

VOLUME 9

THE BIBLE SERIES

A METAPHYSICAL
AND SYMBOLICAL
INTERPRETATION OF

The Bible

by

Mildred Mann

	Page
JOSHUA, CHAPTERS 1 – 5	3
JOSHUA, CHAPTERS 6 – 12	14
JOSHUA, CHAPTERS 13 – 24	25

JOSHUA, CHAPTERS 1-5

Before we become involved in our study of Joshua, I must admit I am a little sad to say farewell to Moses. He was such a magnificent individual that no one (except Jesus) can equal him. Not that I underestimate Joshua – for it takes great courage and great ability to succeed such an overwhelming personality as Moses.

And Joshua certainly had courage and ability. Imagine yourself in his position – the position of having to fill the shoes of a great man. Also picture what it meant to this nation – for the Jewish tribes had now evolved to the status of a nation – when the man who had been their leader for years, who had performed miracles for them and brought them out of captivity, and led them through a wilderness to the verge of the Promised Land, this man, who brought to them a God they had never known before, is gone. In his place there stands a new leader. True, they knew that he had been chosen by Moses, but he was young, very young, certainly not more than thirty years old.

Joshua was just beginning his spiritual life. We know this because his name means "God is my salvation." (Joshua is the prototype of Jesus: the name Jesus in Hebrew is Joshua.) He was far from being as highly evolved as Moses but he tried to emulate him and in many ways he succeeded. In fact, within the chapters under discussion we are told that he took the First Initiation. (Whether he took any of the others is not apparent.) But he was certainly material that could be molded, for he was sufficiently open and receptive to spiritual knowledge. No wonder he was the man Moses chose to be his successor.

We find in the beginning of this book that God is speaking to Joshua, and Joshua is given three instructions. In 1:6 the Lord says: "Be strong and of a good courage, for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swore unto their fathers to give them;" in Verse 7: "Only be thou strong and very courageous, that

thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper withersoever thou goest," and in verse 9: "Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee withersoever thou goest." Now if each and every one of us lived by just these three tenets, there is not a thing in the world that would not be ours, including all of the wisdom of the ages; we would be "illuminated."

"Be strong, have faith, do not be afraid; remember God is with you wherever you are." This advice is so simple that it is almost an insult, isn't it? But there are few of us, even in metaphysics, who have been able to begin to realize these three concepts. If we were to take just anyone of them and live by it – for instance, "Be strong and of a good courage" – every day there would be miracles in our life. We will demonstrate miracles if we never deviate from our belief, if we look neither to the right nor to the left ("looking to the right and to the left" symbolizes rationalization.) But we always find a reason why that which we want, need and pray for cannot materialize – we say it is against all the laws of logic. Now, logic is a mental concept; it has nothing to do, as far as spiritual power is concerned, with spiritual understanding. Yet it is a strange thing – spiritual understanding never violates the laws of logic. No matter how amazing the occult or the esoteric experience may seem at first, when you understand it you will find that it never violates the laws of logic. God does not ask us to accept strange, weird ideas.

If we were to visit Tibet, a land with customs vastly different from our own, we would find that the people are allergic to soap and water and smear themselves with slightly rancid butter fat to shield themselves from the cold; Tibetans also believe that whenever a husband dies the wife must marry all of his brothers. At first we would say; "For heaven's sake, what kind of a life is this?" But as we learned to understand the symbology of the Tibetan religion, we would see that these customs are perfectly logical. Remember in Exodus and Deuteronomy the laws of marriage as prescribed by Moses were not too different. Although a widow did not marry all of her husband's brothers, she was compelled to marry the eldest one whether he had a wife or

not. To us, this too is very strange, but at the time of Moses this custom was perfectly logical, for it was practiced to perpetuate the nation of Israel.)

So whatever we think strange when we first encounter it in metaphysics (and there are many things that we find strange upon first hearing), will appear perfectly logical when, with patience and understanding, we discover the reason for it. It is important to realize that we need a greater understanding to comprehend the laws of growth, and that these laws are not limited to the physical world or the physical body. They also apply to the soul. And these laws, in so far as the soul is concerned, take a much longer time to manifest than the laws that govern the physical body. For instance, we could live perhaps fifteen hundred lifetimes without ever having encountered any metaphysical knowledge. Then when we first come in contact with the concepts of metaphysics, it probably takes several lifetimes to properly absorb them for the growth of the soul proceeds at a very slow pace. But as we begin to understand how the soul grows and we reflect on what it is and what it thinks through this physical mechanism that we call the body, we realize that it is a completely orderly progressive stage of unfoldment. (The soul is the combination of the conscious and subconscious minds.) But we have learned by now that God never violates the laws of any of the planes of being, even if at the moment we are not able to grasp fully the "how, why, when, and where." If we are patient and learn to understand what we hear, read and experience, we will find that the laws of logic are never violated.

No, God does not violate His own planes of Being; nor does He ever not live up to His promises. In 1:5 He promises Joshua: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

You remember it was mentioned in Numbers that the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh decided they would stay east of the Jordan. This decision caused quite an uproar; the other tribes knew they would have to fight for the land they were going to take, and the tribes of Gad, Reuben and Manasseh would have no part of it. Moses bargained with them and it was agreed that when the Jews crossed the Jordan these tribes could leave their families behind and only the fighting men would go forth.

Now that this time had come Joshua (in 1:12-15) went to them and told them they were expected to live up to their end of the bargain. They agreed they would, on one condition: "Only the Lord thy God be with thee, as He was with Moses." (1:17) So you see this stiff-necked people are being brought into line, and we are being told that they had a tremendous respect and love for their God Yahweh. Yes, they would fight for Joshua as they had for Moses, provided God was with him. And of course, in their minds, God "with him" meant that he would perform miracles whenever they were needed. As you know the Israelites came through.

In Chapter 2 Joshua sends two spies into Jericho. There is a very interesting esoteric idea in this section. Rahab the harlot in the Old Testament corresponds to Mary Magdalene in the New Testament. After the fall of Jericho she is allowed to join the Israelites; eventually she marries one of them and was the great-great-grandmother of David. This is the family that produced Jesus. Isn't this a nice lesson for those of us who are very intolerant of other peoples' behavior? Symbolically, in the story of the soul the name of the woman always stands for a particular evolutionary phase of the soul. Rahab is the lowest point the soul ever reaches: the harlot. The soul begins as Eve, a state completely innocent, naive and uninteresting. Eve starts out to make her way in the world and finds Adam and lives with him. Adam is of no particular help because Eve always wants to dominate (the subconscious always wants to dominate the conscious mind). She goes from one experience to another until she finally reaches rock bottom (Rahab the harlot); but from that point on she begins the process of redemption.

After many and various adventures (all told to us in Bible symbology) she becomes the completely redeemed soul, all-wise and all-knowing. She has experienced everything and is purged of everything except Love and Good. She is now known as Mary. When the soul is completely cleansed it is symbolically known as the Immaculate Concept (the purity of the soul which is necessary before it can bring forth the Word made flesh). The soul is always portrayed as a female and, if you want to find out at what degree of evolution a male character in the Bible has reached, study the character of the woman with whom he is coupled — for instance, Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, David, and

Bathsheba, etc. You will find this an interesting and rewarding study.

There is one thing that was very wonderful about the early Israelites, they always kept their word. When they made a vow they lived up to it. Rahab and her family were promised safety and it was granted. Not only that, but this woman who was a harlot married an Israelite and was accepted by Israel. This is very interesting, particularly when you know that this race was told that it was to remain a pure race dedicated to the belief in the one God.

But to return to Chapter 2, the spies came back and reported that the people of Jericho were simply terrified. In fact all Canaan was in an uproar. They had heard about the miracles Yahweh had performed for the Israelites and they were terrified: who could withstand the miracles of this god? They were frightened to death at the thought of the invasion of the Jews but they had no idea how they could prevent it (2:24).

The episode of the crossing of the Jordan resembles the crossing of the Red Sea and shows us that life moves in a spiral. Joshua the leader of this adventure was trained by Moses. Moses was an initiate who had studied at the temple of On in Heliopolis, and all of the occult sciences were known to the initiates. Moses undoubtedly instructed Joshua in some of this knowledge of "magic" – or at least trained him how to do things that gave the appearance of magic. Actually this knowledge was often only an awareness of what we today would call "scientific fact." For instance, the Israelites crossed the Jordan in April, which in that part of the world is the time of harvest. It was also the time when that region suffered severely from earthquakes. Now just as the *Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* knew when the eclipse would take place, so Joshua knew that the Jews should cross the Jordan immediately after there was an earthquake, prevalent at harvest time.

The Jordan is a narrow deep river and at times overflows its banks. The lower part of it flows down to the Dead Sea, but in the north it is banked by white clay cliffs. An earthquake topples these cliffs into the narrow stream and completely dams it up. It has dammed up for as long as twenty-four hours. Whether this happened immediately after the quake and Joshua said, "We're ready to go," or whether he commanded the Jews to wait a day or so, we do not know.

But we do know they passed through the Jordan as they passed through the Red Sea and they got across safely. It certainly was not an act of "magic," unless Joshua had enough power to cause the white clay cliffs to tumble. I doubt it; I think he had a knowledge of climatic occurrences and saw to it that his people were assembled there at that particular time.

