:

Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph, God hath made me lord of all Egypt: come down unto me, tarry not:

And thou shalt dwell in the land of Goshen, and thou shalt be near unto me, thou, and thy children, and thy children's children, and thy flocks, and thy herds, and all that thou hast:

And there will I nourish thee; for yet there are five years of famine; lest thou, and thy household, and all that thou hast, come to poverty.

And, behold, your eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin, that it is my mouth that speaketh unto you.

And ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen; and ye shall haste and bring down my father hither.— Gen.45:9-13.

“God hath made me lord of all Egypt.” Not for a moment did Joseph claim that he, apart from God, had done anything. The Great *I AM* had done it all. The big “I” of personal sense had done nothing. “And ye shall tell my father of all my glory.”

With Joseph's dream of ascendancy fulfilled before their eyes, his brothers did indeed bow down to him. But he lifted them up, that they might share in his glory.

And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck, and wept; and Benjamin wept upon his neck.

Moreover he kissed all his brethren, and wept upon them: and after that his brethren talked with him.— Gen.45:14,15.

Joseph was a father not only to Pharaoh, but also a father to all his brethren. Israel's divine adventure in Joseph was truly glorious. He was in command. All the prophecy concerning Israel's divine dominion was being fulfilled in Joseph. And, like a

mother, he literally spread his arms to enfold all those close to him, to bring them into the same divine estate in which he lived.

And the fame thereof [the report] was heard in Pharaoh's house, saying, Joseph's brethren are come: and it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants.

And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Say unto thy brethren, This do ye; lade your beasts, and go, and get you unto the land of Canaan;

And take your father and your households, and come unto me: and I will give you the good of the land of Egypt, and ye shall eat the fat of the land.

Now thou art commanded, this do ye; take you wagons out of the land of Egypt for your little ones, and for your wives, and bring your father and come.

Also regard not your stuff; for the good of all the land of Egypt is yours.

And the children of Israel did so; and Joseph gave them wagons according to the commandment of Pharaoh, and gave them provision for the way.

To all of them he gave each man changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver, and five changes of raiment.

And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with the good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father by the way.

So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out by the way [that you do not quarrel among yourselves].—

Gen.45:16-24.

Pharaoh's gratitude to Joseph is seen in his joy that Joseph has been united with his brethren, and that his father is still living. His love for Joseph is seen in the royal command he issued: that all of Joseph's family come and abide in the land of Egypt under his protection and provision, in the lavish abundance with which he made provisions for the brothers' return to Hebron, and for the journey back to Egypt. Joseph had attained such ascendancy in Pharaoh's eyes that he is not only willing but eager to extend his love for Joseph to favor all that belongs to him.

Israel's divine adventure is hastening to its fulfillment in Joseph's experience. Soon Jacob would rejoin Israel's spiritual journeying.

Chapter L

ISRAEL AGAIN JOURNEYS IN JACOB'S DIVINE ADVENTURE

And they went up out of Egypt, and came unto the land of Canaan unto Jacob their father.

And told him, saying, Joseph is yet alive and he is governor over all the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart fainted, for he believed them not.

And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob their father revived:

And Israel said, It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.—

Gen.45:25-28.

All the years Jacob had believed Joseph was dead, *Israel, the soldier of God*, seemed to be asleep, as though buried in grief. But when Jacob knew that Joseph was alive, his spirit revived; *then Israel spoke*. After more than twenty years father and son were to meet again. Recall that when Joseph was born, Jacob had thrown off the bondage of servitude to Laban (Gen.30:25). Now, with the glad tidings that Joseph is alive, and that the visions of his ascendancy had been fulfilled, *Israel vivifies Jacob*; again the divine nature prevails over the mortal nature; again *Israel* journeys in Jacob's divine adventure.

And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-sheba, and offered sacrifices unto the God of his father Isaac.— Gen.46:1.

Although eager to go on and meet Joseph, Israel paused at Beer-sheba, on the southern border of the land of Canaan, for prayer and sacrifice. Beer-sheba — where Abraham and Sarah had lived, where his father Isaac had been born, and where Jacob himself had spent his boyhood!

What is the metaphorical significance of Beer-sheba in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? The well at Beer-sheba is called

“the Well of the Oath.” In the spiritual journeying of Abraham and Isaac, Beer-sheba stands figuratively as the place of their Covenant of Peace with men — a Covenant based on the understanding of their relationship with God, through which they found a harmonious relationship with men and with their environment. Before going into a foreign land, Jacob must needs be reminded of this Covenant of Peace with God and with men, which included a Covenant of Peace with his environment — a Covenant that gave him dominion in whatever land he dwelt.

In his pause at Beer-sheba Israel offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac. What did Israel sacrifice to the God of Isaac? In the words of St. Paul, he put off the old man; he laid on the altar a false concept of himself as Jacob, a mortal involving both good and evil. Further, he sacrificed a mortal, personal sense of himself as a human father hastening to be united with a beloved son. And from the Phoenix fire of true sacrifice, which consumes only the old mortal sense of man, Israel, the new man, arose. Now, instead of hurrying on to meet Joseph, he bowed humbly before the God of Isaac, the Almighty *I AM*, and listened for divine directions. Was it right for him to leave Canaan, the land promised as an inheritance for his progeny? Was this migration into a foreign land a part of his divine adventure? Was God’s will leading him down into the land of Egypt? The answer was not long in forthcoming:

And God spake unto Israel in the visions of the night,
and said Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I.—

Gen.46:2.

Note that God addressed Israel as *Jacob*. Further, *Elohim* spoke this old name twice — *Jacob! Jacob!* Was this a sharp reminder to our soldier of God that he had been too long thinking and acting like Jacob, not Israel? The response to God’s call indicates that Israel heard the summons, for certainly it is Israel, not Jacob, who replied: “Here am I.” Or, *Here I am. Israel, the very expression of the Great I AM*, felt the dynamism and authority of this *name of power* as his own divine *Ego*.

Listen prayerfully as the Great *I AM* inscribed the divine prophecy and promise of the uninterrupted unfoldment of his divine adventure in Israel’s responsive thought. And recall that in the Biblical record when God says *I, I am, or I will* to an individual, this is proof positive that there is a response within the in-

dividual — a clear indication that the message has been inscribed on the very tablet of his being as the I or *Ego* of his divine identity.

And he said, I am God, the God of thy father: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation:

I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes [he will be with you at the time of death and close your eyes].— Gen.46:3,4.

In Egypt Jacob's sons would multiply and increase and become known as the *Children of Israel*. Like him, they would be soldiers of God, representatives of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself. His children and his children's children had been chosen to let their lives be an allegory in which the continued unfoldment of Israel's divine adventure would be recorded. Through them the knowledge of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob would be written and given to the world. In Egypt, under the protection of beneficent Pharaohs, his people would become a multitude. There they would be cared for while they developed into a great nation. The universal nature of Israel's divine adventure, revealed at the Tower of Edar, had begun to spread abroad. The *I AM* had spoken!

Josephus' record of Israel's communion with God at Beer-sheba gives us further insight into the prophecy concerning the descent into Egypt, and the promised ascent out of it in years to come. God said:

When thy father would have deprived thee of the dominion, I gave it thee; and by my kindness it was that, when thou wast sent into Mesopotamia all alone, thou obtainedst good wives, and returnedst with many children, and much wealth. Thy whole family also has been preserved by my providence; and it was I who conducted Joseph, thy son, whom thou gavest up for lost, to the enjoyment of great prosperity. I also made him lord of Egypt, so that he differs but little from a king. Accordingly, I come now as a guide to thee in this journey; and foretell to thee, that thy posterity shall be many ages in authority and glory, and that I will settle them in the land which I have promised them. (*Josephus*, Book II, Chap. VII, par. 3.)

Note well the Almighty *I AM's* words:

I am the God of thy father;
I will make of thee a great nation;
I will surely bring thee up again into this land;
I will not leave thee until I have done that which *I* have
 spoken to thee of;
I gave thee the dominion;
I conducted Joseph and made him lord of Egypt;
I am come now to guide thee;
I inform thee that thy posterity shall be many ages in
 authority and glory;
I will settle them in the land which *I* have promised
 them.

The *I AM* spoke! And Israel heard!

With the assurance that the great *I AM* was with him and would speak as the "I" of his being and be the divine *Ego* of his people,

Jacob rose up from Beer-sheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry them.— Gen.46:5.

Jacob rose up . . . and the *sons of Israel* carried *Jacob* their father. Why this use of both his human and divine identification? While *Jacob* rose up as *Israel*, the sons of *Israel* thought of their father as *Jacob*. And their concept of him as an old man seemed to prevail in this record. For a time *Jacob* appeared to manifest the qualities of decrepitude instead of the divine energies of *Israel*. However this would soon change, and *Israel* would again have the dominion over *Jacob*.

And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, *Jacob*, and all his seed with him.

His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.— Gen.46:6,7.

And so began the great migration of the children of *Israel* into Egypt in fulfillment of God's revelation to *Abraham* (Gen.15:13,14). Imagine the extensive and hurried preparations for this unprecedented move. *Jacob* was a wealthy man, and like *Abraham*, there had grown up around him a veritable tent-city. In addition to

his immediate family of eleven sons, their wives, and we know not how many daughters and their husbands, their children, and their personal possessions, there were many household servants and herdsmen and innumerable cattle, sheep, and asses. To this number was added the Egyptian escort which Pharaoh had ordered for their comfort and safety.

Picture the caravan as it formed and moved on to the great caravan route of the fertile Crescent — the southern extension of the same route Abraham had taken when he came from Chaldea and Haran into the land of Canaan more than two hundred years before. Can you not feel the excitement and hear the songs of rejoicing as they set forth from a land devastated by famine to go to a land of abundant food, with a royal welcome awaiting them? There may have been many anxious thoughts concerning the move; some doubts about the wisdom of going into a strange country and away from their promised land. And Joseph's brothers — how did they feel about going to a place where they knew they would be under Joseph's oversight? But there was no doubt in Israel's mind. He knew he was acting under divine orders.

With God's assurance that He would bring the children of Israel again into the land promised them for an inheritance,

Israel went on more cheerfully for Egypt with
his sons and all belonging to them.
(*Josephus*, Book II, Chap. VII, par.4.)

Chapter LI

MIGRATION INTO EGYPT

And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons: Reuben, Jacob's firstborn.

And the sons of Reuben; Hanoch, and Phallu, and Hezron, and Carmi.

And the sons of Simeon; Jemuel, and Jamin, and Ohad, and Jachin, and Zohar, and Shaul the son of a Canaanitish woman.

And the sons of Levi; Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

And the sons of Judah; Er, and Onan, and Shelah, and Pharez and Zerah; but Er and Onan died in the land of Canaan. And the sons of Pharez were Hezron and Hamul.

And the sons of Issachar; Tola, and Phuvah, and Job, and Shimron.

And the sons of Zebulun, Sered, and Elon, and Jahleel.

These be the sons of Leah, which she bore unto Jacob in Padan-aram, with his daughter Dinah: all the souls of his sons and his daughters were *thirty and three*.

And the sons of Gad; Ziphion, and Haggi, Shuni, and Ezbon, Eri, and Arodi, and Areli.

And the sons of Asher; Jimnah, and Ishbuah, and Isui, and Beriah, and Serah their sister: and the sons of Beriah; Heber, and Malchiel.

These are the sons of Zilpah, whom Laban gave to Leah his daughter, and these she bare unto Jacob, even *sixteen* souls.

The sons of Rachel Jacob's wife; Joseph, and Benjamin.

And unto Joseph in the land of Egypt were born Manasseh and Ephraim, which Asenath the daughter of Potipherah priest of On bare unto him.

And the sons of Benjamin were Belah, and Becher, and Ashbel, Gera, and Naaman, Ehi, and Rosh, Muppim, and Hupplim, and Ard.

These are the sons of Rachel, which were born to Jacob: all the souls were *fourteen*.

And the sons of Dan; Hushim.

And the sons of Naphtali; Jahzeel, and Guni, and Jezer, and Shillem.

These are the sons of Bilhah, which Laban gave unto Rachel his daughter, and she bare them unto Jacob: all the souls were *seven*.

All the souls that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all the souls were *threescore and six*.

And the sons of Joseph, which were born him in Egypt, were two souls: all the souls of the house of Jacob, which came into Egypt, were *threescore and ten*.— Gen.46:8-27.

The apparent discrepancy in the numbers recorded in verse 27 is explained in Gen.48:5 and 50:23. While Joseph had only two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, he adopted Manasseh's son Machir, as his own. This grandson of Joseph is counted in the genealogy.

The record declares that Jacob's daughters and his sons' daughters were in the large company. But except for Dinah, the daughter of Leah, and Serah, the daughter of Asher, Zilpah's son, no other daughters are either listed or counted. Neither are the wives of his sons and of his sons' sons counted. Leah had died before the migration. But no mention is made of Bilhah and Zilpah, Jacob's two concubines, or secondary wives. Nor is mention made of all their servants, herdsmen, and their families. The total number of those who migrated to Egypt was considerably more than the threescore and ten listed in the genealogy, possibly hundreds, even thousands.

When Jacob "rose up from Beer-sheba" and departed the land of Canaan for Egypt, he was no longer the aged father. He was Israel, the prince of God, in full command of his journeying! The time required for the caravan to reach Egypt is not known. Since the distance from Hebron to the land of Goshen was more than two hundred miles, the travellers were on the road for a week or more. But Israel remained the leader of the journey. When they were a short distance from their destination, with patriarchal authority, he sent Judah to apprise Joseph of their arrival. And so Israel came in honor, with royal escort, into the land of Goshen (Gen.46:28,29).

As soon as Joseph knew that this father had arrived in Goshen, he went forth in his royal chariot to meet him. We may picture the

reunion of father and son after twenty years. Certainly it was a highly emotional scene. There was possibly little change in Israel's appearance from the time Joseph left him to seek his brothers in Shechem. But Joseph bore no resemblance to the youth, the shepherd boy, his father had last seen. To all appearances he was an Egyptian of high rank. His clothing, his demeanor, his royal chariot, the obeisance given him by the Egyptians, all spoke of Egypt, not of Canaan. But Joseph was still Joseph. He was his father's son. And their meeting left no doubt of the deep affection he felt for his father.

Israel greeted his beloved son as though he had risen from the grave. Joseph had indeed been resurrected. He had been forced to look to God as his Father. And he himself expressed so much of the Fatherhood of God he was known as a father to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians. And now he was to be a father to his own family.

Israel recognized Joseph's *spiritual* ascendancy. He seemed unimpressed with his son's *material* ascendancy. His joy at being united with Joseph was not alone that of a father finding a long lost son. It was divine assurance that his own mission had not been in vain; the periods of divine unfoldment would continue to unfold in Joseph, and the Covenant of God with man would be exemplified in him. He realized that the understanding of *the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob* — the Triune Divine Principle of the universe — was individualized in this beloved son. His statement to Joseph, "Now let me die, since I have seen thy face" (Gen.46:30), was not a desire to die, but an acknowledgment that when he was gone, the periods of Israel's divine unfoldment would continue through Joseph's divine adventure.

