

VOLUME 12

THE BIBLE SERIES

A METAPHYSICAL
AND SYMBOLICAL
INTERPRETATION OF

The Bible

by

Mildred 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)

NOTES

NOTES

Thank you, and God bless
you.

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

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We know that we can change anything in our lives if we have enough faith in the power of the Word and the Law. We constantly limit ourselves, however, because we really have never imagined ourselves able to really achieve what the people in the Bible achieved.

For example, do you really believe that Elijah was able to consciously leave his physical body, and then dispose of it? We know that Jesus did so, as did Moses, but Elijah is not the same spiritual calibre as they are. If you accept the fact that he did, (and I do) the next question is, can you and I do it?

The answer is yes - if we believe it. If you have ever made the smallest demonstration in overcoming anything wrong in the body, you can certainly do it. For the same Law acted upon by your faith in the Word will change any condition in the world.

"Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." Rom. 12:2

	Page
II SAMUEL, 13 - 24	3
I KINGS, Part One	13
I KINGS, Part Two	24
II KINGS, Part One	36

tate to set brother against brother for he was perfectly sure of the final outcome. We cannot deny the fact that this man was at least a powerful occultist.

What do you think made it possible for Elisha to do the things he did? You have often heard of the Power of Thought. How much power do you think a thought has and where does that power come from? Take a thought with which we are thoroughly acquainted: "God is Love." It is not the thought that is powerful; it is the amount of feeling we put behind the thought. What is behind the feeling? The control of that feeling is a flame. It is the source of a dynamo of Power. You can say "God is Love" until Doomsday and nothing will happen to you; but if you are in a moment of great emotional stress and say "God is Love" and really mean it — I emphasize really mean it — miracles will happen. The thought without feeling behind it will produce no results. The medium of thought is our point of focus, but it is the emotional feeling behind our thought that is the Power. It was not what Elisha said that performed miracles, it was the tremendous emotional feeling behind his words that generated the power of the words he spoke.

For example, if we wake up with a brutal headache and we cannot get rid of it, we should sit down and repeat the phrase: "God is healing me now." If we really believe that the God within us will do so — that is, if our subconscious mind accepts this belief — then we will get over our headache quickly. The more power we put behind our words the sooner we will be healed. But nothing will happen to us until we believe the words, for the words are the expression of power and it is the controlled power that produces the results. We build our own power and send it forth.

It does not matter whether we call this occultism or mysticism, it is the same process — except that the mystic utilizes his power in the name of God, and the occultist utilizes his power because he believes *he* is the Law.

II SAMUEL, 13 - 24

In Chapter 13 we have a good example of the testing of David's character. This concerns the episode of his son Amnon with his half-sister Tamar, the sister of Absalom. At that time intermarriage was completely acceptable. It was one of the beliefs that the Israelites took over from the Egyptians. (Today we would call it incest.) Intermarriage with one's brothers, sisters and cousins was highly proper — we even see remnants today of this acceptability in the few remaining royal families of Europe. Royalty always restricted marriage to members of a highly selected inbred group.

But to return to our story — Amnon's infatuation with Tamar was so great that he was too impatient to wait for marriage. By means of a plan conceived by his crafty friend Jonadab, Amnon violated Tamar and then had a complete revulsion of feeling against her. This episode is the beginning of Absalom's rebellion against his father because David did not punish Amnon for his betrayal of Tamar. Absalom felt that his father had failed him and Tamar and sought revenge. We all know people who have a great resentment against their parents because they have failed to live up to their duties as parents.

So you see the history of the soul and its reactions is not something new that Sigmund Freud discovered — and I am not underrating the contribution that Freud has made to psychological progress — humanity has always had the same reactions to emotional situations. And we also learn from this episode of Amnon and Tamar, as well as from the incident of Bathsheba, that David believed in the law of retribution or what the Hindus call Karma. He felt that he was being punished for his sins. Later on we read that when he was cursed by a Hittite, his soldiers wanted to kill the man, but David would not allow them to do so. He said: "God is giving him words to say to me; I am being punished

for sins I have committed." David felt very strongly that his actions had been far from perfect and he had no right to evade punishment.