People are amused when we say it is possible to control the weather, but I think it is really possible to do so if we reach a high state of consciousness. Remember, Jesus stilled the waves. But although it may have been possible for Joshua to provoke a cataclysm or to have parted the river, I am inclined to doubt it, for we know he was not nearly as developed as Moses. However, the only thing that was important – at least it was to the Israelites – was that the episode of the Red Sea was repeated.

When the Jews crossed the Jordan, it was the first day of the Passover, and they were again supplied with manna. But this was for the last time. Now they were able to provide for themselves. Actually, what we call miracles is nothing more than the working of natural law. As was stated above, no plane is ever violated by the Law of God; not even the earth plane. But at that time the Jews believed in miracles and Joshua, needless to say, after these incidents assumed a stature in the eyes of his people almost comparable to that of Moses.

In Chapter 4 Joshua commanded that a man from each of the twelve tribes of Israel should take a stone from the Jordan and lay it down where the next night's encampment was to be established. He also took twelve stones and deposited them in the middle of the Jordan. The place where the tribes placed the stones was called Gilgal. Do you know why the number twelve is used? It is the symbol of Cosmic Consciousness and Cosmic Completeness.

In Chapter 5 we have a recapitulation of Jewish ritual. The males had to be circumcised again as an act of purification even though the Jews were in the middle of a war. This was necessary because none of the men (and women) who had actually escaped from Egypt were still alive. The Jews of Joshua's day were the third generation. I do not know why the practice of circumcision was discontinued and no one seems to have any information about it.

The Interpreter's Bible only mentions that stone instruments were no longer employed and that Joshua used flint knives. *The Bible Dictionary* gives no reason for this lapse of one of the most important rituals of the Jewish nation. We just suddenly discover that nobody has been circumcised during the years the Israelites were sojourning in the wilderness (5:2-8). From the esoteric point of view it proves again that we develop in a spiral. Once more there is a complete dedication or rededication of the union between man and God. Now isn't this a peculiar and wonderful way to conduct a war? Here were the people of Jericho frightened because they were going to be invaded and all of Israel is incapacitated until an act of ritual has been performed. And both sides wait. We are certainly far from being as civilized today.

But don't forget that the Canaanites, the Hittites and other neighboring tribes were completely under the influence of magic. Imagine what these people who really worshipped magic thought when they saw such a thing occur. To them it was further proof that a god was leading the Jews. And they knew they had no magic power with which they could compete; there was no sense in even trying to use force. I don't know whether you have ever had an experience with unpleasant occultism. (I purposely say "unpleasant" because not all occultism is unpleasant.) I hope you never will, but if you do you will know that physical force is the last thing resorted to; it is not needed. If the situation cannot be controlled through your own power and the power of God, it is better not to try to do so through violence. The Canaanites knew this. They believed so much in magic that when they saw the rivers part and manna fall from heaven, they knew they could do nothing to equal it. So they did not put up a fight, even when they knew the Israelites were incapacitated.

Then in 5:13 we come to the meeting with the stranger. When Joshua walked outside the walls of Jericho, he saw a man standing there with a drawn sword. He did not know whether he was a friend or a foe, so he asked him: "Art thou for us or for our adversaries?" The stranger replied that he was the captain of the Lord's Hosts. Symbolically, we are being told that this is the beginning of the First Initiation of Joshua. We always come to the stage where Rahab becomes Mary – and this was taking place in Joshua

— the point where we actually meet, face to face, our Higher Self. Jung speaks of it in psychological terms as the Anima (for men) and the Animus (for women). Bulwer Lytton wrote an amazing book called *Zanoni* in which he called this experience the Dweller on the Threshold. Here in Joshua it is designated as the Stranger. Joshua meets him and he says to Joshua: "Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy," (verse 15) meaning that the spiritual understanding Joshua was now given was holy and came from God. This was Joshua's first great experience of the soul and he emerged a much stronger and wiser man.

The blood-letting of Chapters 6-12 is quite familiar by now but no doubt some of you are still disturbed by it. Are you reading the Bible literally or are you reading it on the metaphysical level? Even if you are reading it literally, why should these chapters bother you? You surely have studied history and read many tales of conquest. I would like to go a step further. Men have conquered and will unfortunately continue to conquer for a long time to come; but looking at it from the metaphysical viewpoint and translating this viewpoint to the realm of physical action, do you really think that the Amalekites, the Perizzites and the Hittites could possibly have such things happen to them unless they karmically had brought it on themselves? And another thing, as far as the Bible is concerned — and it is an important point to remember — one of the reasons there is so much repetition of material, and so many incidents are told from different angles, is that many writers have contributed to the writing of the various books.

Furthermore, we must never forget that the writers who assembled the Bible did so a long while after the historical events mentioned took place. These events were only kept alive by word of mouth. For instance, the esoteric version of the Cabala was not put into any form of writing until about the fourteenth century; before this it had been only taught orally to the men chosen to be teachers of that particular generation. They were the only recipients of this knowledge and they controlled the dissemination of it. In the same way much of the history, folklore, myths and legend of the Old Testament was put together by writers who lived in the fourth or fifth century. This is the foundation of the Bible as we know it today.

Long before this the Jews experienced the Exodus and reached the Promised Land; they had completely forgotten the one God and had been led into captivity again a hundred years later. All of this history was handed down by word of mouth until the Old Testament was put together. Coupled with this history was the belief that Israel was a chosen people. Israel had to be pure, for Israel was a people formed by God, created by God – therefore no impurity could ever touch Israel. This idea of purity did not remain only a Hebrew idea. In certain parts of the world today impurity is stretched to the point where if you come into contact with a person of a certain caste you are defiled. Look at the "untouchables" of India. This idea of purity is a very old one and it began when the stories of the Bible were put together. The pagans had to be purified and so their cities were sacked, their people killed and tortured and all the horrible things we read of in Joshua were perpetrated. But such things are nothing in comparison to what we have seen in our own century, nothing to what has been done by the Germans and the Russians and the Chinese. I think that probably the editors of the Old Testament took poetic license and exaggerated the eradication of everything that possibly pertained to the tainted race of the enemy. Do you know that there is a sect in India that is so "sanctified" that if a person even smiles he is considered impure? A smile denotes a feeling that is joyous and this sect believes in the concept of "no feeling" – only absorption into the Godhead. I admit this is an extreme example but it does show us that other religions also go to extremes in some phases of their beliefs.

But as far as we are concerned, the Bible is our textbook. It has historical value of course, but it is primarily a textbook of the human soul. For instance we saw in the story of Moses a figure who had reached tremendous spiritual heights, heights that few other people have ever attained. And here in the story of Joshua we have another type of spiritual person, a person who is attaining some degree of development, power, understanding and realization. But Joshua is not a Moses; he is not a Moses in years nor in spiritual development, but he is progressing. Remember the story of Joshua should also be read on the level of esoteric development. This is what the book is really about, but we too often cannot see the forest for the trees. We

read about the treatment of the Amalekites and we are appalled. I grant you it was horrible, but it could not have happened to them unless they had brought it on themselves karmically. I firmly believe that the horrible purge of the Jews in Germany was a karmic debt. I believe in reincarnation and I believe that though we happen to be born in a particular religious sect in this incarnation, it does not mean that we had been born in the same religion in a previous incarnation. In fact, it would be rather rare if we had.

I am always amused when people say: "You know, my family goes all the way back." Emmet Fox had a beautiful saying which applied to people who brag about their ancestry. He said "They are like potatoes; the best part of them is underground." Remember that when we reincarnate, we do not return to the same set of circumstances or the same church. The circumstances of each lifetime come from the various strains of our many karmic patterns.

I believe that we have lived before in male bodies and female bodies; and that we were all of different nationality, and all of different color – there have been lives when we had black skin, there have been lives when we had brown or yellow skin, and there have been lives when we had white skin. When we say: "You know, my family goes all the way back" – what do we mean they go back to? So when we read about people whom the Israelites are putting to the sword we must realize that although it was an uncomfortable existence for them, it could not have happened to them unless they had reaped it. I do not deny that early history was primitive, but let us admit that modern history is even more primitive from the point of view of the value of human life. To understand it, we must comprehend the philosophy behind it. The people who were slaughtered in the days of Joshua were not killed by chance; and the people who had the power to kill did not acquire this power by chance either. This same law works every day of our lives. That which we sow, we shall reap. Nothing in the world can change it.

Be strong, have faith, do not be afraid; remember God is with you wherever you go" applies to you and me just as much as it did for Joshua. This is a formula which is true for every man, woman and child on the face of the earth.

My suggestion is that you meditate on this each day, and you will not only find that no problem can stand against the inner certainty you will acquire, but you will have gained tremendous spiritual power and knowledge.

M. M.

JOSHUA, CHAPTERS 6-12

We have now reached Chapter 6, the story of Jericho. Jericho means "Material consciousness" and it is the material consciousness, of course, that has to fall. There are a number of steps which are quite interesting here, twelve in all. They are very indicative of the progress of the soul and the obstacles that the neophyte must overcome. You must realize by now that when we get to the stage of evolution the Israelites were at the time of Joshua, we are not by any means ready for anything else than to be guided and pushed onto the path of spiritual development. Sometimes the Israelites did right well, but more often than not they failed. But once we are on the path, all of life moves upward in a spiral. We start from where we are at the present moment; then we ascend two or three rungs of the ladder and look down; we then find ourselves at the identical stage we were before but at a higher level than when we started.