Joseph was eager that his people should be settled in a land to themselves and not among the Egyptians. Hence his reason for sending them to Goshen, in the extreme north of Egypt, lying east of the Nile — a region more or less isolated from the inhabited parts of Egypt. While he was ambitious for them to profit socially and intellectually from association with the more cultured Egyptians, still he did not want them to be influenced by the idolatrous worship of the sun god nor to be carried away by the pageantry and ritualism of paganism. He knew that his family was to be a *peculiar people* on the earth. As God said:

Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people.— Ex. 19:5.

Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.— 1 Pet.2:9.

After greeting his father, Joseph went to tell Pharaoh of the arrival of his family. But before leaving he gave specific instructions to his brothers who accompanied him what they should say to the king when they were presented to him. Joseph knew that the Egyptians considered shepherding as offensive to their usual sense of cleanliness, and he desired to do nothing that would offend the Egyptians who served and trusted him. But he was determined that his brethren should have a trade and not become wards of the state. They had always been in the cattle business, so to speak. But they also had sheep, goats, camels, and asses, and needed good grazing land for their great herds. And so, that Pharaoh might give him permission to locate his family in the land of Goshen, which was rich delta land and far from the highly civilized habitations of the Egyptians, he instructed his brothers thus:

I will go up, and shew Pharaoh, and say unto him, My brethren, and my father's house, which were in the land of Canaan, are come unto me;

And the men are shepherds, for their trade hath been to feed cattle; and they have brought their flocks and their herds, and all that they have.

And it shall come to pass, when Pharaoh shall call you, and shall say, What is your occupation?

That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers; Gen.46:31-34

Joseph's brothers were shepherds, but they were also trained cattlemen. It was the only occupation they had ever known. The land of Goshen was rich in pasture land. It was well suited to the pastoral life to which Jacob's family was accustomed. Joseph had skillfully led them into this land to await their meeting with Pharaoh. He knew intuitively that the king would be disposed to permit them to remain there, apart from the Egyptians, since the

shepherds of Egypt were considered to be an uncouth lot, and "every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians" (Gen.46:34).

Joseph took with him five of his brethren and presented them to Pharaoh, saying:

My father and my brethren, and their flocks, and their herds, and all that they have, are come out of the land of Canaan; and, behold, they are in the land of Goshen.

And Pharaoh said unto his brethren, What is your occupation? And they said unto Pharaoh, Thy servants are shepherds, both we, and also our fathers.

They said moreover unto Pharaoh, For to sojourn in the land are we come; for thy servants have no pasture for their flocks; for the famine is sore in the land of Canaan: now therefore, we pray thee, let thy servants dwell in the land of Goshen.

And Pharaoh spake unto Joseph, saying, Thy father and thy brethren are come unto thee:

The land of Egypt is before thee; in the best of the land make thy father and brethren to dwell; in the land of Goshen let them dwell: and if thou knowest any men of activity among them, then make them rulers over my cattle.— Gen.47:1,3-6.

The Pharaoh's gracious welcome to Joseph's large family was but an extension of the graciousness which he felt toward Joseph. No favor was too great to bestow upon the man who, through his wisdom and virtue, had saved Egypt from starvation. In helping Joseph's family, the king showed clearly his continued gratitude and love toward Joseph and his recognition that Joseph was indeed "a man in whom the Spirit of God is." Not only was the best of the land offered to Joseph's family, but positions of honor — "rulers over my cattle" — were offered to his brothers.

When Joseph brought his father Jacob, and presented him to Pharaoh, it was *Israel* who, with patriarchal authority, blessed the king. Israel knew that the prince of God had ascendancy, even over the Pharaoh of Egypt. And it was the prince of God who invoked God's blessing upon this great and good man.

Pharaoh asked Israel how old he was. This was not an impertinent question. In the ancient Orient, and even today, a man's great age was regarded with honor. Israel answered that the days of his pilgrimage were few, but an hundred and thirty years, as

compared with the days of the life of his fathers in the days of their pilgrimage (Gen.47:9). Abraham was one hundred seventy five years and Isaac one hundred eighty years at the end of their sojourn on earth. But Israel hastened to say that the actual years of his life were as nothing compared with the good which had unfolded, and with the present good of being united with his beloved son.

Upon taking leave of Pharaoh, Israel again blessed the king. Or, rather, he pronounced God's blessing upon him — the blessing of dominion and fruitfulness, the blessing of happiness and prosperity, the blessing of divine favor (Gen.47:7-10).

And Joseph placed his father and his brethren, and gave them a possession in the land of Egypt, in the best of the land, in the land of Rameses (the land of Goshen), as Pharaoh had commanded.

And Joseph nourished his father and his brethren, and all his father's household, with bread, according to their families.— Gen.47:11,12.

Joseph's brethren bore the title of shepherd. But in Israel's divine adventure, manifested in Joseph's periods of spiritual unfoldment, it was Joseph himself who was the true shepherd, the spiritual overseer, the husbandman.

Having settled his family in their new home and cared for their needs, Joseph, like a true husbandman, turned to the needs of his adopted land. And so began a new period in Israel's divine adventure. The foundation was being laid for the spiritual journeying of the Children of Israel.

In Egypt these people would abide in what was then the most progressive nation in the world. There they would have the benefit of a higher culture than could be found in the land of Canaan. There they would be governed by laws, which they sorely needed. There, under the oversight of Joseph and under the protection of beneficent rulers, they would grow in number, unmolested, and be molded into a great nation, before returning to their promised land.

Chapter LII

JOSEPH AS STATESMAN

We do not know how many years the famine had been in the land when the provisions which had been stored up in the cities were exhausted. Only the food supplies in the royal storehouses were left. The people came from all over the land of Egypt, from the land of Canaan, and from other lands to buy bread, for the people of those lands "fainted (languished) by reason of the famine" (Gen.47:13).

Soon the money both in Egypt and in other lands "fainted," was exhausted. We do not know how the people in other lands fared in their distress. But in Egypt Joseph gave the people bread in exchange for their cattle and horses and flocks and herds and asses. After a year there was no money or cattle to barter for bread, and the famine was still upon them. The people came to Joseph begging him to buy their land in exchange for bread and for seed to plant the land so that it not be desolate (Gen.47:13-19).

And Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh; for the Egyptians sold every man his field, because the famine prevailed over them; so the land became Pharaoh's.— Gen.47:20.

The question has been asked: Why did not Joseph give the people food instead of demanding payment for it? Joseph seemed to know intuitively the danger of encouraging the people to look to the government to meet their needs. For such action, once begun, leads to demands for *give-away programs* and robs the people of their initiative and of their desire to work. There is no record of starvation in Egypt at this time. But a wise and steady hand was needed at the helm of government during those testing times. And Joseph expressed the wisdom which kept the ship of state on an even keel while caring for the people in a way which did not undermine either the government or its people.

At the beginning of the famine Joseph had moved the people from their lands into the cities where the food supplies were

stored. But as the famine drew to a close he gave them seed where-with to sow the land and sent them back into the countryside (Gen.47:23). *Josephus* tells us that when the river once more overflowed the land,

Joseph came to every city and gathered the people thereto belonging together, and gave them back entirely the land which by their own consent, the king might have possessed alone, and alone enjoyed the fruits of it. He also exhorted them to look on it as every one's own possession, and to fall to their husbandry with cheerfulness, and to pay as a tribute to the king, the fifth part of the fruits for the land which the king, when it was his own, restored to them. These men rejoiced upon their becoming unexpectedly owners of their lands, and diligently observed what was enjoined them; and by this means Joseph procured to himself a greater authority among the Egyptians, and greater love to the king from them. Now this law, that they should pay the fifth part of their fruits as tribute, continued until their later kings. (*Josephus*, Book II, Chap.VII, par.7.)

It is not known whether legal title to the lands was restored to the people, or whether they were to pay a fifth part of the fruitage thereof as rent to the king. But each was permitted to sow and harvest the land which had been theirs before the famine, keeping four-fifths of their fruitage for themselves.

According to the record in Genesis, the people did not feel that they had been unfairly treated. In fact they said to Joseph:

Thou hast saved our lives; let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

And Joseph made it a law over the land of Egypt unto this day, that Pharaoh should have the fifth part; except the land of the priests only, which became not Pharaoh's.— Gen.47:25,26.

Whatever was the real disposition of the land, the Egyptians were content. So far as they were concerned, Joseph had saved their lives. Further, he had saved them from being vassals of the state. He was their saviour, their guardian angel, their hero. And they loved him.

Chapter LIII

THE MANTLE OF ISRAEL FALLS ON JOSEPH

And Israel dwelt in the land of Egypt, in the country of Goshen; and they had possessions therein, and grew, and multiplied exceedingly.
(Gen.47:27.)

The sons of Jacob were diligent, industrious, and successful in many different undertakings. From later records we know that they did not confine their activities to shepherding. They were fruitful in many good works. They increased abundantly, and waxed exceeding mighty (Ex.1:7). It is true that Joseph continued to oversee all the activities of his brethren. But it is also evident that they responded to his shepherding. And although they were foreigners in the land, they became responsible citizens in Egypt. The Egyptians accepted them because they were Joseph's family. And Joseph saw to it that his brothers did nothing to offend the people who befriended them.

And Jacob lived in the land of Egypt seventeen years: so that the whole age of Jacob was an hundred forty and seven years.— Gen.47:28.

When Israel began to think of his age, he began to think of himself, not as Israel, but as Jacob, an old man who was ready to die. He felt that his pilgrimage on earth had been completed. He had seen his beloved Joseph fulfilling his great expectations of him. And he had seen in Joseph the continuation of Israel's divine adventure. But before leaving the scene, he knew he must warn his sons of the danger of settling in Egypt. This was not to be. He called Joseph to his side and commanded that when he died he was not to be buried in Egypt, but in the family burying place in Hebron — the site which Abraham had purchased from Ephron the Hittite (Gen.23:13-18). In this demand Israel sought to impress upon Joseph and all his sons the necessity of considering their stay

in Egypt as a temporary one. Joseph promised that he would fulfill his father's will. But this was not enough for Israel;

And he said, Swear unto me. And he sware unto him.— Gen.47:31.

Further, Israel made clear to Joseph that the birthright with its double blessing was his — a birthright which made him both spiritual and temporal leader of his brethren. Joseph must understand his place in the Covenant. Joseph must never forget God's promise to Abraham and to his seed:

I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.

And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly.

And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

Thou shalt keep my covenant, therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.—

Gen.17:1,2,6-9.

Then Israel told Joseph of the time when *El-Shaddi*, The Almighty God, had appeared unto him and repeated the same promise:

God Almighty appeared unto me at Luz (Bethel) in the land of Canaan, and blessed me.

And he said unto me, Behold, I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee, and I will make of thee a multitude of people; and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession.— Gen.48:3,4.

Israel felt the need of impressing upon Joseph the fact that the unfoldment of the Covenant relationship of God and man was the

real adventure before him. Whether or not Joseph had known of Israel's holy experience at Bethel, we do not know. But it is clear that Israel felt it was imperative that Joseph be reminded of this period of spiritual ascension.

With divine authority Israel insisted that Joseph realize that the understanding of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob was his real heritage; that this threefold nature of The Almighty was individualized in him. Further, Israel insisted that Joseph comprehend the vision of the ladder of life, set up on earth that reached to heaven, which symbolized heaven husbanding his earthly experience. For the brief space of his holy vision at Bethel, Israel had seen himself as a ladder whose feet rested on the earth even while his consciousness reached to heaven. *Now Joseph must see himself in the same light.* Joseph must realize that *he* is the messenger of the Covenant, in whose life the *link* between God and man, heaven and earth, the divine and the human, is to be exemplified. Israel saw in Joseph the nature of the husbandman, and he spent his latter days insisting that Joseph understand that he held this exalted office by divine right.

Israel reminded Joseph that the God of whom Abraham and Isaac were ever mindful was the same God who had shepherded him all his life; and that this God, *El Shaddi*, The Almighty *I AM*, was also the God of Joseph. Israel's words pointed to the Covenant demand: "*I AM* the Almighty God; Walk before me, and be thou perfect." Be ever mindful of the divine presence, of divine power, of divine intelligence omni-active in individual experience.

Israel further reminded Joseph of his experience at Peniel, when his life had been redeemed. He told of the mighty transforming Angel who had helped him to put off the old man and put on the new and thereby win his new name Israel, a prince in whom God commands (Gen.32:24-30). It was as though Israel was acknowledging that Joseph's wondrous sense of love had taken him up to a *Peniel* experience in which he too had seen God face to face, and his life was redeemed — the light of spiritual being shined on him. And that he too was a prince in whom God commands, a soldier of God in whom Israel's divine adventure would be continued.

In repeating the promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Israel was insuring that Joseph understood the nature of God, The Almighty, as *I AM* — the name or nature of the Supreme

Being through which the Covenant relationship of God and man is established. For this name of power manifested in man, is the divine *Ego*, which speaks with divine authority as the "I" of man's being.

Israel knew that Joseph had proved, and would continue to prove, that God was with him in whatever land he was. But Joseph, as the heir of the birthright and of the Covenant, must fully realize that the spiritual dominion of the Children of Israel was to unfold in the land of Canaan, not in Egypt. The divine promise was: "I will bring thee again into this land." Joseph must not permit his brethren to forget this. Their stay in Egypt, although a place in which they might prosper and find abundant material advantages, was not to be a permanent one. Israel was insistent that Joseph understand that the land of Canaan was the land that was to serve the purposes of God, where the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could become a nation and be known as the people of God. In this land Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had discovered the dominion of heaven on earth. Here, as the people of the Covenant, God would care for their seed so that they might be a blessing to all people of the earth. In the land of Canaan God would write His allegory of *The Dominion of the New Covenant* in the experiences of the Children of Israel.

Then, as though to further emphasize the will of God that the offspring of his sons must be known as the *Children of Israel* and must return to the land promised them by God, Israel claimed Joseph's two sons as his own, to be counted as the sons of Jacob in the genealogy. By this action, Israel insured that Manasseh and Ephraim would not become Egyptians. He knew that they had been reared as young princes in Egypt, enjoying the favor of the royal house. But Joseph must understand that they were children of Israel. Hear Israel's declaration of adoption:

Thy two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, which were born unto thee in the land of Egypt before I came unto thee in Egypt, are mine; as Reuben and Simeon, they shall be mine.

And thy issue, which thou begetteth after them, shall be thine, and shall be called after the name of their brethren in the inheritance.— Gen.48:5,6.

