

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

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Saul and Stephen

(Continued)

Saul unreservedly gave himself to the Christ work. He went forth uttering that clarion call which was to be heard to the farthest confines of the Earth: "Let the Christ be formed in you." His every thought and act were now dedicated to serving that magnificent Messiah who was "groaning and travailing in the Earth awaiting the day of His liberation."

While reading the Akashic records Saul witnessed the great spiritual outpourings to Earth by the Lord Christ and His attendant hosts of Angels and Archangels during the four sacred intervals that we know as the two Solstices and the two Equinoxes. These outpourings are repeated in slightly lesser degree twice each month, on the nights of the new and the full moon. The four seasons make their impress upon the physical composition of Earth in the form of a cross. This is what Plato meant when he said that the world's soul is crucified. Saul saw that down through the ages Mystery Schools had established their temple observations in conformity with these great spiritual outpourings of the Lord Christ. He saw, too, how High Priests of these Temples had taught their disciples the meaning of Christ's mission to Earth, and how each one in turn had been a stepping stone in preparing future civilizations for the coming of the Christ. It was this realization which caused Saul to choose as the very key-words of his life "I am determined to know only Christ Jesus and him crucified." These words did not refer to the figure of a man bound to a cross, but to the great Cosmic cross through which

the Christ pours His mighty forces into the heart of the Earth during these sacred seasons. Saul's aspiration was that he might at some time reach that high place in spiritual attainment where he could be numbered with the Wise Ones of all ages who, with the Lord Christ and His celestial messengers, take part in the Holy Rites of these sacred periods.

Only after this revelatory experience could Paul write: "at the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . And every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." This is substantially the same vision vouchsafed to the enraptured Isaiah, which led him to sing of the day of world-wide harmony and universal peace wherein the lion and the lamb should lie down together and a little child should lead them.

During this experience Saul was shown his destined part in the Great Plan. Memory of the divine commission conferred upon him by the Master Jesus, the inspiration of His Presence together with the glory of the Christ Mystery, ever afterward, despite beatings, stonings, imprisonment and even martyrdom, caused Paul to remain steadfast and undaunted, affirming always "I was never disobedient to the heavenly vision."

Acts 9:10-20

And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord.

And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one

called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him, that he might receive his sight.

Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem:

And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name.

But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.

For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.

And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

The leader of the Christian center in the Syrian capital, Damascus, was the disciple Ananias. As Saul prayed he was given a vision of Ananias, and to Ananias came a vision of Saul at prayer. There are no barriers of time or space on inner planes; all is the eternal here and now. There spirits commune in oneness, though on the physical plane their bodies are separated by thousands of miles.

“Arise, and go to the street which is called Straight.” This line holds another mystic key referring to the Path of Initiation. “Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life.”

With the aid of Ananias the scales fell from the eyes of Saul. He received extended vision and was baptized. He acquired powers

of the Initiate, which gave him the ability consciously to investigate unseen worlds and discover the mysteries of life and death. Paul's experiences in the supernal realms, which continued for a period of three days and nights, left their impress in varying ways on each of his Epistles. Every word of these inspired communications spells immortality and every page glows with the radiance of life eternal.

Ananias addressed the apostle as “brother Saul,” denoting thereby that the latter had been received into the inner circle of Mystic Christians. The remainder of his life is characterized by constant communion with Christ Jesus and work on inner planes. *I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision* epitomizes his life thereafter.

Acquisition of first-hand knowledge concerning the life and conditions in super-physical worlds, contact with Great Ones on inner planes and obedience to their instruction and guidance, are requirements for true spiritual Initiation, according to the teachings of the Master and of those Disciples who came after Him. Such Initiations are possible today, but a high spiritual status is essential and few there are who can meet the exactions.

SAUL IN ARABIA

With his awakening Saul received a vision of his future work as the herald of the Christian movement. First there was a period of retirement for added preparation, both physiological and physical. A man's body must undergo complete regeneration before it is transformed from a “den of thieves” into a “temple of the living God.” In reference to this time of preparation, Paul states, “I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia.” Herein he again refers to work with Great Ones beyond the limitations of the physical realm.