Suppose, for example, a person has a violent temper, and as soon as he gets angry he throws things around; he may even strike someone. Then he learns to control his temper. He is ascending the spiral of development. He then reaches the same point but is a step above; now when he loses his temper he has learned (although his desire is the same) to control it. He has moved up a rung and he keeps on going until he reaches the same spot on the third rung. He still has a temper but he no longer wants to throw things or hit anyone; he no longer has to control his temper but he can certainly use his tongue — and he does so with no holds barred. When he gets to the fourth rung he finds his anger is still there but he gets over it very quickly; he has no resentment and has no desire to "get even." We can thus proceed ad infinitum. This is the way life evolves and we have to learn to build our own growth. That is why it takes countless lifetimes for us to develop spiritually.

I remember that when I was a child certain members of my family (and they were really wonderful, sensitive people) were always very proud of their remark: "I can forgive, but I can never forget." They had arrived at the stage of development where they could at least forgive verbally. But they would have a long way to go until they reached the point where they could no longer remember their hurts. We must get to the point where we never think of resentments unless some association of ideas brings them to our mind; and when we do remember them we must look at them and say: "Oh yes, that." Only then are we grown up, only then are we really mature. This involves the clearing up, the cleansing and the controlling of the circumstances of our daily living, the things that make up the events of our lives. Joshua obviously had lived many lifetimes and was well along the spiritual path. Now there are 72 minor tests we have to pass, but only when we have succeeded in passing all but the last ten do we begin to approach the portals of what are figuratively and beautifully called the "Doors of Initiation." This is the point Joshua had reached.

What is an Initiation? The simplest and easiest way to define it is to call it a growing, enlarged state of consciousness. There are Major Initiations and Minor Initiations. Every time you learn to control a bad habit, you have had an initiation; every time you overcome a particular fear, you have had an Initiation. These are only minor ones, but they impel you forward and up the spiral. After you take the 72 minor ones you finally come to the point where you are ready for the Major Initiations. These are taken in full consciousness. Let no one tell you that you must go through strange performances to experience an initiation. Anybody who tells you such things is a complete charlatan and should be avoided at all costs. These experiences must come from within you. And, when you reach this stage, they are taken in perfect consciousness — I cannot emphasize this too often. When this happens to you, you suddenly find that your spiritual understanding is enormously increased.

After you experience the first one, you are sure you understand everything about and in the universe; then you become overawed when you soon discover that there is a great deal more to understand — and then you come to the true understanding that you can never really exhaust con-

sciousness. And you can't. But each time this experience occurs you open spiritual doors within yourself. You use powers you never knew you had. But with power go certain responsibilities that you must now incur and adhere to, for you are given great control over others as well as yourself. You are given certain duties to perform, not duties as we understand them, but duties of a different sort. More and more you begin to realize that "not my will but Thy will be done." That is Initiation.

They are divided into various stages because each one of them deals (especially the Major ones) with a specific plane of being. We can take the five Major Initiations in the flesh but there are two more that we take out of the body when we no longer have the earthly ballast to keep us on this plane. In other words, after we have experienced the Fifth Initiation we no longer have any fear in ourselves; there is no longer anything to keep us on this plane and we are ready to experience a greater spiritual life. All of us are a long way away from that, so don't worry about it yet. But each time we encounter one of the Major Initiations, we have control over a particular plane of being. There are four planes of being — earth, water, air and fire. I do not mean the actual physical planes but what they stand for metaphysically. The earth represents the physical; water represents the emotions; air represents the mentality and fire represents the Spirit. The First Initiation concerns the Spirit; that is, the beginning of the complete domination of the individual by Spirit. The Second Initiation concerns our mentality; the Third our emotions and the Fourth the earth.

Now you might say: "Isn't this order of Initiations a little bit inverted?" No, I will explain this by the example of the Star of David. Do you know the real meaning of this six-pointed star? It consists of a triangle coming down and a triangle going up. These triangles interlock where Spirit reached down and man reaches up. The triangle pointing up represents man reaching up to God and the other triangle pointing down represents God reaching down to man. Likewise, the First Major Initiation is the effect of the realization of the Spirit within the human being and is experienced when a contact is made with the Presence of God within.

There is not a complete union at first, but a beginning has been made.

The Second Major Initiation is called the Baptism and deals with the mentality. Now the emotions come under the control of the mind. The Third Major Initiation, the Transfiguration, pertains to the emotions. In other words, each plane is a complete reversal of the plane above. The same thing occurs when we look in a mirror; our right side now becomes our left side and our left side now becomes our right side. This is also true of the planes of consciousness. One is directly on top of the other but in reverse. The emotional control gained by the Transfiguration allows one to dominate the mentality; and it is the power of the emotions which brings the human being to the pinnacle where he is a son of God and not a child of God. He has reached that stage of development where he has the power to remember his past lives. But now he also has tremendous responsibility to himself and to his environment. This is the point that Moses reached. When the initiate has passed the Third Initiation he has the right to say: "Look, I've had enough for awhile. I would like to take it easy for a few lifetimes." And he can do so for as long as he desires. The Fourth Major Initiation, which is the control of the physical earth and the physical body, is known as the Crucifixion. It is very obvious why it is called this, for when the individual dies his physical body is finished. Now it is the Spirit which completely orders the death and the rebirth of its own body. This is the Resurrection. When the initiate has reached this stage of development all karma is a thing of the past.

Joshua was now approaching the stage of development where one of the things he had to control was the lust in his own nature, just as we have to learn how to control our passions. If you remember in Exodus 8, vs. 11, 13, 14, Moses sent Joshua out to battle with King Amalek. And we found that Joshua won the battle—he had learned to control his lust. That was the first of the remaining minor initiations he had to undergo. Read exoterically, there is nothing in the Bible itself that gives this interpretation, but the word Amalek is the key, for Amalek symbolizes lust. Also it was Moses who sent Joshua out to battle. Moses was his

spiritual teacher and directed his activities spiritually as well as physically. All this has significance and must be understood.

The second minor initiation occurs in Exodus 33:11 at the end of Moses' life. For the first time Joshua attained realization of the God within. It happened when Moses and Joshua went into the tabernacle and "when Moses turned again into the camp, but his servant Joshua, did not depart from the tent." This is the symbol of Divine Communion.

The third minor initiation is found in Joshua 1:8-9. It is learning the lesson of humility (or at least the beginning of it) and is explained in the text: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." We learn humility when we realize that the intelligence that guides us is not our own but that of the God within us. For the first time Joshua realizes "not I, but the Father within doeth the works." He was beginning to learn humility which is one of the last lessons we must learn – and one of the most difficult.

After the lesson in humility we experience the beginning of the expansion of consciousness. In 2:1 Joshua sent out two men to spy on the land of Jericho. These spies indicate the natural curiosity of the human being. This is a perfectly normal and healthy sign, for if we do not have curiosity, we will not grow. I do not mean that we must be inquisitive – that is quite a different thing. But if we are not curious about what metaphysics can achieve and what it will do for us – and at this stage do not worry about the other fellow – we will never grow. If we don't ask questions, we will stagnate. In the Bible curiosity is symbolized by the spies and Joshua is at that stage of development when he analyzes all aspects of a situation: Is it better for him to go ahead or is it better for him to retreat? He sends the spies to Jericho, which stands for the material consciousness. They are sheltered by a woman named Rahab and she is a harlot. Rahab symbolizes that stage of the soul which has finally conquered lust, and her next act is an act which begins her redemption. In saving the spies, she makes her first effort to give of herself in the right

direction, and she gains a greater spiritual awareness.

Actually this passage only concerns Joshua and Rahab, for the spies symbolize his negative thoughts and ideas. These negative thoughts must be overcome and Rahab symbolizes the phase of the soul which is making an effort to redeem itself, and return to a positive way of life. Here we are learning about the expansion of consciousness. Why did the spies meet a harlot rather than a high priest who probably would have said: "Yes, I think your people are right; you worship the true God and I will be glad to help you." If this had occurred we would have had no symbol which indicates the conquest of lust. Rahab is necessary to illustrate the point of the story.

The fourth minor initiation takes us back to the 31st chapter of Deuteronomy. In Numbers 13:16 Joshua was spoken of as Oshea, but in Deuteronomy 31:23 he is again called Joshua. Why? Is it a misprint? No, it is not. You will remember we have mentioned previously that each of us has a spiritual name. When we reach the stage at which Joshua is now, we learn our spiritual name. Our spiritual name is the name we have had since we were created. It is always a dim echo of the name we have in each incarnation. Oshea means "Saviour"; Joshua means "God is salvation." Joshua, who ruled with the sword, manifests the idea of demonstration; Moses, who ruled with the rod, manifests the idea of the power of thought. Joshua was active, he had to do things; Moses was a thinker. The name Oshea is mentioned only once, but it is mentioned at the time he dedicated himself to his God. It is quite interesting to note that this is the only time (as far as I know) that the name Oshea occurs in the Bible. I think it is the only instance where a spiritual name is mentioned anywhere in the Bible.