Joseph might claim as his own any other sons born to him, but Ephraim and Manasseh belonged to Israel! Although Joseph was a

ruler in Egypt, and a man's sons were an integral part of his glory, Joseph did not contest Israel's adoption of his sons. Joseph sensed a higher honor for himself than that of being the father of Ephraim and Manasseh. He was learning that he himself was the son of God in whom the promises God made to Abraham were being fulfilled. And that through him Israel's divine adventure would spread abroad to all nations of the earth. He discovered, as did Abraham, that his seed, the children of faith in all generations (Gal.3:7), are those who embody and express the glorious divine nature he embodied and expressed.

Now Jacob, not Israel, seemed to be reminiscing about Joseph's mother. He told Joseph of the loss he had felt when his beloved Rachel died, "when there was but little way to come" — to complete the journey from Haran to Hebron (Gen.48:7). It was as though he was reminding Joseph that his two sons belonged to Rachel also, that although Ephraim and Manasseh were born in Egypt, their matrix was in the land of Canaan.

Again Israel was in command. He saw Joseph's two sons and commanded:

Bring them, I pray thee, unto me, and I will bless them.

And Joseph brought them near unto him, and he kissed them, and embraced them.

And Israel said unto Joseph, I had not thought to see thy face: and, lo, God hath shewed me thy seed.— Gen.48:9-11.

We are told that Joseph brought his sons out from between his father's knees — an allusion to an adoption ceremony, wherein Israel had claimed them as his own (Gen.48:12). But the Covenant blessing had not yet been bestowed.

And Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left hand, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right hand, and brought them near unto him.— Gen.48:13.

In so doing, Joseph brought his sons before his father so that in bestowing the Covenant blessing on them, Israel's right hand would be placed on Manasseh the elder, and his left hand would rest on Ephraim's head. But this was not to be. Although Israel's

eyes were dim so that he could not see clearly, his spiritual discernment was unerring. Crossing his hands,

Israel stretched out his right hand, and laid it upon Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand upon Manasseh's head, guiding his hands wittingly (knowingly); for Manasseh was the firstborn.— Gen.48:14.

Israel first blessed Joseph, as the heir of the Covenant. He then blessed Joseph's sons, who were now Israel's adopted sons.

And he blessed Joseph, and said, God, before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the God which fed me all my life long unto this day,

The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads; and let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth.— Gen.48:15,16.

Israel insisted that Joseph understand that in adopting Ephraim and Manasseh, they would bear not only his name, or divine nature, but also the name or divine nature which Abraham and Isaac exemplified. In other words, when he said, "Let my name be named on them, and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac," he was saying: Let the name, or divine nature, of the threefold nature indicated in the Trinity, which Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob exemplified, be upon these beloved sons of Joseph. Let the Trinity be individualized in them as it was in Joseph.

Let them embody and express Godlikeness, the nature of the Fatherhood and Motherhood of *Elohim*.

Let them embody and express Christliness, the nature of divine Sonship.

Let them embody and express the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, or divine Comforter, which interprets the holy relationship of God and man to humanity and causes the invisible spiritual verities of God's creation to become visible to human sight.

When Joseph noticed that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, he raised up his father's hand to remove it from Ephraim's head and to place it on Manasseh's saying:

Not so, my father: for this is the firstborn; put thy right hand upon his head.

And his father refused, and said, I know it, my son, I know it: he also shall become a people: but truly his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his seed shall become a multitude of nations.— Gen.48:18,19.

As Israel prophetically foresaw, in years to come the tribe of Ephraim gained preeminence not only over the tribe of Manasseh, but also over the other tribes of the children of Israel. Israel saw God's hand at work in the present and the future. And this spiritual vision guided his hand *wittingly* — unerringly, knowingly.

And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless, saying, God make thee as Ephraim and as Manasseh: and he set Ephraim before Manasseh.— Gen.48:20.

Thus Israel adopted Ephraim and Manasseh as his own sons, with rights and privileges equal to his other sons. In so doing he prophesied that in time to come, tribes would be called by their names. And so Israel gave to Joseph, the elder son of his beloved Rachel, the blessing of the firstborn, with a double portion of the inheritance.

Israel foresaw that the seed of Ephraim and Manasseh, those who manifested the same natures as did these beloved sons of Joseph, would have ascendancy wherever they were. And that nations which think and act as they did would have ascendancy in the world. The world has not yet seen the complete fulfillment of Israel's prophecy. But we will see it! The Ephraims of this world will have preeminence. The Manassehs of this world will be great. And both will become a part of Israel's divine adventure and have the dominion of heaven on earth.

After blessing Joseph's sons and adopting them as his own, Israel once more speaks of his approaching death. Again he confirms Joseph's place as his firstborn, with a double portion of both the spiritual and material inheritance of his father:

And Israel said unto Joseph, Behold, I die: but God shall be with you, and bring you again into the land of your fathers.

Moreover I have given to thee one portion above
thy brethren, which I took out of the hand of the
Amorite with my sword and with my bow.—

Gen.48:21,22.

The mantle of the office of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek, which Abraham wore so majestically, had fallen on Joseph — an office for which he had been divinely prepared. He was in very fact both priest and king to his people and to the people of his adopted country. And he had complete dominion — the dominion of the New Covenant — the dominion of heaven on earth.

Chapter LIV

ISRAEL'S PROPHETIC BLESSING OF HIS SONS.

Jacob may have thought his work on earth was finished. But one more vitally important task remained for the prince of God to perform before his mission was fulfilled. He must tell his sons "what would befall them in the latter days." He must warn them of the inevitable outcome of the thoughts they entertained, of the character they expressed, even of the secret things in their hearts. He must make clear to them that what appeared as their outward experiences was but a projection of what constituted their inner being. He must be sure they understood the law embodied in the words voiced by the Master Christian centuries later:

Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.— Matt.7:17.

In a kind of preamble to his last words to his sons, Jacob demanded that they remember that Canaan, the land God promised to Abraham and to his seed, was their promised land to which they must return. No matter how attractive the land of Egypt might be to them, they must not forget that Canaan was their home. Canaan was the land in which they would grow to be a great nation — a nation dedicated to the worship of *Elohim, The Triune God Himself* — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

To insure that his sons would return to Canaan, their land of promise, Jacob had insisted that he be buried in the family burying place in Hebron. Then with prophetic certainty Israel declared:

God shall be with you, and bring you again into the land of your fathers.— Gen.48:21.

Then Jacob called his sons unto him and said:

Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last (latter) days.

Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel, your father.—

Gen.49:1,2.

“Gather yourselves together!” While this command had reference to a dying father’s demand that his children gather around him to hear his last words, note that it is *Israel*, not *Jacob*, who is speaking. Note the repetition of the command — a signal that his message has greater significance than his words indicate. In its metaphorical signification, Israel is saying to the sons of Jacob in the language of the New Covenant: “Be of the same mind one toward another. Let there be no divisions among you, but be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. Love as brethren; have compassion one of another.” In other words: “Be one people, one nation under God. Don’t let the carnal mind divide you up into little principalities or into fractions. There is strength in union.” (See Rom,12:16; 1 Cor.1:10, 1 Pet.3:8.)

Note again the patriarch’s words: “Ye sons of Jacob, hearken unto Israel your father.” The sons of Jacob must hearken — listen attentively, give heed to, and obey — the words of *Israel*, the man who saw God face to face, the divinely royal prince who rules as God commands. Just as God demanded that he put off the carnal Jacob-nature and put on the divine Israel-nature, so they must put off the carnal nature of the sons of Jacob and put on the divine nature of the Children of Israel. In the degree that they do this, they will be blessed with the Covenant blessing of dominion — The Dominion of the New Covenant — the dominion of heaven on earth.

What was this blessing that was so important to Israel, to his sons, and to their progeny? Recall that the Hebrew word *barak’el*, translated *blessing*, comes from a primitive root which carries the meaning of prosperity, to make successful in spiritual happiness and temporal concerns; to be divinely favored; to make holy. The sense is to go forward, to take off material limits, to magnify and increase. The promise is that the Covenant blessing of fruitfulness, increase, multiplication, prosperity, well-being, dominion over all the earth — the blessing of the ever-appearing goodness of God, divine good, revealed in the original Covenant of Godlikeness — would be theirs in the exact proportion to their faith-

fulness to the demands of the Covenant: "Walk before me and be thou perfect!" Walk ever conscious of my presence and be completely active in good works. (See Gen.17:1.)

In blessing his sons, Israel followed the precedent established in the very first chapter of the Bible. When God had finished bringing to light, or making visible, His creation, He pronounced on His offspring the blessing of divinity, of Godlikeness, which gave them the dominion of the kingdom of heaven on earth (Gen.1:26-28). Recall that when God sent Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph on their divine adventures, He likewise blessed them — that is, gave them divine authority to embrace their humanhood in divinity, to express the dominion of the kingdom of heaven on earth, to be prosperous, fruitful in good works. The divine blessing gave them power to triumph in every right endeavor and ability to bring their adventure to fulfillment. Now God is sending the Children of Israel on their divine adventure and is bestowing the Covenant blessing of dominion on them through Israel, the man of God.

The patriarch's last words to his sons might be called *Jacob's* last will and testament as well as *Israel's* direct prophecy embracing not only his sons and the tribes descending from them, but also all mankind. Metaphorically, the twelve sons of Jacob are typical of every type of humanhood. They are symbolic of varying degrees of worthiness, recognition, and acceptance of the Covenant relationship of God and man and its consequent blessing of dominion.

The divine blessing is not always evident in Israel's words, but it is there. A parent's rebuke of his children's faults of character which keep them from expressing the best that is in them is a blessing, though it may not be apparent at the time. And so it was that the divine Parent, God, through the loving human parent, Israel, points out the flaws in the children's character and demands that they be corrected so that *the Sons of Jacob* might be known as *the Children of Israel* and be worthy to receive the Covenant blessing of the dominion of heaven on earth.

With these thoughts in mind, let us read Israel's last words to his sons and seek to discover therein wisdom deeper than language can convey. A casual reading of his stern rebuke of several of his sons might seem like condemnation of them. One might conclude that there was no blessing for them, not even the hint of a promise of future redemption, no hope that they would

rise to express their divine nature and win their spiritual dominion. But this is not so. Each one was blessed according to his present worthiness — *blessings adapted to each*. The combined translations of Israel's words from *The King James Version of the Bible*, *the Septuagint*, *James Moffatt*, *Ferrar Fenton*, *J. B. Phillips*, and *The New English Bible* give profound insight into the patriarch's message.

Israel first addressed the sons of Leah, in the order of their birth.

Reuben

Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. Yet you are too imperious and too self-sufficient. Yours the height of rank and might, but lost by surging lust.

In the excess of thy insolence you burst forth like a turbulent flood. Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; you stained his wed-lock, you profaned it! — Gen.49:3,4.

Reuben's blessing was the excellency of power and dignity of might, strength, beauty, and compassion, which he expressed in marked degree. But Reuben possessed a lustful nature, a strong sexual drive. And Israel's words concerning his first-born son are a grave warning against sensuality, which undermined the noble qualities with which this young man was endowed. Israel saw in this beloved son a tendency toward instability, a turbulent nature that would keep him from excelling or gaining pre-eminence, and would make him unworthy of exercising spiritual leadership over the children of Israel.

Reuben's name, in the Hebrew, means provided in my affliction. But it also means son of a vision. He was so named by his mother Leah because in him, her firstborn, she saw occasion for her own elevation in Jacob's affections and in his household. She said:

Surely the Lord hath looked upon my affliction [Jacob's greater love for Rachel]; now therefore my husband will love me. — Gen.29:32.

The record we have of Reuben as a child reveals a promiscuous knowledge of sex. Recall he gathered mandrakes for his mother, in a superstitious belief that these love apples, as they were called, contained a magical potion that would produce fruitfulness in the womb. Later, as a young man, he became sexually involved with Bilhah, Rachel's maid, whom she had given Jacob to wife, so that she might have children by her. It would appear that Leah's preoccupation with sex had a tremendous influence on the young Reuben. And this sensual inner drive continued to dominate his adult life. (See Gen.30:14-17; 35:22.)

However, when thinking of Jacob's firstborn, let us remember that Reuben was the only one of Joseph's brothers who tried to save him from the savage hatred of the others (Gen.37:22). And remember always his admonition to his brothers that God would not overlook anything that polluted His presence. "For," said he, "Wherever a man is, there ought he to suppose God is also" (*Josephus*). Reuben was not an evil man; in fact, he was loving. But because he was "unstable as water," he lost the birthright of the firstborn.

Another meaning of Reuben's name gives us a clearer picture of his true nature. In S.Arab., the name *Raban* means chief, a name which more nearly describes Reuben's character. But because passion prevailed over reason, he forfeited the double blessing of the firstborn, which included not only temporal lordship over his family and their progeny, but also spiritual leadership of them.

Reuben is typical of those humanly good individuals who are not challenged to discover their divine nature. Human goodness is a virtue all must express. But without a divine overtone resting on a spiritual foundation, human goodness is not powerful enough to overcome the lust of the flesh, the temptations of the lower nature.

While Israel's words to Reuben told him explicitly the sin that kept him from receiving the birthright of the firstborn, Israel did not condemn this beloved son. Reuben was blessed according to his worthiness. Regardless of his shortcomings, he was blessed with "the excellency of dignity and the excellency of power." The blessing of the firstborn was there, waiting for him to fulfill the conditions of the Covenant of Godlikeness. But Israel was insistent that Reuben recognize and forsake "the sin which did so easily beset him." He must "walk in the Spirit" so that he not "fulfill

the lust of the flesh" — so that his lower nature would not dominate him and rob him of the full fruitage of good works. He must courageously fight to put off the sensuous nature that had been imposed upon him when he was conceived by his mother and put on the divine Israel-nature, the nature of the newborn man, the Peniel-nature which sees God face to face and reflects that Godlikeness. In the degree that he let the forces of the New Birth govern him, he would receive the double blessing of the firstborn of heaven — the Covenant blessing of the dominion of heaven on earth.

The Reubenites of this world will receive the Covenant blessing — even the Dominion of the New Covenant, spiritual dominion in all the earth. Sooner or later they will learn that the excellency of power and dignity and might, of strength, of beauty, and compassion which they had thought were simply good human qualities, are really divine qualities — qualities of the divine nature which triumph over the lust of the flesh — qualities so powerful they embrace the human in the divine and rule out every ungodlike element from their humanhood.

Simeon and Levi

Israel turned from Reuben to Simeon and Levi, Leah's second and third sons, and his words apply equally to each of them:

Simeon and Levi are a pair (alike). Their plots are ruthless stabs. Cruel weapons are hidden in them.

O my soul, come not into their council; in their secret conspiracy let not my passions be engaged. My honour, join not their clan! For they murdered guiltless men, joyfully murdered a prince, and hamstrung a bull:

Cursed be their enmity, for it was bitter. It sorely troubled Jacob, and Israel shamed. I will parcel them out in Jacob and scatter them among Israel.—

Gen.49:5-7.