On the other hand David was also a very wily fighter; somehow or other he always managed to trap and defeat his enemy. He had a very clever strategy. He always fled from Jerusalem and met his enemy in the wilderness. No doubt he wanted to spare the city from destruction; but he also knew he had a much better opportunity to win a fight out in the open. The impression we sometimes get of a fleeing David, always on the move, is a camouflage. He was a great and wily warrior, of that there is no doubt, and a man of tremendous courage.

It is fascinating to watch the growth of Absalom's resentment against Amnon until he managed to lure Amnon into a trap and killed him. Often during the spring of the year a sheepshearers' festival was given. The "princes," the sons of the king, were called together and celebrated. Absalom held such a party and invited Amnon to attend. David at first refused to let Amnon go (could he have been a little suspicious as to what Absalom was up to?) but Absalom persuaded him to agree. During the festivities Absalom killed Amnon. It could even be that Absalom intended to kill all his brothers. Don't forget these were primitive times and it was pretty much a dog-eat-dog existence. And Absalom was well aware of the fact that the oldest son of the king was not necessarily the next in line to succession to the throne. The king could appoint whom he pleased. It is quite apparent that Absalom was pretty shrewd, unethical and egotistical, and he probably planned to murder all of his brothers so that no one would stand in his way of becoming king. But the "princes" returned safely.

Absalom was not allowed to return for several years, but later, through the assistance of David's trusted friend Joab, David permitted Absalom to do so. The story is beautifully told in Chapter 14. Verse 1 says: "Now Joab the son of Zeruiah perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom." Joab was very clever in handling David. He was sent to Tekoah and found a woman, and told her to go to David and present him with a fictitious case similar to his own predicament. The woman sought justice of David, and the king, seeing through the ruse, realized that not

think the Church would quite agree.) This is the idea that activates the story of Elijah and Elisha.

There is also another thing which is quite interesting. It does not matter whether the teacher influences the student on this plane or the next. This is particularly true of Elijah, for he certainly influenced Elisha from the next plane. Let us also consider Peter, a big blustering ignorant fisherman with a heart of gold. When he was really put to the test, he was so frightened that he denied Jesus, yet when Jesus was gone, Peter was his most active disciple. He was transformed and became the founder, the real founder, of the Christian teaching. This could not have been possible if Jesus had not had a tremendous influence on him after the Resurrection — from the next plane. If you follow the teachings of Peter and read what he taught on his journeys until the time he reached Rome, you will see that the transformation of this man was fantastic. This certainly occurred only through the influence of Jesus, for he was very dear to Jesus.

What we see symbolized here in the relationship of Elisha and Elijah has happened down through history. This can happen to each and every one of us, for when the real teacher meets the real student an indissoluble union is formed between them. Remember, too, that a guru can have more than one cheelah. Jesus had twelve disciples even though the two most prominent and closest to Him were Peter and John. John carried on His mystical teaching and Peter, who had a horror of suffering and feared so many things, became the first proselyte of Christianity and met his death by crucifixion in Rome.

Another aspect of the Elisha story I find quite intriguing is how this man of God interfered in the political arena. He really stirred up a hornet's nest. Why did he do so if he was really a man of God? This alone is proof that he was an occultist and not a true mystic. If he had been a mystic he would have relied completely on spiritual direction rather than physical interference. Jesus never stirred up a political controversy. It is true that people were disturbed over Jesus' power and popularity, but He never became involved in any wordly intrigue. But Elisha stirred up a great deal of trouble; in fact it was he who deliberately fomented the final revolt of the Hebrew tribes. Neither Jesus nor Isaiah ever did such a thing. Elisha did not hesi-

In every era of history, there always have been small groups of people who have known these things; they have quietly studied and trained and kept themselves completely in the background. Do you realize that it is only in our era that what the book of Revelation says has come true? "There is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed." To-day such things are being written about in hundreds of books; but prior to our time knowledge was always imparted by word of mouth.