The fifth minor initiation is active participation in the spiritual life, and is symbolized by the crossing of the Jordan. The neophyte at this particular point must learn that the Jordan (which means "the waters") is the emotional nature; and that there are emotional crises to be met and to be passed. The Israelites were told to stand still in the Jordan. This indicates that they must learn to control their emotional nature, no matter what happens or what the emergency may be. We are also told that the Ark of the Covenant also stood still in the middle of the Jordan; the Ark of the

Covenant symbolizes the spiritual part of our being. We must have complete stillness: "Be still and know that I am God." In 4:9 Joshua marks the place in the Jordan with the twelve stones, which indicates that he had experienced the beginning of Cosmic Consciousness. The number twelve stands for Cosmic Completion and seven symbolizes man's integration. This is the beginning of Illumination.

The sixth minor initiation is the renewal of the circumcision. That is a rededication but it is on the upward spiral of development; it is the taking of the creative energy which heretofore has been used for physical procreation and raising it to the point where it is beginning to be used for spiritual creation. The circumcision actually refers to the change the glandular system undergoes in the Major Initiation called the Transfiguration. This is the cabalistic interpretation; but all of the esoteric schools are familiar with these steps. They are very clearly denoted in certain parts of the Bible. (I am sure you realize by now that many of the people who compiled the Bible were great esotericists.) It is up to us to learn how to read this Book properly. "They that have eyes, let them see, and they that have ears, let them hear."

The seventh minor initiation is represented by Joshua meeting the man with the drawn sword. This is the Stranger, the Dweller on the Threshold (5:13-15). I don't think we have to enlarge upon it here. This actually takes place just before the First Major Initiation. When we meet the Dweller on the Threshold, we have to account for all of our actions; but we have the feeling that this is of God, and after this experience we are never quite the same. But before this takes place, Jericho is surrounded and must fall — that is, there must be complete control of the unregenerate mind and emotions. We must prepare ourselves for this tremendous experience.

The eighth minor initiation is the eradication, as we are told very graphically, of all the negativity that we have hitherto known. It does not mean that we won't occasionally become angry or do a few things that we wish we had not; but it won't happen very often; and it will happen less and less frequently as we advance. This is symbolized by the complete destruction of Jericho. Seven trumpets made of rams' horns were blown by the priests to fell the wall of

the city. Now the ram is the symbol of the sign of Aries and represents the beginning of the Arian age. (The ram is also the sign of spring, the beginning, rebirth.) Joshua was one of the foremost figures of the Arian age; the next one, the Piscean age, began with Jesus. The trumpet was sounded seven times in seven days; and on the seventh day the city was encompassed seven times. The seven signifies spiritual integration and spiritual understanding; it also tells us that Joshua is becoming a mystic, for it is also the symbol of mysticism. This is the beginning of a new spiritual age for Joshua; he is now taking the First Major Initiation.

The ninth minor initiation (which is a preparation for the Seven Major Initiations) concerns the story of the sacking of Ai. Joshua has just withstood the first attack and is now preparing for the second. This is actually a transmutation. Ai was later rebuilt and flourished for a time. But here Ai is razed by fire and the king of Ai was "hanged to a tree until eventide" (8:29) and then buried under a stone. This means that the physical body must be transformed. The tree symbolizes the cross and the king symbolizes the mentality — this shows the complete dedication of the human being to the God within. The death of the old man and the birth of the new has now taken place. When we start the metaphysical life we begin this transformation.

The tenth minor initiation deals with the sun and the moon which stood still. (Cabalistically the number ten means a new beginning on a higher spiral of evolution.) (10:13)

This also prepares the human being for the next Major Initiation, the Third Initiation, the Transfiguration. The Third Initiation is symbolized by the sun and the moon standing still. But before this can take place there has to be a polarity of the glands. The sun symbolizes the pineal gland; and the moon the pituitary gland. At the point of the Third Initiation itself, there is a union between the two glands which mystics refer to as the Mystic Marriage. The tenth minor initiation is the beginning of that activity. You remember from our discussion of the glands that the thyroid comes into play first; then the pituitary (the moon) and then the pineal (the sun). Here we find that the sun and the moon stand still. The glandular activity has started but at this point the activity is not around the sun and the moon but

it is around the thyroid. The power of the Creative Word becomes real to us – that is the meaning of the Third Major Initiation.

Besides its fascinating symbology, Joshua is also historically very interesting. It is amazing to see what the Israelites accomplished at this time. They had lived as slaves for several centuries, but now they were able to meet every emergency that arose. They began to be able to exercise dominion over their environment. Perhaps you ask: what was it that really motivated them? Well, we know that it was not a personalized Yahweh and we know that it was not a God of Wrath who came down from heaven and ordered the Jews to kill all the people who stood in their way.

Well, then, what was it? It was an ideal. If we learn anything at all from this book of Joshua, we learn that an ideal can perform miracles, provided we translate that ideal into an Idea. There are many of us who have wonderful ideals, but all we ever do is sit and dream about them. The difference between the word "idea" and the word "ideal" is only the letter "L". But that "L" is the letter Lamed in the Hebrew alphabet. It means "Thy will not my will be done." In other words, we incarnated with the capacity to realize our ideal but we must translate it into an idea before we can put it into effect. The book of Joshua is just such a story – the story of a man and his people, a man who stepped into a great man's shoes, feeling no doubt very inadequate; but a man who actually did an absolutely terrific job. He put his ideal into action and led his people into the Promised Land. He saw to it that each one got a fair share of the land; when they were settled he administered the laws that Moses devised for them. In fact, the last words Joshua said before he died were: "Be sure that you remain true to the laws of Moses. As long as you do, you will prosper." And these people obeyed, at least for a while; then they fell away, as we will see when we study the books of Judges and Kings.

You know, the Israelites were very much like ourselves. We don't change very quickly; we reach peaks of development and then we slide back; we reach still higher peaks and slide back again. But the point of evolution is that each time we reach a peak, it is a little higher than the one we reached before. In the book of Joshua the Israel-

ites did go a step or two higher and became a unified nation. Their days of warfare were over and they settled down to a life of farming and cattle raising, quietude and prayer.

But the main story of Joshua concerns the impact of an ideal that was translated into activity and carried forward by a people that seemed completely unprepared to bring such a task to fulfillment. But they did. In our day and age, we say we cannot go very far without the necessary background. I am not belittling education. An education is a wonderful thing, but on the other hand, when we know in our heart that we can really do something, when we realize that this is the thing for which we live, it does not matter what the odds are against us, if we believe — truly believe — and act upon it, we will succeed. That is the story of Joshua, for Joshua symbolizes another part of our evolution. Joshua is the man of action, Joshua is the man with the sword, whereas Moses was the man of the Law. And there is a great difference in these two individuals and what they stand for. Moses is wisdom, the Infinite Mind acting through a human being. Very few people, possibly only Paul, ever attained the wisdom and the brilliance of Moses. Joshua did not have that; he was far from being a genius in any field; he was not an originator or creator in the sense of Moses or David or Solomon. He was a follower — an *intelligent* follower. He was commissioned to do a job and he carried it out. And he did it because he followed the one true course, he lived with his God as closely as he could.

Of course, nothing ever happens to a human being that he is incapable of handling. This applies to you and me; as well as to Joshua or Moses. When we don't do it, whether or not we like to admit it, we have no one to blame but ourselves. We have the equipment, the ideal and the ideas — what we need to put it into practice is the faith. Joshua had this faith. He saw what he had to do and he did it. It is interesting to note that Moses was a more advanced initiate and that Joshua came only to the point of the First Major Initiation. There is nothing in the story of Joshua to indicate that he progressed further in that lifetime.

Here, we again see the necessity of not only training our mind, to think positively, but of training our feelings. Thoughts, if constantly controlled, make the feelings follow.

It is through this procedure that we begin to understand our inner motivations. As the understanding grows, the feelings change from the negative side to the positive.

These form the basis of the minor initiations. Each time we find ourselves spontaneously acting, speaking, thinking and feeling in accordance with the Truth we know, we have passed a minor initiation.

M. M.

JOSHUA, CHAPTERS 13-24

In Chapter 13 we have the recital of the division of the land. The main point of interest here is that the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of Manasseh settled east of the Jordan. Obedient to their promise to Moses, they helped the rest of the tribes to conquer the land and did not return to their own territory until the war was over. However, the symbolic meaning of the various names of the towns is fascinating; and although *The Metaphysical Dictionary* has only some of them, I suggest you look them up. The important thing in this section is that the twelve tribes which are specifically named have a very definite plan. Not only the plan that formulated the Jewish nation and lasted until the end of Palestine, but an esoteric plan.

We speak of individual creation or individual perfection as symbolized by the number seven, and the cosmos as symbolized by the number twelve. Let us look at the astrological significance of these twelve tribes. I do not mean in terms of fortune telling, but of their cosmic significance which has a very definite symbolism in astrology. At this point I might add that all of the so-called occult arts are for the most part very much misunderstood. To use astrology, hand analysis or Cabala for prognostication is foolish and can be dangerous; but to use them as "cosmic indicators" is something quite different. Very often in the Bible we come across certain references to them, and it is important to know something about them. For instance, if you are born in the sign of Cancer in this incarnation, you are of the tribe of Reuben. Whatever the quality of that tribe is will be part of your nature in this life. I do not mean the physical tribe, but whatever the particular thing is that the tribe symbolizes, you are trying to embody in this life. Your sun sign is symbolized by a tribe. (Your sun sign is the month and day of your birth.)