So far as can be determined, the only time Israel used the word *curse* was in rebuking the vengeful and wanton cruelty displayed by Simeon and Levi at Shechem. But note that it was their enmity that was cursed, not the individuals themselves. Although the

brothers had defended their murderous action against the Shechemites as justifiable because the prince of Shechem had defiled their sister Dinah, Israel saw no justification for what they did. And even though more than fifty years had passed since the horrible crime, Israel did not let them forget that their atonement had not been accomplished (Gen.34:1-31).

While no blessing is apparent in the patriarch's words to these sons, a blessing must be there, since each son was blessed according to his present worthiness — *blessings adapted to each*. Perhaps the very rebuke voiced by this loving parent was the beginning of the repentance so sorely needed that would bring to light the blessing so greatly desired.

Simeon

Simeon's name in the Hebrew means God has heard, or hearing. He was so named by his mother Leah because at his birth she declared:

The Lord hath heard that I was hated, and he hath
therefore given me this son also.— Gen.29:33.

Leah was not hated. Had she been she would not have given birth to any of Jacob's sons. But she was not loved by Jacob as he loved Rachel, his dearly beloved.

The only personal incident related of Simeon, other than the massacre at Shechem, is the record of his being selected by Joseph as a hostage for the appearance of Benjamin, when the brothers went to Egypt to buy food. However, from what we know of his cruel nature, it is highly probable that Simeon, together with Levi, was the instigator of the plot against Joseph's life. Joseph's action of holding him as hostage lends credence to this probability.

Simeon is typical of those individuals who are hot-headed, animalistic, and cruel — individuals in whom self-will and self-justification dominate. Israel foresaw the need for many stern lessons for this son and for those who are like him before they are humbled and are willing to repent and forsake self — the will of the flesh. The prophecy is that they will be parceled out in Jacob and scattered in Israel — scattered among the other tribes and lose their tribal identity — before they are willing to go through

the gate marked *humility*. Many stern lessons await the Simeonites of this world before they learn that animal courage is not real strength. But they must learn to put off the carnal nature imposed on them at birth and put on the divine nature, their divinity, or Godlikeness, or they will not become worthy to receive, in this world, the Covenant blessing of the dominion of heaven on earth.

Sooner or later, in this world or the next, the Simeonites will learn what God's will is, repent of their animalistic ways, and be born again of the Spirit. They will discover their spiritual relationship with God. They will rejoice in being Godlike and in expressing the divine nature. They will learn that governing their own spirit is a far greater victory than taking a city or using material ways and means to overcome what they think of as avenging injustice. They will then be worthy to receive the Covenant blessing of the firstborn of heaven — the double blessing of both spiritual and temporal dominion — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

And what of Levi?

Levi

Israel's scathing words when addressing both Simeon and Levi need not be repeated (Gen.49:5-7). But it is well to recall that there was a blessing in the patriarch's words, since each son was blessed according to his present worthiness — *blessings adapted to each*. As with Simeon, so with Levi, the blessing is to be found in the rebuke Israel voiced — the rebuke which was needed to bring to light the evil in his nature that must be overcome before the blessing he so greatly coveted could be his.

Levi's name means my joining, associated, attached. He was so named by his mother Leah because, at his birth, she mistakenly foresaw a closer relationship with Jacob and a more dominant place in his household for herself. For, she said:

Now this time will my husband be joined unto me,
because I have born him three sons.— Gen.29:34.

After his joining with Simeon in the slaughter of the Shechemites and his joining with his brothers in selling Joseph into slavery, very little is known of Levi for many years. There is

some evidence of a slight change of heart when he, together with his brothers, offered to become bondmen to Joseph in Benjamin's place, at the time Benjamin was accused of having stolen Joseph's cup.

But Israel knew that this young man had not repented for his cruel deeds. Israel, whose Jacob-nature had been completely redeemed at Peniel, was keenly alert to the transforming influence of the Spirit of God, and he knew that Levi had not been touched by the Holy Spirit. He saw that the carnal nature expressed by this son, and by those who are like-minded, brings upon them the curse of gross materialism which both Adam and Cain brought upon themselves. The patriarch foresaw many wilderness experiences awaiting the Levites of this world before they forsake the carnal qualities of cruelty, pride, and self-righteousness. Humility is a virtue which seems foreign to them.

Like Simeon, Levi is typical of those individuals who seem to have a cruel streak in their nature. In them also is a strain of self-righteousness so great they claim self-justification for their attitude and for their acts.

Although Israel voiced no blessing for Levi, the blessing is present. The divine Father's rebuke of His children is not condemnation of them. And neither was the human father's rebuke of Levi condemnation of his son. The prophecy, "I will parcel them out in Jacob and scatter them in Israel," was fulfilled in a unique and unprecedented way — a way completely different from the way in which the tribe of Simeon was scattered. During their stay in Egypt they learned to know and love God. They learned how to serve the people of God. They learned the meaning of their Covenant with God. They learned humility in the stern school of hope deferred. So they became worthy to receive the blessing specially adapted to them. And out of the tribe of Levi came one who was to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and to their promised land (Ex.3:10-12).

When the Levites of this world learn humility, they will learn the spiritual meaning of the demands of the Covenant of Godlikeness and bow before them. They will learn what it means to be servants of God and to serve the people of God. Then they will be worthy of the Covenant blessing of both spiritual and temporal authority on earth — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

Judah

In the order of their birth, Israel continued his prophecy concerning Leah's sons, *with the blessings adapted to each*. Of Judah he declared:

Judah, thou art he whom thy brothers shall praise; thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall do you homage.

Judah is a lion's whelp; you have returned from the prey, my son, and crouch and stretch like an old lion asleep. Who dares rouse him?

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from beneath his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes.

His eyes shall be red with wine, bright as grapes, and his teeth white as milk.— Gen.49:8-12.

Israel's prophetic vision of the preeminence of the tribe of Judah is sounded in this blessing. The tribe is compared for its bravery to a lion. In fact, the figure of a lion on a pole became the standard of Judah. "The sceptre between his feet," refers to the custom of planting the sceptre or staff of a prince or chieftain in the ground between his feet as he sat and prefigures a royal line of kings issuing from him. "Until Shiloh come," is a prophetic phrase having Messianic significance, foretelling the coming of the Messiah, who would take from Judah the government of the Children of Israel and give them their new name. The vine refers to the abundance of grapes in the land of Judah, so abundant in fact they could wash their clothes in the juice. Israel foresaw that any land in which Judah abides will be rich in resources, for Judah himself and those who are like-minded, are resourceful and claim their blessing of fruitfulness, prosperity, and well-being.

Judah's name means: Let God be praised; celebrated — a name derived from his mother Leah's words at his birth, a name expressing her own rejoicing that she had born Jacob four sons:

Now will I praise the Lord; therefore she called his name Judah.— Gen.29:35.

The tribe of Judah did praise God. But as individuals and as a tribe they appeared to express a dual nature. Too often they were more interested in celebrating their own ascendancy than in praising God.

A weakness in Judah's nature was revealed at the time the brothers attacked Joseph with the intent of killing him. Reuben had saved Joseph's life by suggesting that he be placed in a pit, from which he could rescue him. But while Reuben was absent, Judah suggested selling Joseph to Ishmeelite traders for twenty pieces of silver. In this incident we see a foreshadowing of things to come. For it was Judas of the tribe of Judah who betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (Luke 22:47,48).

However, Judah's strength was revealed at the time Joseph was testing his brother's love for their father and for Benjamin, whom he had accused of stealing his cup. Judah begged that he, instead of Benjamin, pay the penalty for the theft — that of being made a slave to Joseph.

The only other record we have of Judah himself concerns his marriage, his three sons, and Tamar, his daughter-in-law, by whom he fathered twin sons (Gen.38:1-30).

The Judahs of this world have great potential for success. They bring many talents to fruition. They are honored and bowed down to. But often they seem to have a Judas-nature hidden deep within themselves. This duality can be healed as the Judah-nature, with its Godlike qualities, triumphs over the Judas-nature, with its carnal elements. But this type of mentality too often becomes proud and haughty and loses the humility and grace which made it great. Often too, as with the tribe of Judah, these individuals become so convinced of their own greatness they cannot admit that one comes who is greater than they. And in an effort to maintain their own ascendancy, the Judas-nature seems to prevail. However, the prophecy is that Judah shall triumph over Judas. One will come who will "dare to rouse him," to awaken him to express the full potential of his divinity, his Godlikeness.

The prophetic words of Israel concerning this beloved son were fulfilled and will continue to be fulfilled. Israel's spiritual vision foresaw that Judah would reign "until Shiloh came." And Shiloh did come! And then the government passed from Judah and rested

on the shoulders of the Messiah. "And unto him shall the gathering of the people be" (Isa.9:6,7).

Judah will, in time, acknowledge the triune nature of *Elohim*, the threefold divine nature of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. He will acknowledge the Trinity and express the nature of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and thus gain the dominion Israel foresaw for this kingly son — the double blessing of the firstborn of heaven — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

Zebulun

Israel departed from charging his sons in the order of their birth and spoke next to Zebulun, his tenth son, Leah's sixth:

Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon (Sidon). — Gen.49:13.

Israel's prophetic words declaring that "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea and shall be for an haven of ships," is particularly interesting. According to the record, their portion in the land of Canaan did not border the sea, either the Mediterranean or Galilee. But they had access to ports on the sea. The age-old industrial highway, The Way of the Sea, passed through Zebulun's heritage, which brought his land into touch with the outer world. Their success in maritime commerce indicates an exceptionally industrious nature, making the very best use of what they had.

The meaning of Zebulun's name is: habitation, dwelling place, desired, abiding, dowry — a name derived from Leah's words at his birth:

God hath endued me with a good dowry; now will my husband dwell with me, because I have born him six sons. — Gen.30:20.

We know little of the man Zebulun. But the record is clear that the tribe of Zebulun was industrious and unusually successful in maritime commerce, as Israel foresaw. Further, they were satisfied with their habitation, or dwelling place. Although they had no land actually bordering the sea, they made no attempt to

take possession of the heritage of others, but made arrangements with other tribes for use of their ports — arrangements that must have been beneficial to all concerned. They were endowed with a good dowry — a highly industrious sense.

Zebulun's name also means prince, or ruler. This meaning of his name was reflected in the nature or character of the tribe of Zebulun. There was a sense of royalty in their expression of dominion. It is not surprising that there were many great leaders within the tribe.

Zebulun is typical of those individuals who go quietly about their business without much fanfare. They are skillful in what they do, and their reward is in satisfaction of work well done. While there is no record of spiritual ascendancy in the Zebulun nature, the Zebulunites of this world are industrious, never extravagant, and they never lack. This type of mentality might be likened to those rugged individuals who are unimpressed by what others might think of them. In times of stress their neighbors know they can depend on them for help. But when their help is no longer needed, they return quietly to their own dwelling place.

Zebulun is also typical of those individuals who are receptive to advanced ideas, new ways of doing things. Consequently their mentality, or habitation, is often the dwelling place of many mighty works. They have an open mind and are fearless in launching out into the deep with new ideas. Their most outstanding virtue appears to be a quiet industrious sense which knows no lack — a sense which is confident of individual and collective ability to work together to do whatever needs to be done.

The Zebulunites of this world, those who think and act as did Israel's industrious son, will certainly rise to discover the spiritual nature of their success. Their outstanding humanly good nature will expand to comprehend and express the divine nature and win the Covenant blessing of the dominion of heaven on earth — the Dominion of the New Covenant. They will hear the divine commendation voiced centuries later by the Master Christian:

Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.— Matt. 25:21.

Issachar

Israel's words to Issachar, his ninth son and Leah's fifth, indicates that the blessing awaiting this young man was to be according to his ability to perceive "what was good.:"

Issachar is a strong ass and will become a robust and hardy race. He desired earnestly what was good, halting between two choices.

He saw that his land was a pleasant fertile country, inviting to repose. He bowed his shoulder to labour and became a husbandman. He will submit to foreign ways rather than risk his people and possessions by warlike efforts. And so he became a servant unto tribute. —Gen.49:14,15.

With keen prophetic insight into the character of this son, Israel drew a vivid picture of the future of the Issachar-mentality. He would become a servant rather than strive to be a master, with its attendant responsibilities. He would submit to foreign masters, rather than physically oppose them, if they would permit him to remain in his pleasant land.

The meaning of Issachar's name — hired labor — and a description of his nature is indicated in Leah's words at the time of his birth:

God has given me my hire, because I have given my maiden to my husband [referring to Leah having given her maid Zilpah to Jacob by whom he had two sons].— Gen.30:18.

While Issachar's name means an hireling, it also means, there is a reward. And in Leah's eyes, this son did bring her a greatly desired reward — that of having born Jacob six sons.

Except for the record of his birth, we know nothing of the man Issachar. From Israel's words we may infer that he was pleasant, easy going, well liked. Although "he desired earnestly what was good," he didn't seem to understand what was good. "He halted between two choices." It would seem that while he was strong and hardy as a young ass, he had a mentality associated with that animal. He was willing to work hard with his hands, but he shunned any responsibility that required him to make choices.

Issachar is typical of those individuals in all lands and in all generations who are physically strong, robust, and hardy, but who lack the intelligence that would make them masters instead of servants or laborers. They prefer to pay tribute to enemies, or submit to foreign ways, rather than to stand resolutely with what they have been taught of man's God-given mental and spiritual dominion. They are not consciously evil, but although described as "a strong ass," they are weak in spiritual resolution. They shun confrontation with others. They are willing to be dominated rather than face issues and handle them. It requires spiritual courage to stand for principle. And this Issachar seemed to lack. The Issachar-mentality will usually take the easier way in any situation, whether that way be right or wrong. They prefer peace at any price, or what they think of as peace.

How are the Issachars of this world to be roused out of the sense of being an hireling and find their reward — the blessing of the Covenant of the firstborn, the dominion of heaven on earth? According to Biblical records, Issachar's portion in the land was the richest in all Canaan. Metaphorically, their land, or consciousness, was and is rich. They do not need to go outside themselves to find their dominion. It is already within them. But it is dormant. The great need of such as they is to wake up! They must awake to the power of the kingdom of heaven within them, awake to the Christly demand with its promise:

Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his
righteousness; and all these things shall be added
unto you.— Matt:6:33.

The Christ is saying to all the Issachars of this world: "You don't have to be afraid that foreign powers, forces outside yourself, might take from you your pleasant land, what seems to be good. All the riches of heaven are now in the kingdom within you. Let these spiritual riches, divine qualities, be expressed. And their light within you will cause you to radiate and glow. You will light up your world. Then you will understand the oft repeated declaration of Scripture: 'God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good' (Gen.1:31). You will actually see and consciously possess the divine good you earnestly desire. And you will understand that it is yours, straight from God. Further,

you will not have to pay tribute to foreigners, to materialism in any form. You have dominion. God gave it to you."

