

# WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

## The Tabernacle in the Wilderness

(CONCLUSION)

REFERENCES: Genesis 6, 7, 8, 9; Exodus 3-14, 25-40; Hebrews 9, 10; John 6; II Corinthians 5.

**M**ANAS, *mensch, mens*, or man is readily associated with the manna that came down from heaven. It is the *human spirit* that descended from our Father above for a pilgrimage through matter, and the Golden Pot wherein it was kept symbolizes the golden aura of the soul body.

Although the Bible story is not in strict accordance with the events, it gives the main facts of the mystic manna which fell from heaven. When we want to learn what is the nature of this so-called *bread*, we may turn to the sixth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, which relates how Christ fed the multitudes with *loaves and fishes*, symbolizing the mystic doctrine of the 2,000 years which He was then ushering in, for during that time the sun *by precession of the equinoxes* has been passing through the sign of the fishes, Pisces, and the people have been taught to abstain at least one day during the week (Friday) and at a certain time of the year from the flesh-pots which belonged to Egypt or ancient Atlantis. They have been given the Piscean water at the temple door, and the Virginian Wafers at the communion table before the altar when they worshipped the Immaculate Virgin, representing the celestial sign Virgo (which is opposite the sign Pisces).

Christ also explained at that time in mystic but unmistakable language what that *living bread*, or manna, was, namely, the Ego. This explanation will be found in verses 33 and 35, where we read: "For the bread of God is he which

cometh down from heaven and giveth light unto the world. . . . I am (*ego sum*) *the bread of life.*" This, then, is the symbol of the golden pot of manna which was found in the ark. This manna is the Ego which gives life to the organisms that we behold in the physical world. It is hidden within the Ark of each human being, and the Golden Pot or soul body or "wedding garment" is also latent within everyone. It is *the house not made with hands*, eternal in the heavens, wherewith Paul longed to be clothed, as said in the Epistle to the Corinthians. (II Cor. 5.)

The wand of the magician, the holy spear of Parsifal, the chalice of the Grail King, and the budding *Rod of Aaron* are emblems of the divine creative force, which works wonders of such a nature that we call them miracles. Let it be clearly understood, however, that no one who has evolved to the point in evolution where he is symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant in the West Room of the Tabernacle ever uses this power for selfish ends. When Parsifal, the hero of the soul myth by that name, had witnessed the temptation of Kundry and proved himself to be emancipated from the greatest sin of all, the sin of lust and unchastity, he recovered the sacred spear taken by the black magician, Klingsor, from the fallen and unchaste Grail King, Amfortas. Then for many years he traveled in the world, seeking again the Castle of the Grail, and he said, "Often was I sorely beset by enemies and tempted to use the spear in self-defense, but I knew that *the sacred spear must never be used to hurt, only to heal.*"

And that is the attitude of everyone

who develops within him the budding Rod of Aaron. Though he may turn this spiritual faculty to good account in order to provide bread for the multitude, he would never think of turning a single stone to bread *for himself* that his hunger might be appeased. Though he were nailed to the cross to die, he would not free himself by spiritual power which he had readily exercised to save others from the grave. Though he were reviled every day of his life as a fraud or charlatan, he would never misuse his spiritual power to show a sign whereby the world might know without the shadow of a doubt that he was regenerate or heaven-born. This was the attitude of Christ Jesus, and it has been and is imitated by everyone who is a Christ-in-the-making.

The Western Room of the Tabernacle was as dark as the heavens are at the time when the lesser light, the moon, is in the western portion of the sky at eventide with the sun; that is to say, at the new moon, which begins a new cycle in a new sign of the zodiac. In the westernmost part of this darkened sanctuary stood the Ark of the Covenant, with the Cherubim hovering above, and also the fiery *Shekinah Glory*, out of which the Father of Light communed with His worshippers, but which to the physical vision was invisible and therefore dark.

We do not usually realize that the whole world is afire, that fire is in the water, that it burns continually in plant, animal, and man; yes, there is nothing in the world which is not ensouled by fire. The reason why we do not perceive this more closely is that we cannot dissociate flame from fire. But as a matter of fact, *fire* bears the same relation to *flame* as *spirit* does to the *body*. It is the unseen but potent power of manifestation. In other words, the true fire is dark, invisible to the physical sight. *It is only clothed in flame when consuming physical matter.* Consider, for illustration, how fire leaps out of the flint

when struck, and how a gas flame has the darkened core beneath the light-giving portion; also how a wire may carry electricity and be perfectly cold, yet it will emit a flame under certain conditions.