Why is the point made that seven tribes did not receive their portions and five already had? Because we are

being told — if we can understand — that this is a cosmic plan. The seven tribes refer to the seven days of creation, and the five tribes are the five cosmic nights in between each day. So we are being told very distinctly that the five tribes had been apportioned their share and that there were still seven to be taken care of.

Before we study the meaning of the tribes, I would like to discuss the story of Caleb. In 14:10 Caleb comes to Joshua and says: "I am this day fourscore and five," (he was one of the men Moses sent out with Joshua to spy on Canaan) "and yet I am as strong as the day that Moses sent me" (14:11). He says he can still lead an army but he wants the portion of land promised him. Caleb was not an Israelite, but he cast his lot with the tribe of Judah. Even in the days of Moses when racial purity was firmly adhered to, Moses was extremely lenient to non-Jews when they contributed something of importance to the Israelite race. And remember, Moses was the first Jew to marry out of his own religion (and not once but twice). So it is not too strange to find Caleb becoming not only part of the tribe of Judah but a great figure in it.

Chapter 22 is interesting. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh have set up their own altar on the banks of the Jordan. The other tribes hear about it and are perfectly furious. They send a commission to investigate, and they warn the two and one-half tribes that if they are making a sacrificial altar to strange gods, the other nine and one-half tribes will make war on them and eradicate them. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh tell them that they had no such intention; it was only more convenient to have their own altar on their side of the Jordan than to have to cross it when the holy days occurred. It was their intention to live up to the law of the one God. Everyone parted on the best of terms.

In Chapters 23 and 24 Joshua gives his last address. It is very short but very lovely. He recapitulates everything that has happened and then says to them something that Moses said: "And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom you will serve" (24:15). He reminds them of the miracles that have been done for them: "For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage,

and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed." (24:17). And he warns them: "If ye forsake the Lord, and serve strange gods, then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good." (24:20). And the people choose the Lord. Joshua replied: "Your words are your witnesses against you." Joshua wrote these words in the book of God; then he took a stone and put it under an oak tree — as though the stone were a deity which had heard the words. By that stone the Israelites pledged themselves to remain true to the law of Moses. Then Joshua, a very old man by now, died and was buried in Mount Ephraim.

Half of the tribe of Manasseh went over the Jordan. This tribe was originally the tribe of Joseph and was divided between his two sons Manasseh and Ephraim. One half of Manasseh settled on the east side of the Jordan and the other half on the west. This explains why nine and one-half tribes are on one side of the river and the two and one-half are on the other. When we study the book of Revelation we will find that the tribe of Dan has become the tribe of the Levites.

The entire book of Joshua takes place in the land of Canaan. The symbolism of the word Canaan is quite interesting. Canaan was the Promised Land, the "land of milk and honey." Yet did it ever occur to you that if it was the Promised Land, an awful lot of evil had to be cleared up in it? Canaan probably saw more plundering, rape, killing; in short, more horror than almost any part of the known world at that time. Then how can it be the Promised Land? Because Canaan stands for the unregenerate nature of each of us, the subconscious mind that can give us so much trouble. But when we have learned to control our subconscious mind, then it becomes the power which enables us to enter the Promised Land. It is then we find our problems fading away and in their place comes the beginning of the fulfillment of our dreams.

Let us now study the meaning of the tribes.

The first tribe mentioned is Reuben which symbolizes the sign of Cancer, the Crab. The name Reuben means: "Behold my son." Cancer is a water sign and of course all life comes out of the water. Now we can begin to see that

Reuben represents the New Birth of the God within us. The possibility of this New Birth in any particular incarnation is symbolized by Reuben. If you are a Reubenite, if you are born under the sign of Cancer, you have been blessed with a great sensitivity. But sensitivity like electricity, is neither good nor evil. If you use it in a negative way it can torture you to death; if you use it in a positive way, you can do anything you choose to do.

The next tribe is Gad which symbolizes Gemini. It also symbolizes reason, insight: the word Gad means Seer. Gemini is an air sign and is represented by the Heavenly Twins. It is a mental sign; it signifies the creative mind which has the power of visualization and imagination. It is also "good fortune." If you are born under this sign and use your mind constructively, you will have plenty of good fortune.

The tribe of Manasseh is Pisces, a water sign represented by the fish and is the symbol of emotional control. The word itself means "who makes to forget." People born under this sign must learn to control their emotions and not get so involved in them that they cannot use their minds. They cannot let their hearts run away with them. Such people are emotional "push-overs," and often enjoy martyr complexes.

The tribe of Judah is Leo the Lion. The name means courage, "praise Jehovah," and is symbolized by fire. Leo also possesses the ability to lead in whatever field in which one is interested.

The tribe of Joseph is Libra, represented by the scales of justice. Libra is an air sign and it symbolizes Justice. The word Joseph means "Whom Jehovah will add to." Libra is also the sign of Ephraim. (The names Ephraim and Joseph are often interchanged.) Ephraim means "very fruitful." Manasseh and Ephraim were the sons of Joseph, and their offspring emerged as two of the most powerful tribes of Israel. But remember that one half of Manasseh stayed on one side of the Jordan, and the other half crossed the Jordan. But all of these tribes, including Ephraim, are called Joseph. This was probably done to distinguish them from Mt. Ephraim about which we will read a great deal later on.

The tribe of Benjamin is represented by the earth sign

Virgo the Virgin and stands for purity. The name Benjamin means "son of the right hand." This meaning is very interesting when we consider what the symbol Virgo stands for. Purity seems to be a completely passive quality, but it is actually one of the most active of all qualities. We must constantly strive to achieve this quality not only of the body, but of the mind. The right hand is always the symbol of active participation in work. "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart. And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." (Matt. 5:27-30) While the desire to be pure is incarnate in us, it has been buried by our subconscious mind which frequently has absorbed other ideas on the subject; so if we are to achieve the state of real purity, we have to continually work for it. It is probably the most difficult of all attainments for mankind to reach. I don't mean purity in a narrow sexual sense, but purity of heart; we must be pure in mind as well as in deed. We can only arrive at this state by an active conscious participation of all our faculties. But this is a part of spiritual growth we all must go through.

Then comes Simeon, an air sign represented by Aquarius the Water Carrier. Simeon symbolizes power. It is also the symbol of Brotherhood. The word Simeon means "he who will hear." Incidentally, we are now in the Aquarian age and it certainly is an air age, isn't it — both hot and cold. The idea of Brotherhood is struggling for manifestation through aid to our fellowmen.

Next is Zebulun which is represented by Capricorn the goat. It is an earth sign. The name Zebulun means "habitation or dwelling." It symbolizes the physical body.

This is followed by Issachar, represented by Sagittarius the hunter, which is a fire sign. It signifies wisdom and the name itself means "compensation." In other words, we are compensated for the spiritual knowledge we achieve by right thinking and obedience to the Laws of the universe.

Next is Asher. It is represented by Taurus, the bull, and is an earth sign. It symbolizes fertility. The word Asher means "straight is the way." This is literally true, for the path to truth is straight; it is only we ourselves who insist on going by a crooked road. God gave us the means (the fertility) to achieve this truth.

The tribe Naphtali, represented by Aries the ram, is a fire sign. It symbolizes a New Beginning, and the name means "wrestling with God." It also stresses the pioneer spirit and breaking with old traditions.

And finally we come to Dan which is represented by Scorpio, the scorpion, a water sign. The name means "a judge" or "God is my judge." This tribe represents "death and regeneration" which is the final step we must all take in our spiritual life. The scorpion becomes the phoenix which rises from the dead ashes.

These are the twelve tribes and their meanings. As you see by their Zodiacal symbols they stand for the cosmos and the characteristics of man who is a miniature cosmos. The macrocosm is the Infinite and man is the microcosm. Whatever sign we were born under in this particular incarnation, shows us at what stage of development we are now in. It shows us the characteristic that is most strongly emphasized in us in this incarnation. For instance, suppose you are born under the sign of Gemini. That means you have an excellent mentality, but you have the other things in you too. You could also have a lot of Scorpio (which is Dan) in your makeup — that is you would have a wonderful mentality but you would also have a frightful temper. You could also have a tremendous occult power. It depends on how you use your potentialities. We have many traits within us. In fact, there is not one of us that does not have, at least to some degree, characteristics of all twelve tribes. But we always have one predominant sign, one predominant characteristic, that makes us slightly different from everyone else. This can be either our downfall or our redemption.