The Issachars of this world will awake and discover what is good. They too will learn that the double blessing of the firstborn of heaven is theirs — both spiritual and human dominion — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

Dan

Israel turned from Leah's children to address Dan, his fifth son, the first offspring of Rachel's maid Bilhah. With keen spiritual insight, he looked deeply into the heart of this firstborn of the bondmaid and exposed the subtle animal nature he saw hidden in the Dan-mentality:

Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.

Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that the rider shall fall backward [a reference to the kind of warfare by which the Danites grew in power].— Gen.49:16,17.

And then, as though to assure this son that he had not spoken these words idly or in haste, Israel added:

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord.—

Gen.49:18.

It was as though Israel waited, and hoped, and prayed that something would be revealed to him concerning the character of Dan that would bring redemption for this subtle but dominant personality. But he could see nothing. And he left the outcome of Dan's salvation with God.

We know nothing of Dan as a young man, except that he had one son and that he migrated to Egypt with his family. But Israel knew his son. And in his prophetic words concerning him, the patriarch quietly warned his other children and all children of the world to guard themselves against the subtlety and cruelty he saw in Dan's mentality.

Dan's name means judge, to make decisions. This meaning is derived from Rachel's words at the time this son was born to her maid Bilhah:

God hath judged me, and hath also heard my voice,
and hath given me a son.— Gen.30:6.

Some commentators have associated the name Dan with Daniel. But there is a world of difference in the meaning of the two names. Dan's name carries the meaning, he judges. But Daniel's name, with the suffix *El*, God, means God has judged, or one whose decision and judgment are on a spiritual basis, with no selfish self-interest involved.

The meaning of Dan's name describes a nature or personality which judges, dominates, and make decisions for others through mortally mental means. The Dan-mentality is noted for duplicity, trickery, and craftiness. When this evil mentality strikes, it does so with the subtlety of the serpent so that it does not get the blame, any more than the serpent biting the horse's heels gets the blame when the horse rears and throws the rider. The one who rears is blamed.

Dan is typical of animal subtlety, the type of mentality of which the serpent in Genesis is typical — a subtle, tempting, mesmeric influence that persuaded Eve, and would persuade us, to disobey God's commandments. And, like the dragon in Revelation, it would attempt to obscure the spiritual nature of everything in earth and heaven.

The nature of Dan, though hidden, is exposed by Israel, the prince of God in whom the Spirit of God is. This evil nature would, through subtlety, lead others astray, undermine their good work, and/or cause them to say and do things quite unlike their divine nature. This evil seems at times to operate as one's own thinking. St. Paul detected this subtle influence when he said that while he desired to do good, he saw another influence or law at work in him, warring against the law of his mind and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin. But the apostle also saw that his spiritual nature could overcome this sin, this animal nature, and cast it out (Rom.7:15-25).

The Danites of this world are weak and cruel. The only way in which they can overcome those who are strong is through the use of subtle, silent suggestions which, like a kind of mental judo, would cause an opponent to unconsciously use his own strength against himself. They do not wage an open contest against others,

one which is decided by superior strength. They are typical of present day guerrilla fighters, versed in cunning strategy, wont to strike a quick blow from ambush at a passing troop. They shun open warfare against any large or powerful body. However, the Danites often become victims of their own strategy.

The Dan-mentality is never regenerated. Its influence must be completely cast out of consciousness. No part of this carnal-nature can remain. The Danites of this world must be born again — start anew and be re-named. There is no blessing for Dan or for the Danites of this world. Theirs is the “sin against the Holy Ghost,” against the spiritual nature of God in man. Of such the Master Christian declares that there is no forgiveness for them in this world or in the next (Matt.12:31,32). Even the beloved John in Revelation could see no gate, or way, by which Dan could enter the Holy City and find the Dominion of the New Covenant.

Gad

Israel turned from Dan to address Gad, his seventh son, and the first son born to Zilpah, Leah's maid:

Gad, a troop shall overcome (deceive) him: but he shall overcome at the last.— Gen.49:19.

It is significant that Israel turned from Dan directly to Gad. For, in a sense, Gad is typical of the scientific thinking which outwits and overcomes the Dan-mentality at the last. Israel saw in Gad, and in all those who think as Gad thought, one who refuses to be overcome by evil.

When Gad was born to Zilpah, Leah named him. The meaning of his name is derived from her words at his birth:

A troop cometh (or, good fortune cometh).—
Gen.30:11.

Gad's name carries the meaning: He that overcometh. A commentary in *Peloubet's Bible Dictionary* confirms Gad's resistance to being overcome of evil: “The character of the tribe of Gad is throughout strongly marked — fierce and warlike.” However, Gad was not an aggressor, but a defender.

Gad was endowed with qualities which his real mother Zilpah embodied. The name Zilpah means dignity, a state of being worthy. The name is also a title of nobility and honor, qualities which her son Gad, and the tribe which bore his name, expressed in marked degree.

Historically we know little about the man Gad. But his father has told us a great deal about the unique character of this beloved son and the power of the divine Mind he expressed. The Israel nature is revealed in him. He was noble, honorable, worthy. He had keen spiritual insight into the mesmeric nature of the mentality typified by the serpent and its hypnotic subtlety. And he refused to be overcome by evil in its many guises.

Like Jacob at Peniel, the Gaddites of this world will not rest until they overcome everything within themselves that is ungodlike, everything that would weaken them mentally or physically. This determination to overcome evil in themselves enables them to be strong and victorious in overcoming evil in its exterior material forms. There is nothing in the Gad-mentality that corresponds with, responds to, or is deceived by the subtlety of the serpent or the aggression of the dragon — the serpent grown to enormous proportions. They are warriors closely related to Michael, the arch angel of spiritual strength.

In a sense, Gad is typical of those scientific thinkers who are not easily fooled by the subtlety and treachery of the Danites of this world. They see through this evil nature. And even if they seem to be deceived by it at first, the prophecy is: "He shall overcome at last."

When thinking of Gad and the meaning of his name, thought turns instinctively to St. John's record of Christ's promises to those who overcome:

He that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

He that overcometh, and keepeth my words (perseveres in doing my will) unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations—Rev.2:7,26.

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out (he shall never leave it): and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God; and I will write upon him my new name.

And I will make them of the synagogue of Satan
(those supporting the cause of Satan while claiming
to be mine) to know that I have loved thee.—

Rev.3:12,9.

Those who think and act as Gad did will certainly win the Covenant blessing of dominion with its fruitfulness, prosperity, well-being. And they will continue to grow in grace until the triune divine Principle accomplishes its divine purpose in them. Then will they rise to the full recognition of what it means to be the firstborn of heaven and to have the full dominion of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek — complete dominion of heaven on earth — The Dominion of the New Covenant.

Asher

Again following the order of their birth, Israel spoke to Asher, his eighth son, the second son of Zilpah, Leah's maid:

Asher shall have rich food as daily fare, and he shall yield royal dainties (he shall provide dishes fit for a king).— Gen.49:20.

Asher's name means happy. However, it may also mean blessed. This meaning is derived from Leah's words at the time of his birth:

Happy am I, for the daughters will call me blessed— Gen.30:13.

Although Leah claimed Asher as her own, this son, like his full brother Gad, was endowed with the divinely royal qualities expressed by his real mother Zilpah — dignity, a state of being worthy, nobility, and honor. Zilpah shed her divine virtues on both her sons.

Little is known of Asher himself, except that he had four sons and one daughter *Serah*, or Sarah, a Hebrew name meaning princess, noble lady. The name also means, one who opens and explains. Serah is the only daughter mentioned in the register of the children of Jacob's sons who migrated to Egypt with him (Gen.46:17). The only other woman mentioned in the register is Dinah, the daughter of Jacob and Leah. What is the significance of

Serah in Asher's divine adventure? We are not told. But that there is a meaning to be discovered is borne out by the fact that Serah is mentioned not only in Genesis, but also in the numbering of the tribes in Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Chronicles.

Israel foresaw that Asher and the Asherites of this world would never want for their daily bread. He saw that they would be blessed with riches — the abundance of all good. And this son was blessed with a great inheritance — happiness and contentment.

Asher is typical of those rare individuals who are industrious and successful in everything they do and happy in what they are doing. The Asherites of this world prove that the reward of work well done is not meager, but royal. Yet they are so filled with the grace of God they do not engender envy and greed in others. Their defenses are spiritual, therefore they are impregnable. They feel secure, hence they are secure. They are blessed with the Covenant blessing of prosperity, increase, well-being, progress. They press forward moment by moment in their divine adventure, seeking to attain spiritual maturity. Like Gad, they have the dominion of the sons and daughters of God. And because the divine seed is firmly rooted in them, they will grow, increase, expand, and encompass the full Covenant blessing of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob — the Triune God Himself — the blessing of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The prophecy and the blessing Israel foresaw for this beloved son is fulfilled in all those who think and act as Asher did. The Asher-nature possesses the riches of heaven and expresses the royalty of divinity. The Asherites of this world naturally express the Dominion of the New Covenant — both spiritual and temporal authority in their earthly experiences. The dominion of the kingdom of heaven is within them — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

Naphtali

Israel spoke next to Naphtali, his sixth son, the second child born to Bilhah, Rachel's maid. The various translations of Israel's prophetic words indicate that he saw in Naphtali a sense of freedom, like a hind let loose or like the spreading tree which sends forth beautiful branches:

Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words.— Gen.49:21

Naphtali is a spreading terebinth producing beautiful branches. —*Dummelow*

Naphtali is noble, free, adventurous, swift, and is noted for the beauty of his youth. —*Abingdon Bible Commentary*.

The meaning of Naphtali's name, my wrestling, or struggling — a meaning quite different from Israel's concept of this son — is derived from Rachel's words when Naphtali was born to her maid Bilhah:

With great wrestlings have I wrestled with my sister, and I have prevailed.— Gen.30:8.

Rachel's words reveal her frustration and bitterness because she had born Jacob no children. She claimed her maid's son as her own and felt, in some measure, that she had triumphed over her sister's prolific child-bearing. But Israel prevailed in Naphtali.

Although there is no record of Naphtali himself except for the brief account of him in Genesis, we know a great deal about this young man because we know what his father knew of him. Israel saw this loved son literally springing forth, like a hind let loose, from his lowly origin, the slave girl. He saw the Israel-nature wrestle and prevail over the hereditary limitations that would have held his development on the level of his simple minded mortal matrix. From Israel's vision of him, we learn that Naphtali was noble, free, adventurous. His nature was divinely beautiful.

From Israel's words we also learn that Naphtali possessed the talent or ability to speak eloquently on any subject — an eloquence not dependent on educational processes. It was the gift of God. From Israel's words we learn too that Naphtali was skillful in fine workmanship. He succeeded in whatever he set his hands to.

Those who think and act as did Naphtali are a blessing wherever they go. They are always the friend in need. Though not of a warlike nature, they are able to triumph with spiritual strength over aggressors so that an enemy might well believe that the very heavens were fighting for him and against them (Judg.5:18-20).

The Naphtalis of this world, who wrestle and prevail over a mortal nature and express the qualities of the Israel-nature, will excel

in whatever they do. They are filled with wisdom and understanding. Those who think and act as did Naphtali are truly blessed. They will certainly find that they are safe in the Covenant relationship with God. They have the dominion of heaven on earth — the Blessing of the New Covenant. And in time they will come to understand that within them, waiting to be fully expressed, is the dominion of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek.

Joseph

Having blessed ten of his sons, children born to Leah and to the two handmaids Zilpah and Bilhah, Israel turned to the firstborn of his beloved wife Rachel:

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall:

The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him:

But his bow abode in strength, and their bow was splintered by the Eternal and their strength was broken, and the sinewy arms of their hands enfeebled.

Thence he who hath strengthened Israel is from the God of thy Father; and my God, the Almighty, hath helped thee and blessed thee with the blessings of heaven above, and with the blessings of a land having all things; blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts, and of the womb:

He hath made the blessings of thy father and mother more durable than the blessings of the everlasting hills. They shall be on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.—

Gen.49:22-26.

Israel saw nothing but blessings for this beloved son. Joseph was a fruitful bough, nourished by the well-spring of divine Life. His branches did indeed run over the wall, away from all the familiar patterns of unfoldment, into a spiritual dimension of thought and action. Israel foresaw great material prosperity for Joseph. But he saw the blessings of heaven far exceeding the abundant fruitage of the earth — the blessing of power, respect, honour, and fulfillment. Further, he saw Joseph, and those who are like-minded, expressing the completeness of majesty and wearing the crown of

spiritual dominion. Israel acknowledged that Joseph was worthy of the double blessing of the firstborn, even the Covenant blessing of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek.

Israel acknowledged that Joseph's ability to overcome the persecutions which had been heaped upon him was not because of physical strength, but because in him the Spirit of God triumphed: "His bow abode in strength, and his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob." These words are metaphoric. There is no record that Joseph ever used a material weapon or material ways and means to defend himself. His defense was his spiritual strength, "made strong by the mighty God of Jacob" — The Almighty *I AM*.

Joseph is the only one of twelve sons who learned to say *I AM* aright. Again and again we read, "The Lord was with him." Even the pagan king recognized that the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, Omniscience Itself, was in him. This All-knowing Mind, developed in him, made Joseph a scientific thinker, enabling him to discern what was unknown and invisible to the human mind. Hence his new name, pronounced in the language of Egypt: *Zaphnath-paaneah* — God, the Living One, has spoken, the revealer of secrets, a man in whom the enduring source of inward illumination and intellectual power is expressed (See p.589.)

Joseph's name in the Hebrew, *Yowceph*, has a beautiful and powerful meaning: increase, perfect, progress, complete — the completeness of majesty. These meanings, which describe his nature, are derived from Rachel's words at the time of his birth:

God hath taken away my reproach, The Lord shall
add to me another son. — Gen.30:23,24.

The name Joseph has a much higher connotation than we usually associate with the thought of increase. It means continued increase, or irresistible expansion from within. In Joseph's unfoldment, this irresistible expansion from within was increase of spirituality and divine illumination — growth to spiritual maturity. We can see why Israel called this spiritually gifted son "Nazir — one separated and consecrated, a prince prevailing with God" (*Dummelow, p.45*). Rachel had seen in Joseph's birth completeness and honor for herself. But Israel discerned in this beloved son the divine nature of the Son of God.

We know more of the human history of Joseph, both as a child and as an adult, than we know of his brothers. He was greatly beloved by his parents and was given the birthright of the first-born by his father. While still a teen-ager, he was entrusted by Jacob with the overseer duties of his great herds. He had dream-visions of his spiritual ascendancy, but he unwisely told them to his brothers, who both envied and hated him. He was sold by them into slavery and bought by Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh. He was loved and trusted by his master, but falsely accused by his master's wife and cast into prison. The keeper of the prison loved him and entrusted other prisoners to his care. His spiritual ability to discern the meaning of dreams brought him before Pharaoh to interpret a dream, the interpretation of which caused the king to make this young man head over all the land of Egypt, second only in power to the Pharaoh himself. He became a father to Pharaoh and ruled the land wisely. And Pharaoh gave him to wife Asenath, a noble Egyptian woman, who bore him two sons, Ephraim and Manasseh.

