

# WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

## THE JOURNEY INTO ISRAEL

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt.

Saying, Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father, Herod, he was afraid to go thither; notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee.

And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

*Matthew 2:19-23.*

There comes a time in the life of every spiritual aspirant when Herod, the lower nature, dies, or at least comes under a degree of subjection. Then come "heavenly visitations." The Higher Ones, ever aware of the struggles of the aspiring soul, sustain the deserving and indicate the next step to be taken on the Path. Having been through like experiences themselves, they watch with deep understanding and tenderness all the efforts made by the neophyte to conquer the desires of the flesh and walk in the way of purity and service.

But there are always other worlds to conquer. The newly-born Christ Child — the neophyte who has subdued his lower desires to some extent — must dwell for a time in the land of Israel, the sphere of the lower mind. There it must assert its divine power until the Love-Wisdom Principle triumphs. The mind must be Christed.

Max Heindel tells us that "The mind is the focusing point by means of which

the Ego becomes aware of the material universe. As an instrument for the acquisition of knowledge in those realms the mind is invaluable, but when it arrogates to itself the role of dictator as to the conduct of man to man, it is as though the lens should" dictate to the astronomer in regard to its direction and focus. "The mind . . . is to be subdued by man himself, without any outside assistance."

Galilee represents a condition or state of consciousness on the Path which is attained only by those who persist in striving for the heights of spiritual attainment. To dwell in Nazareth, a "city" in Galilee, one must have joined definitely the ever-increasing group of men and women who are consciously devoting themselves to soul-culture. Hence, every conscious aspirant on the Christian Path may be called a Nazarene.

The man Jesus symbolizes for Christians the Higher Self, present in every individual, which must go through certain experiences in order to attain the state of relative perfection ordained for the particular cycle of evolution in which he is living. The bodies — physical, vital, desire, and the mind — must all be brought under the control of the indwelling Ego, so that it is master in its house.

Every Christian aspirant, or Nazarene, is fulfilling a destiny — a destiny the complete fulfillment of which requires long and arduous struggle for self-mastery. However, the inner joys and upliftment resulting from each victory on the Way are nature toward the flowering of the individual Spirit and of all mankind. ★