If we are a Cancer person, we have great sensitivity which can lead to the possibility of Spiritual rebirth. In a woman this is always a strong sign; in a man it is always a weak sign. A Cancerian man can always be led and shoved this way and that. But, on the other hand, Aquarian men are extremely strong and broadminded, while Aquarian women

have a tendency to be nasty and sharp-tongued. The characteristic of each particular Zodiacal sign differs according to the sex of the individual. This difference is influenced by the theory of incarnation. If you are in a female form, you have a male soul; if you are in a male form, you have a female soul. But while it is true to some degree that there is this difference between the sexes in the same sign, there are some characteristics they have in common. Pisces people are extremely sensitive, but sensitive in many different ways. They will fight for a cause. They will not let anyone be hurt. Without bothering to investigate if they are right or wrong, they constantly give of themselves physically as well as emotionally.

Before we leave the book of Joshua, I would like to mention that in Chapter 20 the Lord told Joshua to appoint the cities of refuge. You will remember that in Deuteronomy cities of refuge were provided for those who had committed crimes. But here in 21:41 it has a wider meaning. There were 48 cities allotted — not given — to the Levites. Note they were "allotted", put aside. A city is the symbol of a state of consciousness, and the name of the city gives the clue as to the type of consciousness. It is important to remember that 48 cities were allotted. The Cabalistic meaning of the numbers informs us that 4 plus 8 equals 12, which reduces to 3, and 3 is the manifestation of idea. Furthermore 4 is the physical plane and 8 means power. And again, as in the tribes of Israel we have 12, the cosmic sign. Here again the symbol is proof that there was a cosmic pattern behind the happenings of the book of Joshua.

The priests, the Levites, are not owners of anything. Whatever they have is allotted to them. It is important to understand this, for when we study Revelation, the last book of the Bible, you will find that the tribe of Dan (which represents Scorpio) has been changed into the tribe of the Levites. As we said previously, the symbol of Scorpio is an interesting one. It is the phoenix that rises from its own ashes and symbolizes the death of the old and the regeneration of the new. It is only through the work of Dan, and our cooperation with Dan, that we become the Levites, the priests of God. Dan is one of the most important signs from the point of view of representing the esoteric side of nature. Dan represents what we must do with ourselves to reach

our own Revelation, when we must overcome the Dan within us and become a Levite instead.

Thus we find that the book of Joshua, which appears to be a mere cataloging of names of obscure Hebrew tribes, is in reality a book of endless esoteric knowledge for us to read and study for our self-development. Joshua indeed means "Jehovah is my deliverer."

There is an old occult belief that the day and month of your birth in this incarnation was the day and month of your death in your last life. And it follows that the day and month of our departure from this plane will be our birthday in our next incarnation.

In other words, the sun sign (the day + month of your birth) give symbolically the qualities you brought back with you to help your progress.

Another old saying is, "God has a plan for every man, and He placed it in his hands." But it is also true of his natal chart.

These are merely indications of what we have within us. What we do with it rests completely on ourselves - and no one can predict what it will be.

H. M.

JUDGES, CHAPTERS 1-12

Our study of the book of Joshua ended with the discussion of the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. It took these tribes about forty years to settle and acclimate themselves to the land they conquered. During this time they were neighbors of the Canaanites, the Midianites and other pagan peoples. But the entire history of this episode of the Jewish people started at Gilgal (Joshua 4:20), so that the book of Judges actually starts in Joshua (and really ends in the book of Samuel). It covers a period of approximately four hundred years. However, the period we are concerned with here only comprises about two hundred years, and it is during this time that the Israelites began to develop a national unity; it is at this time that they began to realize they were a nation.

But they also developed other characteristics which were not as commendable. They began to fall away from the teachings of the Ten Commandments; their history now contains a great deal of treachery, murder and licentiousness; and they began to worship the false idols of their pagan neighbors. But every time they did so, they got into difficulty. Then when they were oppressed, they cried to their God, and the Lord heard them and sent them a leader. In fact, the book of Judges is based on the text found in Genesis: "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door." (4:7)

In this book we will find some interesting stories that illustrate many types of human development; but the cry we hear most often is: "I'm being punished so terribly; I'll really behave myself if I can get out of this trouble." It is interesting to note that the people who fell away from their faith are the people who did not see the wonders performed by Moses and Joshua. They are the children, the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren of those who came through the trials of the Exodus. These miraculous acts of God had become the absolute backbone of the Hebrews, but

the generation that lived at the time of Judges only knew these wonders by oral tradition.

As we look at these people, we realize that they were not much different from ourselves. Their point of view was no different from a man by the name of Thomas who lived almost two thousand years ago and said: "I cannot believe unless I see." When he saw and felt the wounds of Jesus, this doubting Thomas said: "My Lord and my God." The Israelites were very much like that, and so are we. In fact, as we study the Old Testament, we see how slowly the idea of faith grows. This is one of the things the story of Judges tells us, time and time again. Every time the Hebrews got out of difficulty, within forty or eighty years they were back in it again. Why? Because they did not have a strong enough faith in the one God.

The "judges" that give the name to this Biblical book were not judges in the sense that we use the term. Unlike the people who had become extremely materialistic, these judges were chosen by God — "the Spirit of the Lord came upon them." No matter how far we may stray from the religious concept, there is not a generation that has ever lived in which the voice of God has not been heard and preserved. Even in the unholy times of Judges, there were men who were devout and had a high degree of spiritual development. They understood the meaning of existence and were impelled by their God to help and instruct their people to follow the ways of God. These men were called the judges (an exact translation of the Hebrew word *shophtetim*) because in a sense they were commissioned by God to rule the Jews and punish them if they misbehaved. They generally were also the leaders of the army and directed all military activities as well as civilian life. But the important point to remember is that they were always chosen by God and not by the people. There were a number of such judges. Othniel, Ehud, Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Jephthah and Samson were the important ones. But these judges came forth as leaders of the people because they felt the power of the God within. This inner guidance gave them the strength to perform the things they did, and abetted them in all their activities.

In 2:1 we are told that "an Angel of the Lord came up from Gilgal." The Angel of the Lord first appeared in the Garden of Eden, and in some parts of the Bible is

called an archangel. Now there are angels and archangels and some people are clairvoyant enough to see them. An angel is a higher spiritual being than a human being and has great spiritual wisdom much beyond our understanding. An angel is incapable of appearing in a physical body because he is a being too spiritually developed to wear our gross physical form; but an angel is an entity that can be seen. There are seven archangels, one in charge of each of the seven cosmic rays on which we live. Each one of us is on one of these cosmic rays; sometimes we change from one ray to another. This is governed by our spiritual development. The angel mentioned here is in charge of the second ray — that of pious orthodoxy. He is forcing the Israelites back to the second ray, the Law. (We will discuss the other rays in another lecture.)

What we have to realize here is that if an angel could appear to Othneil, it is a sign that he must have been quite highly developed. Consequently he did everything he could to lead his people back to the one God, for they "forgot the Lord their God, and served Baalim and the groves." (3:7) (Remember Moses forbade them to plant trees for this very reason.) Now there were periods when the Israelites were very grateful to be rescued from their difficulties and periods when they were free of trouble and were very ungrateful to their leaders. They were a vacillating people not unlike ourselves. We will work hard to make a demonstration, and once we have made it, we do nothing further. But when we are in trouble again, we bemoan the fact and say: "Woe is me, why did this happen to me?" So we have a series of unpleasant situations, each one more difficult than the last, until we decide to take ourselves in hand. This is symbolized in Judges by the leaders that always were there to rescue the Israelites.

They had various leaders, until Ehud came along (3:15-30). He pulled a rather sly trick. We read that Ehud was a left-handed man. In occult symbolism the right hand is materialization, the hand with which we give out; the left hand is subjective, we take in with the left hand. We are also told that he stopped at the altar at Gilgal first. (You remember that was a sacred altar which marked the crossing of the Jordan.) The left hand indicates that he was to perform a task that was far from pleasant. Yet he delivered his people by means of it; he killed the king of the Moabites and destroyed the army.

There is also another interesting point. Later on mention is made that when the Israelites took Adoni-bezek captive, they cut off his thumbs and his great toes. In ring or finger symbolism the first finger, particularly of the left hand, is the finger that represents God the Father; the second finger represents the Son, and the third finger represents the Holy Spirit. The thumb is the symbol for Divine Creative Thought. In old marriage ceremonies the priest used to say: "I wed thee in the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, Amen." He would then touch the fingers mentioned above. In Michelangelo's painting of the *Creation*, the finger of God is reaching down to man. The thumb and each great toe have always been the symbol of the Infinite. So the losing of the thumb and the great toes indicates that Adoni-bezek was not only deposed as a ruler, but he also lost his standing in the natural and supernatural worlds. The thing that makes this so fascinating is that amid all these stories of bloodshed and wrong, there appear bits of occult symbolism. You wonder how it ever managed to creep into these gory tales.

Chapter 4 is devoted to the story of Deborah and Barak. Deborah was one of the first women in history to become a judge; at least she was the first that we have any record of. I do not mean she was the first important feminine spiritual figure in the Bible. Not at all. Remember, in Genesis we saw that Sarah was a great help to Abraham; and that the love of Jacob for Rachel was one of the dominating themes of his life. There were other strong women in these preceding chapters, Rebecca and Miriam, etc. But for the first time a woman emerges as a lawgiver; she must have been a remarkable woman. Her name means "bee" and bees are known for their ceaseless activity and instinctive intelligence. Another definition of the name is "the leader."