Joseph loved his way out of all his difficulties and gained the ascendancy which his own dream-visions had foretold. He was loved and respected in the royal court and in all the land. Joseph's interrogation of his brothers when they came to Egypt to buy food during the famine and his forgiveness of them reveal the very heart of this Christlike man. He was governed by divine Love all the days of his life.

While Joseph's human history tells us a great deal about him, Israel's prophetic vision tells us even more. He saw in this beloved son his divinely royal nature, and he bestowed upon him the double blessing of the firstborn. He invoked for him the blessing of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek which God had bestowed upon Abraham. Thus Joseph became both priest and king among his brothers and in all the land of Egypt.

Israel's blessing of Joseph leaves no doubt that he made Joseph his successor as both the spiritual and temporal head of the family and of the tribes. He reminded Joseph several times that he had given him one portion above his brethren. It is evident that Israel was determined that Joseph and his brothers fully realize what he had done. Joseph — not Reuben, not Simeon, or Levi, not Judah — had the birthright of the firstborn. His brothers and their posterity must recognize and acknowledge this.

And what does this mean to us? Even this: Only those who express the divine nature as Joseph did have the double blessing of the firstborn. Only such wear the metaphorical crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek. Only such can be both a spiritual and a temporal leader of their people and exercise kingship over their earthly experiences. In the degree that we manifest the qualities Joseph expressed are we blessed as he was blessed with the Covenant blessing and have the dominion of the Almighty God — the power of heaven on earth.

Joseph's inheritance in the land of Canaan, defined by Israel, was in fact, the double portion of the firstborn. It bore the names of his two sons, in accordance with Israel's blessing. Recall that Israel had adopted Joseph's sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, giving them equal portions with the other sons in the land of Canaan, so that Joseph literally had two portions, or the double portion of the firstborn. In blessing Joseph, Israel invoked upon Ephraim and Manasseh the blessing of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself — the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

The seed of Joseph — those who embody and express the divine qualities of excellence and goodness which Joseph's beloved sons expressed, those who continually increase in spiritual majesty — will become a part of Israel's divine adventure and be preeminent and mighty in God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. They will always be successful, wherever they may be. Ephraim, those who are fruitful in good works, and Manasseh, those who are willing to forget the past and press forward to the mark of the high calling in Christ — these individuals and nations will always be ascendant. Israel prophesied that in time to come tribes would be called by their names. And so Israel gave to Joseph, the elder son of his beloved Rachel, the blessing of the firstborn, with a double portion of the inheritance.

Israel foresaw great earthly prosperity for Joseph, for the tribes which bore his son's names, and for the Josephs of this world. But his vision also saw great spiritual blessings that would bring them honor, power, and respect — the completeness of majesty. However, Israel saw even farther than this: Joseph, and those who are likeminded, will always be separate from others — separate in the sense of being different, set apart, as *Nazir*, a prince of divine royalty, God crowned. Possibly the greatest blessing the patriarch envisioned for his beloved son was

that Israel's divine adventure would come to its communion in Joseph and would continue to unfold forever in the Josephs of this world.

Joseph is typical of those rare individuals in whom the divine nature shines brightly, in whom Israel prevails. In him was manifested the perfect humanhood in which there is no guile. He is typical of those faithful children in all generations who go out from the father's house (the vale of Hebron) into the world (down into Egypt) and are met with all manner of evil, but who never become a part of or react to the evil which besets them. There is nothing in the Joseph-nature that corresponds with or responds to ungodlike surroundings or influences. Those who think and act as Joseph did are not overwhelmed by adversity or puffed up by fame. They are not caught up in material currents which swirl about them. Regardless of what others may think, say, or do, the Joseph-mentality continues to express the divine nature. In other words, Joseph continues to be Joseph. The power of the Joseph-nature, true Christliness, transforms one's environment from prison to palace, from slavery to kingship, from bondage to dominion.

The Josephs of this world will grow to spiritual maturity, the completeness of majesty, as did Israel's beloved son. Because they keep their Covenant with God, they will feel and express the God-given dominion of the original Covenant of Godlikeness. They will reign as priests and kings unto God in the kingdom of the Father and wear the crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek, the highest office attainable in this world, and will be recognized as both spiritual leaders and rulers of their own experiences (Rev.1:6). They will always be separate from their brethren — set apart as a prince of God. They may be envied and even hated, often by those who are closest to them. But as they continue to be themselves, to express godliness, the divine Israel-nature, they will rise higher and higher in spiritual ascendancy and in the dominion of the New Covenant. Israel's divine nature and divine adventure are fulfilled in the Josephs of this world.

Benjamin

There seemed to be a pause in Israel's thinking as he turned from Joseph to Benjamin. Let us pause with him and remember

some of the circumstances surrounding the birth of this child. Benjamin, Israel's twelfth son was the only son born in the land promised to the seed of Abraham — the land of Canaan. Israel, with his large retinue, was traveling from Bethel to Hebron. They stopped not far from Ephrath, or Bethlehem. Here Rachel gave birth to Benjamin. Great sorrow however preceded, accompanied, and followed the birth of this child. Shortly before Israel and his family reached Bethel, he discovered that Rachel had stolen her father Laban's household gods, and that she cherished these pagan images of worship. While still in Bethel, Deborah, Rebekah's beloved nurse and confidante, who had joined the company, died and was buried in Bethel. And shortly after that, Rachel died while giving birth to Benjamin (Gen.31:19,34; 35:8,16-20).

Even while Israel seemed to be remembering these events, his prophetic vision looked far beyond that day and time. And in one brief verse he uttered a prophecy which is still unfolding:

Benjamin shall ravine as a wolf (is ravenous as a wolf); in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.— Gen.49:27.

Israel's words picture Benjamin as having a ravenous appetite for food. His insatiable appetite is still hungry in the morning after a night of feasting. The words describing this young man point to a ravenous appetite for life, for excitement, an exuberant sense that overflowed to embrace everything he touched. As the youngest of twelve sons and the child born to Rachel just before she died, Benjamin was much beloved of his father. We may assume that, being a motherless child, the baby in a large family, he probably did not receive the discipline that a healthy, active, inquisitive, impulsive child needed. Israel's words indicate that Benjamin's nature was self-indulgent, a nature that needed to be tempered with self-discipline and self-restraint. But he also saw a generous quality that impelled him to divide, or share, what he had with others. Looking deeper into Benjamin's nature, Israel saw spiritual strength that lay hidden in his character. Recall that his mother had called him *Benoni*, son of my sorrow. But his father changed his name and called him *Benjamin*, son of my right hand.

Israel must have seen that this son possessed a strong Jacob-nature which, like his own, could only be redeemed after much wrestling with the old nature, or the old man, before his new

name, or divine nature, could be realized. With his prophetic vision, Israel may have foreseen another Benjamin who would win his new name when the light of Peniel shone on him on the Damascus Road. For out of the tribe of Benjamin came one of the most dynamic characters in all Scripture, Saul of Tarsus renamed Paul, who wrote his own history in the New Covenant of our Bible (Acts 9:1-30).

Except for the incidents surrounding his birth, Benjamin is not mentioned until the brothers went to Egypt to buy food. Joseph demanded that Benjamin be brought to him as proof that they were not spies. When the brothers told their father of Joseph's demand, Jacob was distraught. He spoke of Benjamin as though he were still a child, although at that time Benjamin was a grown man with a wife and ten sons. The Bible record of the reunion of Joseph and Benjamin is poignant. But there is no record of Benjamin's reaction when he discovered that his brother was alive, and that he was a governor in the land of Egypt. When Joseph's cup was found in Benjamin's bag, the brothers were as one in defending him. But again, we do not know how Benjamin reacted to the accusation against him. The only specific record we have of him is the enormous portion of food he devoured at the time of the feast prepared by Joseph for his brothers.

Bible history describes the tribe of Benjamin as warlike. This description of the Benjamin-nature may be glimpsed in Israel's words: "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf." While the words imply ravening after food, the word *ravin* also means the act of proving. And the meaning of the Patriarch's words, by extension, may also refer to Benjamin's love of a fight, regardless of the cause.

Benjamin is typical, in a sense, of the so-called younger generation — impetuous, self-indulgent, immature, zealous, having a ravenous appetite for both food and excitement, yet impulsively generous. The Benjamins of this world are inclined to be emotionally unstable and are too often easily influenced by a dominant personality or by religious fervor and political propaganda. But when the light of spiritual illumination penetrates their consciousness, they quickly shed their adolescence, exchange the glitter of world popularity for the pure gold of spiritual worthiness, and blossom in the glory of the New Jerusalem. Moreover they will share their enlightenment with the world, regardless of the cost to themselves.

Those who think and act as did Benjamin may need to fight a good fight before they overcome a mortal nature. Yet they will prevail over this will of the flesh and will respond to the name and nature Israel bestowed on this beloved child — son of my right hand. They will be crowned with Godlikeness and will carry the royal scepter of divinity. They will win the Covenant blessing of dominion over all the earth — The Dominion of the New Covenant.

All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them, blessing each one with the blessing suitable to him.— Gen.49:28 (RSV).

In Israel's blessing of his sons we see his absolute conviction that the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, which had transformed his nature would also transform their characters. He saw that his sons, and those like them, would, in due time, put off the old man with his deeds and put on the new man, their Godlikeness, and express their divine natures. He saw in each one the divine seed that would grow and blossom. He saw each one becoming a soldier of God and winning the Covenant blessing of the firstborn of heaven — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

Each one, that is, except *Dan*. The serpentine nature, of which Dan is typical, never repents, never reforms, is never blessed. This carnal nature must be completely destroyed. And the individuals who have cherished the characteristics typical of the serpent must be born again and go through many periods of probation before they are cleansed of carnality.

In blessing his sons Israel spoke directly to each one of his children; yet his message is a direct prophecy concerning the children of Israel in all ages and "extends to the days of the Messiah, and His first and second advents" (*Companion Bible*). But this message is even more far reaching. His words are a warning to mankind to search out the faults of character which must be overcome before they are worthy to hear the divine proclamation of the Covenant Blessing: *Let them have dominion!* Dominion over all the earth — the Dominion of the New Covenant. Symbolically, Israel's words embrace all those who think and act as did his sons, even to this day.

Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

... After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.— Heb.8:8,10.

Israel's Blessing — A Mirror In Which We May See Something of Ourselves

Israel's blessing of the sons of Jacob might be called:

A portrait gallery of human types, good, bad, and indifferent. ... Here is a mirror in which a nation may look at its particular reflection, and consider whether it is satisfied with what it sees there.— (*IB*. Vol.1, Expos., pp.818-819.)

In this mirror individuals may look and see something of themselves and ask: In which character do I find my likeness? What are the faults I must overcome before I am worthy of the Covenant Blessing — the double blessing of the firstborn of heaven? What qualities do I need to develop and express that will help me grow to spiritual maturity and express the dominion of the prince of God, who fights a good fight with a mortal material sense of himself and who has power with God and with men — who rules as God commands?

In the degree that we courageously wrestle with a mortal sense of ourselves and put off a carnal nature, the light of Peniel shines on us. In this holy light we see God face to face, as in a mirror, and discover our Godlikeness, our mirror-likeness to the Divine. This light is not illumination from without, but radiance from within. It is the light of our divinity which radiates within and shines without. As we go forth from our Peniel a new day dawns. We see everything in a new light. We walk in the Spirit, on holy ground. And the lust of the flesh will not be fulfilled in us, the influence of our lower nature will no longer dominate our lives. Then we find that the Covenant blessings accompany us wherever we go. The Covenant power is manifest in whatever we do. And we discover, often to our amazement, that we are indeed priests and kings unto God — having both spiritual and temporal authority on earth — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

Chapter LV

JACOB COMPLETES HIS DIVINE ADVENTURE

Jacob's prophetic blessings of his sons brought to a triumphal conclusion his divine adventure on earth. He had finished the work God gave him to do. He had put off the old man with his deeds, the old mortal sense of himself and of his experiences, and he had gone forward spiritually to put on the new man, the new spiritual concept of man as the Son of God, and had thereby won his new name *Israel*. He had completed the seven periods of divine unfoldment in his step upon step of spiritual ascension of the ladder of life and had earned a metaphorical master's degree in his divine adventure.

Jacob knew that Israel's divine adventure would continue to unfold on earth in the Children of Israel, in the seed of the woman, in the children of faith in all generations. Certainly he must have felt the reward of the work well done in that the new nation which he saw developing was to be called *The Children of Israel* — the children of the soldier of God who had fought and won the good fight with a mortal sense of himself, and who had power with God and with men. Furthermore, he foresaw that the land of Canaan, in which his offspring would develop and grow into a great nation, would one day be called a holy land and would bear his new name, *Israel*.

Israel had been in the land of Egypt for seventeen years when he quietly departed for his holy land. God had shown him the way to his heavenly abode at Bethel, where he had seen a vision of the ladder set up on the earth, whose top reached heaven. In his periods of spiritual ascension he had climbed this ladder, had seen God face to face, and then descended the ladder to show in his own experience the way for all mankind to reach the heavenly heights. He had shown mankind that *step upon step* they must put off the old man with his deeds. They must lay aside the old mortal qualities that respond to earthward gravitation and sensual desires, so that their ascending footsteps would not be heavy laden

and respond to the drag of materialism, but would be responsive to spiritual attraction, to gravitation Godward. His experiences illustrate the fact that in the degree mankind resist earthward gravitation and respond to spiritual attraction, to the forces of Spirit, they walk in the Spirit on holy ground and have the Dominion of the New Covenant — both spiritual and temporal authority of heaven on earth.

Before leaving this plane of existence, however, the soldier of God charged his sons concerning his burial. As with all things in his life, Israel's words have metaphorical significance:

I am to be gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of Ephron the Hittite,

In the cave that is in the field of Machpelah, which is before Mamre, in the land of Canaan, which Abraham bought with the field of Ephron the Hittite for a possession of a burying place.

There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife; and there I buried Leah.

The purchase of the field and of the cave that is therein was from the children of Heth.

And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost [breathed his last], and was gathered unto his people.— Gen.49:29-33.

And so Israel bade farewell to his earthly abode. His sons, still viewing their father as a mortal, thought he had died. And, to all appearances, he manifested their concept of his departure; hence their intense grief when he left them. But this faithful representative of the Trinity had ascended into another dimension of thought and action, there to continue his God-work — his divine adventure.

Israel's demand that he be buried in the family burial ground in the land of Canaan was not alone because he wanted his body to lie with his fathers. He expected his children and their children to return to this land, which would be to them a holy land.