At this point it may be expedient to mark the difference between the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, Solomon's Temple, and the later Temple built by Herod. There is a very vital difference. Both the *miraculously enkindled fire* on the Brazen Altar in the eastern part of the Tabernacle and the invisible *Shekinah Glory* in the distant western part of the sanctuary were also present in Solomon's Temple. These were thus sanctuaries in a sense not equaled by the Temple built by Herod. The latter was, nevertheless, in a sense the most glorious of the three, *for it was graced by the bodily presence of our Lord, Christ Jesus, in whom dwell the Godhead.* Christ made the first self-sacrifice, thereby abrogating the sacrifice of animals, and finally at the consummation of His work in the visible world *rent the veil* and opened a way into the Holy of Holies, not only for the favored few, the priests and Levites, but that WHO-SOEVER WILL may come and serve the Deity whom we know as our Father. Having fulfilled the law and the prophets Christ has done away with the *outward* sanctuary, and from henceforth the Altar of Burnt Offerings must be set up *within* the heart to atone for wrongdoing; the Golden Candlestick must be lighted *within* the heart to guide us upon our way, as the Christ *within*, the *Shekinah Glory* of the Father, must dwell *within* the sacred precincts of our own God consciousness.

Paul in his letter to the Hebrews gives a description of the Tabernacle and much information about the customs used there which it would benefit the student to know. Among other things, note that he called the Tabernacle "a shadow of good things to come." There is in the ancient Mystery Temple a

promise given which has not yet been fulfilled, a promise that holds good today just as well as upon the day it was given. If we visualize in our mind the arrangement of things inside the Tabernacle, we shall readily see the shadow of the Cross. Commencing at the eastern gate there was the Altar of Burnt Offerings; a little farther along the path to the Tabernacle itself we find the *Laver of Consecration*, the Molten Sea, in which the priests washed. Then upon entering the East Room of the Temple we find an article of furniture, the Golden Candlestick, at the extreme left, and the *Table of Shewbread* at the extreme right, the two forming a cross with the path we have been pursuing toward and within the Tabernacle. In the center of the second veil we find the *Altar of Incense*, which forms the center of the cross, while the Ark placed in the westernmost part of the West Room, the Holy of Holies, gives the short or upper limb of the cross. In this manner the symbol of spiritual unfoldment which is our particular ideal today was shadowed forth in the ancient Mystery Temple, and that consummation which is attained at the end of the cross, the achievement of getting the law *within* as it was within the Ark itself, is the one that we must all concern ourselves with at the present time. The light that shines over the Mercy Seat in the Holy of Holies at the head of the cross, at the end of the path in this world, is a light or reflection from the invisible world into which the candidate seeks to enter when all the world has grown dark and black about him. Only when we have attained to that stage where we perceive the spiritual light that beckons us on, the light that floats over the Ark, only when we stand in the shadow of the cross, can we really know the meaning, the object, and the goal of life.

At present we may take the opportunities which are offered and perform service more or less efficiently, but it

is only when we have by that service evolved the spiritual light *within* ourselves, which is the *soul body*, and when we have thus gained admission to the West Room, called the Hall of Liberation, that we can really perceive and understand why we are in the world, and what we need in order to make ourselves properly useful. We may not remain, however, when access has been gained. The High Priest was only allowed to enter *once a year*; there was a very long interval of time between these glimpses of the real purpose of existence. In the times between, it was necessary for the High Priest to go out and function among his brethren, humanity, and serve them to the very best of his ability; also to sin, because he was not yet perfect, and then re-enter the Holy of Holies after having made the proper amends for his sins.

Similarly it is with ourselves at this day. We at times attain glimpses of the things that are in store for us and the things we must do to follow Christ to that place where He went. You remember that He said to His disciples: "Ye cannot follow me now, but ye shall follow me later." (John 13:36.) And so it is with us. We have to look again and again into the darkened temple, the Holy of Holies, before we are really fit to stay there, before we are really fitted to take the last step and leap to the summit of the cross, *the place of the skull*, that point in our heads where the spirit takes its departure when it finally leaves the body, or off and on as an Invisible Helper.\* Golgotha is the ultimate of human attainment, and we must be prepared to enter the darkened room many times before we are fitted for the final climax.

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\*Occult science teaches that those who have by lives of purity and service built the "wedding garment," or soul body (of the two higher ethers of the vital body) may function in this vehicle in the spiritual realms, consciously or unconsciously, according to the stage of development.