Deborah stands for spiritual discrimination, and being a woman, she is the symbol of the soul. She also was a prophetess; she foretold what would happen and it did. Prior to this it was the voice of the Lord, or the angel of the Lord, who informed men of future events. But here it is Deborah who tells Barak: "Take ten thousand of the men and fight against these nine hundred iron chariots of Jabin, the Canaanite. But it will be my victory not yours." Symbolically, we are being told that the soul (Deborah) has

reached a certain development and is now able to make conscious contact with the physical plane. Barak represents the physical plane. Together Deborah and Barak make a very beautiful "demonstration." When Deborah commands Barak to attack, we realize that the Canaanites were a pretty powerful nation; they had a potent military strength augmented by nine hundred iron chariots. Yet, the Israelites, a mere handful of men, without any of the equipment that the enemy had at their command, attacked them and defeated them. What I think actually happened was that suddenly a great leader appeared and led the Israelites at a time when they were in a great depression. This sudden appearance of a leader gave them the psychological impetus to conquer the enemy.

The Bible calls this "chosen by God." In a real sense this is true, for if people have faith in their leader they develop a zeal and a power nothing can overcome. We saw this happen many times in World War II. During the Battle of the Bulge, a group of men, fighting for something they believed in and having faith in their general, accomplished fantastic feats. This has occurred all through history and this happened time and time again to the Israelites. They were a highly emotional people and they believed their leader was acting under the guidance of God. When they were desperately in need of help and were told by their leader, whether a man or a woman: "The Lord God says that you must do so and so," they did as the Lord commanded. Nothing could hold them back and they usually emerged victorious.

The beautiful song of Deborah is found in 5:1-9. The content of this lyric poem is the story told in the preceding chapter. After this, the Israelites again live in peace for forty years, that is until the episode of Gideon. Gideon was also visited by an angel of the Lord. In Chapter 6:12 the angel appears to him and says: "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor." What ray does this angel represent? The ray of mysticism. Gideon, the most humble of men, says: "Why pick me? I am the poorest member of my family; who am I?" At first he cannot believe he is chosen. Then (and it is the first time we hear about this in the Bible) he asks the angel to give him a sign. (In metaphysics we call such a sign a Cosmic Signature, and I always suggest you ask your Indwelling God to give you one if you are puzzled by

what to do in a certain situation. You will always receive an answer.) He is told to sacrifice a kid and bring the angel unleavened cakes. Then, to quote 6:21, "The angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the Lord departed out of his sight."

But Gideon is still not quite sure and he asked for another sign. He put a fleece of wool on the floor that night, and in the morning the dew was on the fleece only and not on the floor. The next night the same thing happened in reverse. Only then did Gideon believe he was to do as he was instructed.

We look at these Israelites and we ask ourselves whether such things could happen today. Yes, they certainly could. But we become rather skeptical because we do not sacrifice animals or expect fleece to become dry or wet or what have you. This is completely alien to our modern world. Yet what hampers most of us metaphysically is that we say: "Well, this happened in the Bible. Yes, I believe it could have happened then, but it certainly could not happen today." Why can't it? When we say things like this we unconsciously say all the acts of God happened in the past and cannot happen in the present. Do you realize that? Whatever the demonstration that has to be made, I know that it is just as possible now as it was in the days of Gideon. But we must have faith, and we cannot adulterate that faith. I completely believe what Jesus said: "Greater things than I do, ye shall do."

True, none of us have done it yet, but it can be done and will be done. Each of us at this moment could reach that height if we really wanted to. But we limit ourselves constantly. Life was much harder for the Israelites than it is for us; their intellect was not as trained as ours. (Sometimes I am not sure whether this is a boon or a curse.) Their physical life was extremely difficult and they lived under a constant cloud of fear — fear of the elements, of warring tribes, of the wrath of God. Yet they managed to survive situations that would have killed us many times over. But in our own way we have the same kind of experience to overcome. We are not the slaves of the Midianites or the Canaanites, true, but we are the slaves of our own fears, doubts,

stupidities and selfishness. We do not have to go out and fight wars with other kingdoms, but we have to fight a war within ourselves. And the same thing is true of us as it was of the Jews. We do not believe in miracles because we have not seen them. But isn't life itself a miracle? Where do the stars come from? The power that made them, made us. We are part of that power and can use that power. Whatever our need may be, if we really believe in that power our need will be met. That is just what the Israelites did. Deborah did not doubt she was going to win a war; she *knew* she would. We must have that kind of knowing. I agree, you may say, but how do I get it? Only by practice and something we all loathe — self-discipline. But until we do practice self-discipline, we will get nowhere.

Before we finish the story of Deborah, I would like to mention briefly the story of Sisera (4:17-22). He really is a pathetic little figure. He entered the tent of a friend, or so he thought, and he had every reason to believe he would receive shelter because nomads never made war on anybody. He did not know that Jael and her husband Heber had left the tribe of the Kenites and joined the Israelites. Instead of receiving hospitality, he was murdered by Jael. We are a little revolted today to read that this horrible murder was applauded by the Israelites. Many of us are bothered by this disregard of human life. But Jael was more interested in the welfare of her people than in one human life. Symbolically we are being told, though the Bible does not spell it out, that if you believe in God there is no death.

To my mind the story of Gideon is most interesting because it focuses our attention on an important point — what kind of person becomes the leader of others? There are several types. There is Gideon, a man who is very much like ourselves in many ways. He was not unlike Jacob either, except that he had a nicer character. Gideon believed in God, he was a man of prayer; but before he would have faith in the Word, he always wanted reassurance that the Word was really an actuality. So he asked God for and always received corroboration — what I called above a Cosmic Signature. It is perfectly fascinating to see that this man (and this is a great danger for us in our own metaphysical lives) although he believed in God — and he had a strong belief — had more faith in the power of the signature.

Very often I am asked the question: "What can I do in this situation?" When I say: "Do you have faith or don't you?" I always get the same answer: "Certainly I have faith, but how do I know I am doing the right thing?" I usually tell the student to "ask for a Cosmic Signature." I am perfectly sure that when people first hear the phrase "Cosmic Signature" they think I mean that stars and meteors should come tumbling down through the heavens — or some equally outlandish thing. A Cosmic Signature is nothing of the sort; it is really a simple corroboration of what to do in a certain situation. If you have doubt (and we all do) ask the God within you to show you unmistakably what is the right thing to do. Wait for the "signature" and do not act until you get it. That is just what Gideon did in Judges 6:39. He said that if the fleece would be dry in the morning when the dew was on the ground, then he knew that what he thought he should do was the right thing. The fleece was dry even though the dew was heavy upon all the ground. Gideon received not one, but two, signatures.

It is quite all right to ask for a signature when we are confronted with a problem in which we are so emotionally involved that we are unable to objectively distinguish the right answer to our problem. Look at it from another point of view. Each one of us has a dual nature. We have a dichotomy within us — "I" and "me." "Me" is composed of the conscious and the subconscious minds, and "I" is the Presence of God that lives within us. Sometimes both "I" and "me" seem to speak at the same time. In the beginning of our metaphysical life it is rather difficult to distinguish between "I" and "me." It becomes exceedingly hard when it concerns something that we are quite disturbed about. When we treat for something that is tremendously important to us we often hear either the word or get the impression of "No." Then because we are not too far along the path we say: "That was my subconscious mind talking. That is 'me'." Actually it is the Presence of God in us that will tell us the things we do not want to hear; it is very rarely the subconscious mind that will tell us things we do not want to hear. The subconscious mind has the habit of flattering; the presence of God has the habit of telling the Truth, and they are not exactly compatible at our present stage of evolution.

But let us return to Gideon. He is a wonderful man but he is not of the stature of the former leaders of Israel — no one in Judges is the tremendous figure that Moses or Joshua was. But Gideon is highly capable and rallies the people to fight the Midianites. Then in 7:2 we read: "And the Lord said unto Gideon, the people that are with thee are too many." Actually it was not only God who told Gideon to reduce the army. It was the conscious and subconscious minds of Gideon agreeing completely, for his faith was now strong enough. After all, he did have three Cosmic Signatures. Gideon knew that if he had a tremendous army with him the credit for victory would be theirs and not God's.

Of course, that is a limited belief; God is not concerned with numerical supremacy. ("If God is with us who can be against us?") But with all his deficiencies we get the impression that Gideon is very close to mysticism and that his one desire was to bring Israel back to its religious concept of the one God. His one desire was to perform in some way the "miracles" that were performed in earlier days. He felt that if he had a small army he could do so. It would make the Israelites believe in a 'miracle'. But the evidence that his own faith was not what it should be is given us in 7:9-11. Gideon, because he was a little bit worried about the size of his force, decided that God had told him to take his chief assistant and go down to the enemy's camp. He did so at a most appropriate time, for he overheard a Midianite discussing his dream (7:13). Actually some degree of psychological warfare must have been practiced in those days too, because the Midianites were so terrified of the Israelites that they immediately interpreted this dream to mean that the Israelites were going to overrun the land. That was all Gideon had to hear. He rushed back and prepared for battle and did not even have to fight. He blew the trumpets as Joshua did at the fall of Jericho. The enemy fled and Gideon captured the city. Victory, yes, but not a victory due to a complete faith in the power of God — not the faith of a Joseph or a Moses.