In Israel's last words we learn that Leah, who had taken second place to her sister Rachel in Jacob's affections and in his household for so many years, had been buried in Hebron with those who had

exemplified the threefold divine nature of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself. This place of honor was given her, not because she had accompanied her husband in his divine adventure, but as a reward for her faithfulness to him and her faithfulness in mothering his children — her own, her sister's, and those of the handmaids. Thus we learn that *Israel* loved Leah even though *Jacob* loved Rachel. The fact that Israel gave specific orders that he be buried beside Leah in Hebron and not beside Rachel "in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem" (Gen.35:19), confirms this. Sweeter words have not been writ in poem or in prose than these: *Thou hast been faithful.*

Pharaoh and the Egyptians honored Israel as they honored royalty because he was Joseph's father. In accordance with the custom of the Egyptians, their physicians embalmed Jacob's body. Then followed forty days of mourning. Pharaoh expected that Joseph would bury his father in Egypt. But Joseph made a special appeal to the king:

My father made me swear, saying, Lo, I die: in my grave which I have digged for me in the land of Canaan, there shalt thou bury me. Now therefore let me go up, I pray thee, and bury my father, and I will come again.

And Pharaoh said, Go up, and bury thy father, as he made thee swear.— Gen.50:5,6.

And so Joseph made preparations to carry his father's mortal body back to the land of Canaan. As a kind of royal honor guard, the king sent servants, the elders of his house, and the elders of Israel, together with chariots and horsemen to accompany Joseph and his brethren on their sad journey to Hebron. The procession paused at the threshing floor of Atad, east of the Jordan, for seven days of mourning for Israel — a very special honor in the eyes of the Egyptians and of the Canaanites who saw it. Then the great company of mourners entered Canaan and proceeded to the cave in the field of Machpelah in Hebron — the parcel of ground Abraham had bought for a burying place from Ephron the Hittite. There they buried Jacob's earthly remains (Gen.50:1-13).

But let us not lose sight of what this remarkable man stands for in the Covenant relationship of God with man. Jacob was chosen by God to be the human representative of the third aspect of the

Trinity — to show forth in his human experience the power of the Spirit of God to rescue mankind from the carnal mind, from the wiles of the serpent, and to transform the human sense of being with the divine idea of man created in God's own likeness. In his divine adventure we may see something of our own struggle to put off the old mortal concept of man and to put on the new spiritual sense of self, our divinity — thus to win our new name *Israel*.

Israel! This beautiful name has a heavenly tone because it was first voiced by an angel. The name *Israel* is not so much the name of an individual as it is the type of thought or spiritual character an individual embodies and expresses when God rules his every thought and act. *Israel* is the new name which crowns everyone who has wrestled with and prevailed over a mortal concept of himself, who has put off the old man with its self-love, self-will, self-glorification, and has put on the new man, the divine nature, with its divine qualities of wisdom, intelligence, integrity, virtue, love, joy — the individuality which constitutes the God-like man, the man who images forth divinity or Godlikeness. The Israel-nature has dominion, and the individual who expresses this divine Israel-nature rules as God commands and has the dominion of heaven on earth — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

We can take leave of Jacob because we know that Jacob has taken leave of a mortal sense of himself. Israel has taken complete charge of Jacob. He has entered the realm beyond the grave, a spiritual dimension which is invisible to the material senses, where a new divine adventure awaited him.

Chapter LVI
JOSEPH
THE LOVING SHEPHERD OF HIS PEOPLE

And Joseph returned into Egypt, he and his brethren, and all that went with him to bury his father, after he had buried his father.— Gen.50:14.

In a sense, the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to Hebron, in the land of Canaan, prophesied their sure return to this land where, in God's own time, they would establish the kingdom through which the knowledge of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob — the Triune God Himself — would be known and recorded and given to the world.

But now they are in Egypt with apparently no thought of returning to the land God promised to give to the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And the sons of Jacob appear to be uneasy. Now that their father is no longer with them, what is to be their status in Egypt? What will Joseph's attitude be toward them, the brothers who had attempted to murder him and then had sold him into slavery? Soon after their return from Canaan, they sent a messenger to Joseph, saying:

Thy father did command before he died, saying,
So shall ye say unto Joseph, Forgive I pray thee now, the trespass of thy brethren and their sin: for they did unto thee evil: and now we pray thee, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of thy father.— Gen.50:16,17.

This is the first intimation we have that Israel had learned of his sons' evil deed against Joseph. Joseph wept when he received this message. But he made no reply. Then —

His brethren also went and fell down before his face; and they said, Behold, we be thy servants.—
Gen.50:18.

Joseph was moved by their humility, even though he knew it was engendered by fear. But Joseph did not need to forgive his brothers in his heart. His realization that God was with him all the way had turned the brother's evil deed into a blessing. This righteous man was able to see only good, not evil, as the result of his brothers' cruel act. Realizing this, he could not judge them as others might. All he required of them was a change of heart — repentance that included reformation. Now, seventeen years after Joseph had first assured his brothers that God had been leading him all the way and had prospered him, he reassured them that God's hand was still at the helm and that there was nothing to forgive. As for judging them, he said;

Fear not: for am I in the place of God? As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it to be good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.— Gen.50:19,20.

And then this great and noble man gave his brothers the assurance that even though he was a ruler in the land of Egypt and a father unto Pharaoh, he was still their brother and would always care for them:

Now therefore fear ye not: I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.— Gen.50:21.

Joseph expressed the shepherding qualities of the Good Shepherd of the New Covenant. He had been shepherding his family all his life, although neither he nor they knew it. Not until the climax of his divine adventure did he realize that he had been leading his brethren every step of the way. Even when he went as a slave into Egypt he was leading his family there. He literally went before them to prepare a place for them. When they went to Egypt to buy corn they had no idea that they were following Joseph's leading. Like a true shepherd he led them by walking before them in the way of holiness. And like the Good Shepherd, he comforted them and spake kindly unto them.

In caring for his large family Joseph seemed to realize that he was shepherding a young nation. He was in tune with Israel's vision of the destiny of the Children of Israel. And he assumed the

leadership of that new nation. There is no record that tells us how he led his people into a higher understanding of Deity than many of them expressed, how he kept alive the worship of *Elohim*, the Triune God Himself. But this he must have done. For when, many years later, God sent Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt to their promised land, He told him to say to the people: "The God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob hath sent me unto you" (Ex.3:15). The people knew this triune name for God. And they accepted Moses as their leader, for they knew he had been sent by the God of their fathers.

And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation: the children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were brought up upon Joseph's knees— Gen.50:23.

Recall when Israel adopted Ephraim and Manasseh as his own and gave them the blessing of the sons of Israel, Joseph adopted Machir, the son of Manasseh. Now we learn that Joseph also adopted the sons of Machir as soon as they were born. He gathered them with him into the Covenant relationship with God. He took charge of their spiritual education. In no sense did he permit them to become Egyptians. The fact that his wife's father was a priest of the temple of On, the sun-god, did not influence Joseph's worship of the God of his fathers. And he did not permit his sons and his sons' sons to be influenced by paganism. They were all Children of Israel!

Joseph dwelt in the land of Egypt for ninety-three years. For thirteen of those years he had been a slave, and we know not how many of those years he was in prison. But the years were not wasted. This period of his life — a wilderness experience — was a kind of preparatory school for his divine mission. Whence came the strength which enabled Joseph to remain true to the highest and best that was within him? It came straight from God! Again and again the holy record declares: *The Lord was with him*. His mind was never in bondage to his environment. Hence he never became like-minded with those around him. He lived so close to God that he could not help being Godlike. "He made the consciousness of God's presence and intervention in his affairs a vital principal of his actions, the law of his life" (*Dummelow, p.4*).

For eighty years Joseph, the man in whom the Spirit of God

was, was in favor with the king of Egypt. When the famine had passed, he continued to be a father unto Pharaoh. During those years the light of his divine nature was never dimmed. It was the light of heaven shining in him and through him.

Joseph's life story might well be called *THE DOMINION OF LOVE*. Although he never talked about God as Love, he lived the life that is love. From early boyhood love governed all his relationships. Love was the principle of all his actions. All his life long he felt and lived the Love that is God. Hence he could hold no enmity toward anyone. Not once in his life is there any record that Joseph stopped loving, or that he even contemplated returning evil for evil. He emerged unscathed and unstained from every encounter with evil. The love he felt for others was so pure, so Godlike, that it embraced even those who had sinned against him. He lived so close to God that the actual Love that is God shone through his human consciousness, blessing all who came into his presence. He was a living example of the coincidence of the human with the divine. The love that was enthroned in his heart crowned him with glory, honor, and power. And his divine royalty made him governor of all the land in which he had been enslaved. He was in very fact a ruler — first over himself, and then governor of the whole land of Egypt. His Christliness won for him the right to wear the title and the metaphorical crown of the royal priesthood of Melchizedek — Priest and King unto God.

When Joseph was an hundred and ten years old, he knew that his work on earth was finished. His last concern was for his people. They must understand that Egypt was not their home. Egypt was not the land in which the knowledge of the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob — *the Triune divine Principle* — would be established, recorded, and given to the world. He spoke with divine authority and prophetic certainty when he said:

God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.— Gen.50:24.

Further, he made them swear, as his father had made him swear, that they would return to the land of Canaan, and that they would carry his earthly remains with them, as though, even after death, he would still be leading them. According to Egyptian

custom, Joseph's mortal body was embalmed. But his people did not carry his remains to Canaan, as he had done for his father. Instead,

He was put in a coffin in Egypt.— Gen.50:26.

But this was no part of Joseph's experience. He had already ascended out of Egypt into his holy land, into the kingdom of Love. His brothers' readiness to leave his body in a coffin in Egypt is symbolic of the fact that the Children of Israel were not ready to go back to the land of Canaan and establish a new nation there. They were satisfied with the luxuries of Egypt. And they settled down to spend the rest of their existence on earth in that land.

Although Joseph's brothers and their descendants were content to stay in Egypt under the protection of friendly Pharaohs, in years to come God routed them out of that state of mind in a unique way. We read:

Now there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.— Ex.1:8.

And this new king was not kindly disposed toward the Children of Israel. Their *EXODUS* under Moses marks a new chapter in Israel's divine adventure.

It seems strange that the Book of Genesis which begins so gloriously: *God, Spirit, created heaven, earth, and all that is therein, and made man in Spirit's own image and likeness* — should end so ingloriously in a statement concerning a coffin. But this was not the end of the wonderful Genesis of man's divine adventure. It was simply a statement of mortal man's concept of the end of mortal man. A material sense of creation cannot comprehend the *Alpha* and *Omega* of the Great *I AM*, of infinite Being.

Chapter LVII

DECLARING THE END FROM THE BEGINNING

(Isa.46:10.)

The blessing which Israel foresaw for his beloved son encompasses the whole Covenant of Godlikeness revealed in the first chapter of Genesis, in the seven periods of unfoldment of the divine nature in man and the universe. The Genesis of Revelation of the divine nature in man rises to its meridian in the life of Joseph. And a most significant development in the pattern of the *Trinity* is revealed in his life.

In the first period of unfoldment the nature of God as *Elohim*, *the Triune God himself*, is revealed. In this Trinitarian name of the Supreme Being we discovered three aspects of the Infinite, known throughout the Christian world as *Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, or Holy Spirit*:

The Creative aspect, in which God is revealed as the *Father and Mother* of the universe including man.

The Self-revealing aspect, in which is revealed *the Son of God*, the Christ, the Light of the world, the radiance of the divine presence in man.

The Interpretive aspect, in which is revealed the *Holy Ghost*, the power of the *Spirit of God* to spiritually transform the minds of men and thus to redeem them from a mortal, material concept of themselves and of all creation.

As God, *Elohim*, is acknowledged to be the only Father and Mother of man, the only Creator of the universe, the divine energy of this primal truth is felt as a mighty spiritual force. This divine force is the Spirit of God moving upon the elements of consciousness, banishing the darkness of materialism, silencing the clamor of personal sense, and opening the door of the kingdom of heaven, revealing the Christ, the image and likeness of God, the Light of the world. The radiance of this first period of unfoldment

of the divine nature reveals a world of marvelous light, in which the divine idea of all that God has made becomes visible and tangible. All creation is seen covenanted to God in a sacred bond of unity, all things bearing the seal of divinity, all the glories of the kingdom of heaven revealed and released in man.

The threefold divine nature of *Elohim*, revealed in the first period of unfoldment, was individualized in Joseph and expressed in his human life:

He was both father and mother to his family and to the people of Egypt. Further, he expressed the creativity of the Creator in transforming his earthly experience into a heavenly divine adventure. He dwelt in the heaven of God's presence. His consciousness of the divine presence was a vital principle of his life. This divine consciousness was a spiritual dimension of thought, holy ground, the sanctuary of Spirit, where he was safe from every attempt of evil and its emissaries to destroy him.

He was a faithful son and brother, expressing the nature of Christ's divine Sonship. He was also a member of the grand brotherhood of man. The Light of his Christliness, his Godlikeness, shown brightly in the darkness and banished the shadows of gloom which seemed to overshadow him. But the darkness did not even dim his light.

The Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God, moved continually on the waters, or elements of his consciousness, bringing to light the specific manifestations of Divinity he needed every moment to support him as he journeyed on earth in a divine adventure.

Joseph was truly a citizen of heaven. In recognition of his divinely royal status, the Pharaoh gave him a new name. Or rather, the king acknowledged the heavenly name, or nature, given him by the Father, which, translated into the Egyptian language, is *Zaphnathpaaneah*, the revealer of secrets, the man in whom the enduring source of inward illumination and intellectual power is expressed — the man in whom the Living One, the *I AM*, has spoken!

(See pp. 36-45; Gen.1:1-5.)

In the second period of unfoldment of the New Covenant, it will be recalled, God placed the firmament of spiritual understanding, which He called Heaven, in the midst of the waters, the elements

of consciousness, to divide the waters above from the waters below — to make the distinction between spiritual and material concepts of creation.

Joseph was heavenly endowed with this spiritual understanding. And this divine intelligence brought to light in his consciousness a priceless divine attribute: a discerning and discriminating insight which knows instinctively what is good and what is evil, what is right and what is wrong, what is wise and what is unwise. He made the separation between good and evil, between what is true and what is apparent, between what is substance and what is shadow. He saw divine reality with eyes inspired by Christly intuition. The inspiration of the Almighty I AM opened the doors of his human comprehension, and spiritual understanding took possession of his whole body of consciousness. This understanding spiritualized his concept of everything he saw. His spiritual vision penetrated the mist of the carnal mind, which would have obscured the divine nature of creation, and enabled him to see through the shadow of materialism to the substance of Spirit. The mysteries of the dreams of his fellow prisoners and of the Pharaoh were laid bare before him, And because he held fast to the divine message revealed in his own dreams of spiritual ascendancy, nothing others said or did could destroy him. He rose above their evil intent and found refuge in a spiritual dimension of thought where he was safe. This divine state of Mind was holy ground, the sanctuary of Spirit, which was in truth the firmament of spiritual understanding which God called Heaven.

(See pp. 45-50; Gen.1:6-8.)

