

THE COMING OF THE CHRIST

The Christ comes at such a time as one is ready for it, no matter what one may be doing or where he may be. It does not necessarily come to one through attending church, studying, reading or praying by word of mouth. It comes when one is about his Father's business. It does not come by cudgeling the brain, by concentrated thinking, or by any method of the human mind. In fact, it comes only when the human mind is stilled, when one is fulfilling the Master's injunction to, "take *no* thought," or, as Mrs. Eddy says, "silence the material senses." (*Science and Health*) It does not require the presence of a person, although it may come through a person, but the Christ operates as well with as without a person, and as well without as with a person.

Elijah made this particularly plain to Elisha (I Kings 19:19-21). When the Christ came to Elisha, he was not in a synagogue praying; he was not pondering deeply or concentrating thought on spiritual things. Not at all. He was about his own business, which is always the Father's business, ploughing the fields behind twelve yoke of oxen. If one is ploughing with one yoke of oxen, he is a pretty busy, man; but consider how busy Elisha must have been ploughing behind twelve yoke of oxen! He certainly had no time to do any thinking other than to attend to his business, which, as has been pointed out, was God's business, as is every other good business. And while he was thus engaged, the Word of the Lord came to follow *him*.

At this point the human, or mortal mind, tempted him to delay things a bit (to think it over), and there came into his consciousness the very natural thing to do, namely, to say good-by to his father and mother, so believing that Elijah had spoken to him when his mantle fell upon him (the Spirit of the Christ operating through that personality known as Elijah had come upon him), he followed after Elijah and asked him if he might "kiss my father and my mother" farewell. Whereupon Elijah said in effect, to him: "Why do you ask me [Elijah]? What have I [Elijah] done unto you? Return again, or go back to *Him* whose voice you heard — God, the I AM, the *Me*, The only I, or US — and ask *Him*."

Elisha immediately perceived that it was not the person, Elijah, but the Christ operating through a person; or, he perceived that Elijah, as beheld by him, was God in manifestation, or God manifesting *Himself* through him, Elijah, to him, Elisha. Then he forthwith followed God, and became one of the great prophets of God. The mantle of Elijah had fallen upon him in very fact.

Later on, when a "double portion" of the Spirit of Christ, as manifested through Elijah, fell upon Elisha, we find the same expression used, and with that increased understanding, or Christ-mind, he was able to part the waters of Jordan and pass through them dryshod. Elisha then no longer looked to Elijah's personality, but to *God*, to the I AM, to the *Me*; and, returning, he literally "burned his bridges behind him," he slew his oxen and with them made sacrifice to God and made a feast for the people. In other words, he was through with his old manner of life and from thenceforth was to be about another phase of his Father's business, and a prophet of the Lord.

Evidently Jesus was so familiar with the story of Elisha's induction into the life of prophecy, that later on, under similar circumstances, when a certain man averred that he would follow him, and, tempted by the human mind to hold on to what he had rather than to trust God implicitly, saying "Suffer me first to go and bury my father," Jesus said: "Let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the Kingdom of God;" while to another, under practically similar conditions, he said: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

It is seldom that one is inducted into the greater works of the Kingdom of God through intensive study, through concentration of thought, through forcing one's self to attend church, lectures and other similar "calling of assemblies," or by prayer of words. Isaiah makes this perfectly plain in Isaiah 1:11-19, where he says that such things are an abomination and a weariness unto God; thus pointing out to us that the Christ comes to us and calls us to follow when the human mind is stilled (not trying to do something of itself), when the material senses are silenced, and when we "take *no* thought," as Jesus so succinctly put it.

It came to Jacob in a dream, to Joseph the same way; it came to Paul while he was honestly (as he believed) striving to destroy the followers of Christ. To Moses after eighty years of strenuous striving and concentrated thinking had failed utterly, while attending to his cattle out on the ranch, when the human mind was stilled, God appeared to him, and, without a question hardly, he laid down the work at hand, "burned his bridges," and went forth on his Father's behest to bring the Children of Israel out of bondage.

Peter, James and John, fishermen busily engaged in their daily labors, heard the voice of God speak to them and "they forsook their nets, and followed him," becoming from that time forth no longer fishermen, but "fishers of men."

Likewise with Daniel; for Daniel had fasted (from the world or earthly sense) and prayed (recognized the *ever*-presence of God) for three weeks. Finally, as it is related in Daniel, "was I in a deep sleep" (dead to the call of the world or the use of the human mind), whereupon the Christ came to him and said: "Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words."

There may be sought from the Bible many like instances where the Christ appeared — sometimes one way and sometimes another — yet, always there seems to be the requirement of the stilling of the human mind with its seemingly interminable thinking, thinking, thinking, before the Christ, released from the tomb of human thinking, will arise and become the Saviour. "For the Son of man cometh [the real man appears] at an hour when ye think not."