In the case of Jephthah — Chapter 11 — we have another fascinating study. He was an illegitimate child, the son of a harlot, and his family disowned him. He was raised far from the city and became a highwayman. But when the Jews were oppressed they called for this man, for they knew he

was a good fighter. Understandably enough, he was a little sharp with them at first: "This is all very fine; but remember you put me out of the city because you did not approve of my parents. Now you ask me to deliver you." They promised to make him their leader if he would save them. Jephthah being a very religious man, vowed that if he won the battle, he would sacrifice to God the first living thing to meet him when he came home. This turned out to be his daughter, an only child. She understood his vow and they agreed she had to be sacrificed; but she was given two months in which to bewail her lot. Fortunately, we are spared the gruesome details of her death; all we know is that she was killed.

When we read this story we say: "How horrible." True, it is horrible. But it does show us that this man, who had a tremendous faith in God, felt that he had to bribe Him. "You do this for me, and I will do that for you." Doesn't it remind you of Jacob who said after his dream of the angels ascending the ladder of heaven: "Lord, if you take care of me and bring me back successfully, I will build a temple for you here."

Now this is a concept we have to overcome too. What is actually being said is that sacrifice is completely foolish. We are all aware of the idea of sacrifice that has persisted in all religions for thousands of years. And we believe in the same idea today although in a modified form. We feel we have to sacrifice certain things to God to put Him in a good humor. This is what Jephthah did. But there is only one sacrifice we ever have to make and it is the one that is the hardest. We do not have to sacrifice anything outside of ourselves. We must sacrifice something within ourselves. We have to sacrifice all of our negative qualities. It is much harder to do that, and do it thoroughly, than it is to make any other kind of sacrifice. The sacrifice of a dove or a bullock — even a human being — is over very quickly, but the sacrifice of our negative qualities is a never-ending sacrifice to the perpetual flame of the living Truth.

Besides Deborah, the book of Judges contains the stories of quite a few other notable women. They symbolize the various phases of the human soul, from those who create evil when the soul is negative, to those who create good when the soul is positive. Both of these aspects of the soul are characterized throughout Judges. Even more than that,

because these women were human beings they emphasized various types of spiritual development as far as their understanding of God was concerned.

Another extremely interesting thing about Judges is that practically every other chapter starts with the words: "the children of Israel sinned against the Lord their God." Then after they got into difficulty they prayed to God to get them out of it. Whenever they are given a deliverer they are reminded of what Moses did (or what Joshua did) and they are urged to return to the ways of the Lord their God. This is a good lesson for us all, too. For instance, in the wilderness the Israelites were under the guidance of a genius from the time they left Egypt until they reached the Promised Land. But once they were settled in the "land of milk and honey" all their miraculous history – and it was miraculous – was taken for granted.

In the same way, each one of us at some time or other has been in a position where it is necessary to make a tremendous demonstration; we work hard and it comes through. But then we "rest on our laurels." We get a little smug and say: "Oh what a good boy am I." If it teaches us nothing else, the one thing that the book of Judges proves is that we cannot live forever on our past demonstrations. Nothing is more stale or dead than our past demonstrations. Another way of saying this is: "We cannot live on reflected glory."

Many of my students are startled when I say I expect them to make three demonstrations a day. This implies of course that God's power is limited. But never forget, you do not make the demonstration and I do not make the demonstration. All we do is open ourselves to the Presence of God within us so that the demonstration can take place. When we hear the word "demonstration" we immediately think of something extraordinary: it can be, of course, but it usually does not work that way, usually it is a very small thing. The size of the demonstration is unimportant. What is important is to know that a demonstration is two-fold; it is the clearing up of the negative concepts in the subconscious mind and simultaneously the opening up of ourselves to the action of the Presence of God within us. We cannot experience the action of God until we clear the way for God to act; and God has perfect manners. He will never come in where He is not wanted.

As long as we hold onto negative concepts, and we all do, God says: "I have infinite patience; a thousand years are as a day in my sight." And He waits; but we are the ones who lose out. Now that is exactly what happened to the Israelites. They were always looking for a spectacular demonstration and because they did not always get it, they returned to their old ways. Don't we also always look for the spectacular? Isn't this the "age of the spectacular?"

Actually, the demonstration that we consider to be the greatest in our lives may be of the least importance to our soul; and the one that we think is the smallest and most insignificant can be the greatest to our soul. But we all have a materialistic viewpoint to some degree, and we measure our demonstration in terms of material values. If someone is healed overnight we consider it a miraculous demonstration. If someone who has never had a kind word for another human being (and there are such people) does or says something nice about someone else — in short, responds in a positive way, the impact of this revelation is greater than any physical healing that could take place. These are the demonstrations we discount, and this is our danger point. I say danger point because in metaphysics if we constantly discount such things, we then descend to a completely materialistic level.

One of the most important things we can learn is to appreciate the small lovely things of life that occasionally happen to you or to me, seemingly out of the blue, or — even more important — that we are able to do for other people. Those are the real demonstrations, and none of us have enough of them. Instead we have the unfortunate habit of saying, once we have made one or two demonstrations: "I made a fine demonstration five years ago. It's lasted me ever since." Now when we demonstrate, what are we demonstrating — the solution to the problem? We are demonstrating the Truth. We are witnessing the Truth of the Law of God. We demonstrate this Truth within ourselves and we demonstrate this Truth in the outer world. We bring this truth out in the open — we manifest it. This Truth is always there, but we are actually witnessing this Truth and bringing it into being. We forget this in our humdrum materialistic way even as the Israelites did time and time again in the book of Judges.

True, in this book we are not meeting people who are of the stature of Moses, Jacob, Abraham or Joshua; we are meeting little men, but they are little men who are seeking their God even as you and I. Here we are beginning to see different levels of mysticism and spiritual development. Each man symbolizes a different aspect of ourselves. Gideon is continually bolstering up his own faith; Jephthah, feels that he must sacrifice his daughter, for if he gives something he loves then God will see him through. He is a briber of God. He did not reach the understanding of the God within. The Israelite who did was Moses, and to a lesser degree Joseph and Abraham.

But the people in Judges could not understand a God who is Infinite, a God who individualizes Himself in His children, (that is why He created them) a God who is Principle. They did not know that everytime they broke the Law, they had used the Principle wrongly; they believed that Yahweh was punishing them. But God never punishes anybody; nor does He ever blame anybody. God is perfectly aware of what we are like, and in spite of all He loves us; He knows that we sometimes try and He knows that we do not always succeed. He knows that we are going to keep right on trying, and He knows that when we do not succeed we have only hurt ourselves. God does not hurt us. The hurt comes because we do not yet have the faith, the understanding and the mentality to realize that God is Love, and that everything we need to make our life perfect has already been given to us. We believe that we have to do without this and do without that or we will be punished by God. So we cannot be too smug when we look back at these people who inhabit the pages of Judges and say: "They were certainly stupid." Most of us have not advanced much farther than Jephthah and the rest. In fact, as far as we are concerned, we can learn a great deal from them. These people are at the same levels of development that we are; some a little below and some a little above. But they were trying, even as you and I are trying.

We know that spiritual evolution proceeds on a spiral. In the book of Judges it becomes very evident as we see the array of men and women who periodically lead the tribes. We also see it in the people themselves.

Always remember that the leaders of any nation, as well as states and cities, are the out-picturing of the people themselves.

However, there is one thing to remember, and that is when the morals and ethic of a people is low, after a while, it will right itself - and each time this happens, its new spiral is a little higher than it was before.

M. M.

Thank you, and God
bless you.

Hilda Mann

Seven Steps in Demonstration

Desire: Get a strong enthusiasm for that which you want in your life, a real longing for something which is not there now.

Decision: Know definitely what it is that you want, what it is that you want to do, or have, and be willing to pay in spiritual values.

Ask: [When sure and enthusiastic] ask for it in simple, concise language...

Believe: in the accomplishment with strong faith, consciously and subconsciously].

Work at it ... a few minutes daily in seeing yourself in the finished picture. Never outline details, but rather see yourself enjoying the particular thing ...

Feel gratitude. Always remember to say, "Thank you God," and begin to feel the gratitude in your heart. The most powerful prayer we can ever make are those three words, provided we really feel it.

Feel expectancy. Train yourself to live in a state of happy expectancy ... Act it until it becomes part of you, as it must and will.

These are the seven steps. Follow them and they will bring you whatever it is that you need.

***FORMULA FOR DEMONSTRATION**

(A demonstration is answered prayer..
the manifestation of the Presence,
Power and Love of God.)

" **A**sk And Ye Shall Receive,

Seek And Ye Shall Find,

Knock And It Shall Be

Opened unto you"

- *JESUS*

(*The formula is ASK Mildred Mann)

AUTHOR OF

HOW TO FIND YOUR REAL SELF (textbook)

THIS I BELIEVE

LEARN TO LIVE

THE FAMILY OF ADAM AND EVE

THE BIBLE - The Seven Days of Creation.

BECOME WHAT YOU BELIEVE

WHAT IS PRAGMATIC MYSTICISM?

Published by

THE SOCIETY OF PRAGMATIC MYSTICISM

101 West 57th Street

New York 19, N.Y.