In the third period of unfoldment of the New Covenant, we hear the creative mandate: "Let the dry land appear." And the visible forms of life, which the earth brings forth, emerged from their invisible spiritual source, completely independent of matter and its conditions. The law of this third period declares the transcendent truth that all of God's ideas are ever-present; and where an idea is, the law of ever-appearing creation brings forth the form which identifies it — the visible form expressing the intelligence, power, substance, activity, and life of the Creator.

The third period of unfoldment of the divine nature of God in man and the universe was wondrously manifested

in Joseph's life. He was a fruitful bough, fruitful in good works. Hence the fruitfulness of heavenly good was manifested abundantly in his earthly experience. Everything he did was successful. Everything he touched responded to the law of prosperity he embodied, whether he was a servant in Potiphar's house, a prisoner in Pharaoh's prison-house, or a ruler in the land of Egypt. His heavenly vision of the infinitude of spiritual fruitage was manifested in the magnitude of the fruitage of the land, which he wisely stored to circumvent the devastation of famine. He expressed the divine husbanding of heaven on earth.

Joseph may not have been conscious of the law of ever-appearing creation, but he felt the dynamic forces of the Spirit of God at work — forces which caused ideas of divine good to appear, to emerge from the infinite elements of the divine Mind and become visible in his human experience. This divinely good man had discovered the secret of “the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
(See pp. 50-55; Gen.1:9-13.)

In the fourth period of unfoldment of the New Covenant, the Almighty *I AM* speaks, and the lights in the firmament of heaven shine on earth.

This period was individualized in Joseph. The heavenly lights shone brightly in him. He was a star of the first magnitude. No matter how dark, how bereft of even a glimmer of light, some of his experiences seemed to be, the light of his divine nature never waned. His godliness blessed all who came into his presence. He was a light glowing in the darkness of ignorance, superstition, hate, and fear. The light of divine intelligence enabled him to see the power of God unfolding right where the carnal mind was presenting its holographic pictures of unrelenting carnal mind forces. He was an exemplar of the light that shines in darkness which the darkness cannot comprehend, encompass, or extinguish. He was, in the words of the New Covenant, “a city set on an hill, shining for all to see.” His star still shines in the heavens, glorifying God.
(See pp. 55-61; Gen.1:14-19.)

In the fifth period of unfoldment of the New Covenant, at God's command, the great moving creatures that have life and the fowl

that fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven appear. This period of unfoldment teems with action. Everything moves! Everything progresses! Everything unfolds! Everything expresses the omni-action and infinitude of divine Life itself. Furthermore, everything is majestic and stately, reflecting the divine royalty of the Creator.

This period was manifested abundantly in Joseph's life. He responded to and moved with the omniactive spiritual ideas, of which the moving creatures are typical. And these dynamic ideas which defied the force of earthward gravitation, reproduced in him their own characteristics of vitality and action, of substance and intelligence, so that he was able to move in the atmosphere of divine Mind and rise above thoughts that would have kept him earthbound, on the same level with the thinking of those who sought to destroy him. These mighty moving ideas, divinely blessed, expanded his thought in infinite dimensions, so that his life teemed with spiritual progress and human achievement. They gave majesty to his character, inspiration to his endeavors, impetus to his actions, success to his aspirations, and bore him triumphantly to the climax of his divine adventure.
(See pp. 61-68; Gen.1:20-23.)

In the sixth period of unfoldment of the New Covenant, the Word of God brought forth, made visible, the living creatures — creatures symbolic of the specific, useful ideas of heaven which accompany us in our earthly experience, ideas which give form and character, life and vitality to everything we do. As this period continues to unfold, the climax of creation is revealed. But what appears is not a new discovery. It is rather the gathering together in one all-embracing divine idea all that God has made — an idea which embodies all the glories of heaven and earth. God, *Elohim*, the divine Father-Mother, created, or imaged forth His own likeness and called this finished figure of creation *man*. God gave to His beloved likeness *dominion* — divine authority, supremacy, sovereignty, jurisdiction over the sea, the air, and over all the earth — the Dominion of the New Covenant.

The compound divine nature of man, revealed in the sixth period of the Covenant of Godlikeness, was individualized in Joseph. The majestic qualities of God's

Fatherhood and the tender loving qualities of God's Motherhood shone in him. The expression of both the masculine and feminine qualities of his Father-Mother God gave him spiritual equipoise, which kept him in perfect balance when personal and material conditions threatened to throw him off balance, to force him out of his divine orbit of spiritual unfoldment. Throughout his life he expressed the qualities of the perfect man, the spiritual maturity associated with perfection. He was blessed with the dominion of heaven on earth. He held the scepter of spiritual and temporal authority and wore the metaphorical crown of heavenly sovereignty on earth. In him was fulfilled the royal priesthood of Melchizedek, the dual office of both priest and king. He was spiritual adviser to his family, to the Pharaoh, and to the people of his adopted land. And he was king, or head, over his family and over all the land of Egypt. He expressed the dominion of heaven on earth — the dominion of the New Covenant.

(See pp. 68-81; Gen.1:24-31.)

In the seventh period of unfoldment of the New Covenant, *God rested*. His work was finished. Heaven and earth — harmony and its sphere of operation — are fully expressed. The *rest* of the seventh period of unfoldment is not a period of idleness. Nor is it progression toward new revelation. It is the development of what has been revealed, a period of fulfillment in which the kingdom, the power, and the glory of the New Heaven and New Earth are fully developed in human consciousness.

The seventh period of unfoldment was individualized in Joseph's life. The divine completeness, the development of infinite good, the heavenly rest of the Sabbath Day characterized his thoughts and actions day by day. The mighty force of the Infinite had its way in him. The divine momentum of the Spirit of God was indeed a River of Life whose mighty currents bore him triumphantly to the zenith of his divine adventure. He was ever conscious of God's presence with him. Even in prison, each day was a holy Sabbath unto the Lord, because he served God all the day long. He rested because he saw, as God saw, that everything God made was and is good, even very good, and expressed the completeness of majesty, which his name and nature envision. He rested because the seven-fold blessing revealed in the periods of unfoldment had

been exemplified in his life. And finally, Joseph rested because he knew that his divine adventure had accomplished its holy purpose. His Covenant with God had come to its communion.

Although Joseph walked on the earth, he knew his world was God's spiritual universe. Hence he walked in the Spirit, in the spiritual dimension that God called Heaven. He never departed from God's Heaven. Every place on which he stood was holy ground. He expressed divine authority wherever he was because he reigned first in the kingdom of heaven within himself. Hence in him was fulfilled the dominion of heaven on earth — THE DOMINION OF THE NEW COVENANT.

(See pp. 82-96; Gen.2:1-3.)

The demand of the seven periods of unfoldment of the New Covenant is upon every individual in the world: "Walk before me and be thou perfect." Walk in the Spirit, in the spiritual dimension of thought and experience. In the degree that we do so, we naturally express the dominion, or divine authority, of the kingdom of heaven in our earthly experience. And we discover that every thought and deed is blessed, glorified, exalted, fulfilled, and brings forth fruit after its own kind abundantly.

The grand Symphony of the Infinite, the harmony of heaven, will sound in and through our whole earthly experience as we seek the glories of the kingdom of heaven within us, and let the scale of heavenly music, the harmony of divine Life, be more fully developed and expressed in our humanhood. We will hear the music of the spheres and move in harmony with the rhythm of the universe. Then we will feel the heavenly restfulness of our Sabbath Day, in which is no labor at all.

The Spirit of God, the mighty force of the Infinite, which leads us into every period of unfoldment of our Covenant with God is moving upon the elements of individual and universal consciousness. As on the Day of Pentecost, a rushing mighty wind from heaven, the breath of The Almighty, is sweeping over the earth filling the minds of men with the knowledge of God. (See Acts 2:1-18.)

In the dark places of the earth, this knowledge may not be recognized quickly. But it will unfold — and in the degree that each one moves with the momentum of divine unfoldment, the *Trinity*, the Triune divine nature of the Almighty *I AM*, *The God*

of Abraham, The God of Isaac, and The God of Jacob will be individualized in human consciousness.

Each one will embody the majesty of the Fatherhood of God, the tenderness of the Motherhood of God, and will express the creativity of the Creator.

Each one will embody the qualities of Godlikeness and express the nature of divine Sonship.

Each one will embody the power of the Spirit of God and express the Dominion of the New Covenant — the Covenant which embraces humanity in Divinity in the human and divine coincidence, enabling us to put off a mortal sense of ourselves and to put on the divine nature, the new man.

In this divine *Trinity* we discover the harmony of heaven on earth, in which all things work together for good, everything that happens fits into a divine pattern, all elements of creation are united in a holy bond of unity, and God's kingdom comes on earth as it is in heaven.

We must *let* the divine *Trinity* have its way in us. And sooner or later the dominion of heaven on earth will be fulfilled in each one of us — *THE DOMINION OF THE NEW COVENANT*.

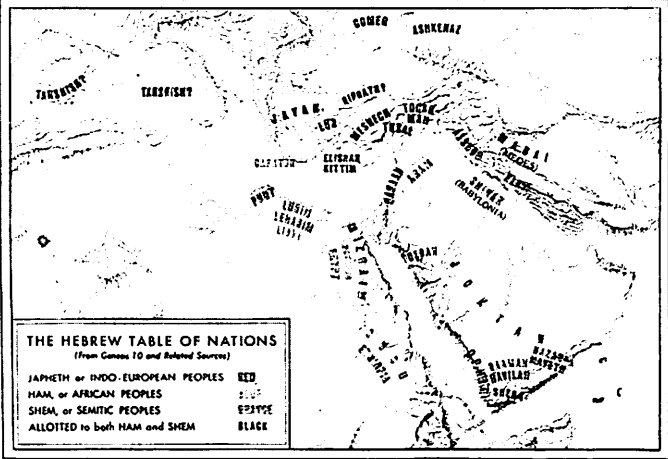
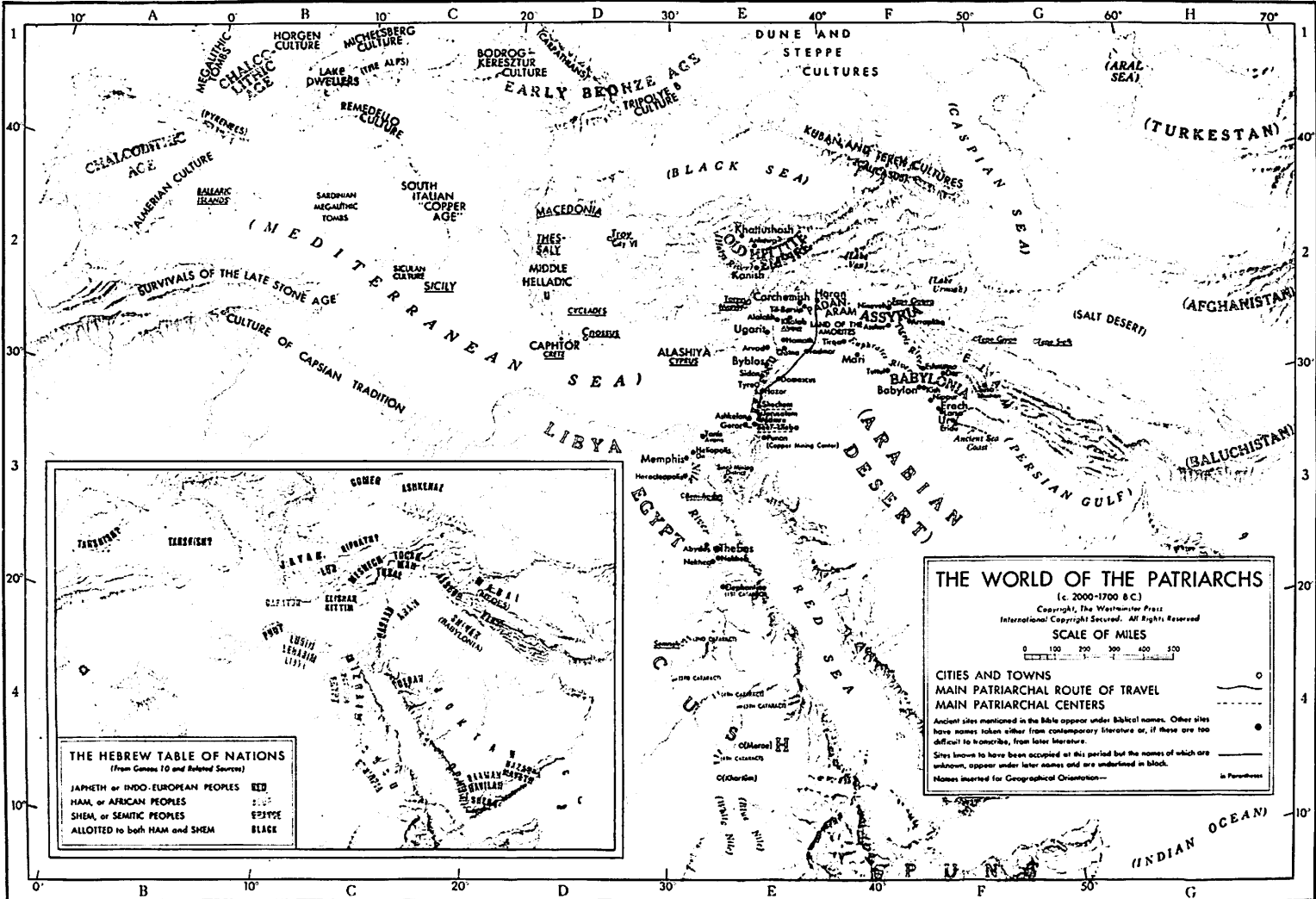
EPILOGUE

It is of more than passing interest to note that, except for the record of Jacob's approaching demise (Gen.48:1), there is no mention of sickness in the Book of Genesis. The lives of individuals whose history is recorded in the Genesis of our Bible reveal a startling fact, namely, that knowing God, serving Him, and living in accordance with the provisions of the Covenant of Godlikeness lifts one into a spiritual dimension of thought and action where man has dominion over all the earth, and sickness is unknown.

While all the people of that era were not obedient to the law of the Covenant, "Walk before me, and be thou perfect" (Gen.17:1), they, nevertheless, lived under the protection of the Covenant that God made with Abraham and his seed. Hence, they were beneficiaries of God's promise of dominion over all the earth (Gen.1:26).

Centuries after Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph departed earth's scene, the Psalmist glorified in song the triumph of the people of the Covenant. His Hymn of praise includes these triumphant words: "There was not one feeble person among their tribes" (Ps.105:37).

In the degree that we strive to know God, to express the divine nature, and to be obedient to the law of the Covenant of Godlikeness, we may hear the echo of God's promise, voiced millennia ago: "I will take sickness away from the midst of thee" (Ex.23:25). Thus we express dominion, God's first gift to man, *THE DOMINION OF THE NEW COVENANT*.



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