The Hindus also say that when the student is ready the teacher appears. This is completely true. When we are brought into contact with someone who suddenly exerts a tremendous influence on our lives, we may think this is a chance happening. But it is not. It is not something that has happened outside ourselves; it is something we have been subconsciously working for. When we are ready for that experience, sooner or later we and our teacher will be brought together — even if we are in one corner of the globe and our teacher in another.

Think back to when you first heard of metaphysics. You probably came into it either out of a healthy curiosity or more likely, out of a dire need for it. I'm sure you were led to it by the activity of your own soul, not by an outside circumstance. I am also sure that at that particular moment the scales suddenly began to fall from your eyes and you began to find another world.

The Bible gives us a very beautiful description of this in the story of the meeting of Elijah and Elisha. God had told Elijah to whom he was to pass his mantle before he left the earth plane. Actually every teacher knows who is the one to carry on his work; for the old axiom "order is Heaven's first law," is true not only in the orderly process of the stars and planets, but it is also true of the process of human development. When a really great teacher such as Jesus appears, he knows the people he wants as his pupils. Jesus had His choice of thousands of men but he picked Peter and John and all the other disciples, including Judas. He chose them because He knew exactly what each man would do and He knew exactly what they were supposed to do. In the same way every teacher selects his pupils and the disciple who is to carry on his work. This was as true of Elijah as it was of Jesus. (Actually, that is the real meaning of the Apostolic Succession, although I do not

only was he being deprived of his son, but Israel was being deprived of an heir.

Absalom had not learned his lesson for as soon as he returned, he made himself known to the people. He stood at the gates of the city greeting them and asking them what their problems were. He said he was sorry that he was not able to give them justice, for he had no authority to do so. By snidish insinuation he hinted that his father's government was not as it should be. Absalom became very popular, for he was charming and extremely attractive. He would allow no one to pay him homage — he wanted equal rights for everybody, he was only interested in the "welfare of the people" and wanted to protect them from their enemies. In short, Absalom was the first demagogue, a type we are all too familiar with today. And little by little he began to have a following.

He asked David to: "Let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron" (II Samuel 15:7). David consented and in gratitude towards his father, his favorite son led a rebellion against him. How long the uprising lasted we don't know, probably only a few months. But again we have the law of retribution and the description of what happened to Absalom is amazing and extremely graphic. When his armies were routed and he came face to face with the followers of David, Absalom turned and fled on his mule. "The mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak and his head caught hold of the oak and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth, and the mule that was under him went away" (II Samuel 18:9). Absalom was not dead when Joab found him but Joab killed him when he thrust three darts into his heart.

When David heard the news he was overcome with grief, a grief that has become immortalized in the lines: "And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom! my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! (II Samuel 18:33). It was Absalom's perfidious actions that caused David's grief. He held no resentment against his son. Indeed there was no trace of malice in this man, only genuine, sincere love. I think that he is one of the most fantastic characters we will ever encounter. He is so terribly, terribly

ly human and yet at the same time he has a beautifully logical mind.

This whole section of David's story is a crystal clear working out of the law of Karma, the law of cause and effect. Whatever you do will be returned unto you.

Let us now discuss the name of David. David means love, but it does not mean perfect love. The letters A and I in the name represent a tremendous emotional drive, a relentless searching for the Presence of God in this particular physical body. I have mentioned before that there are certain stages we must pass through as we come to the end of our spiritual development. As we near that particular experience known as the "Awakening" or the "New Birth," we undergo what all mystic literature so beautifully calls the "Transformed Heart." We speak of this in terms of our glandular system, for it is the heart (actually the thymus) that is changed by this experience.

David symbolizes this. He is not perfect by any means, but he is prone more to good than to evil. At this time the soul is perfectly aware of its own shortcomings but it tries to live up to the best that it knows. David is not only a perfect symbol of this but a perfect picture of it. This man is basically a completely good man. Except for the episode of Bathsheba, which was purely an emotional incident, and for his weakness in controlling his children, David was a tremendous figure. When he made a mistake he admitted it and never blamed anyone else for his shortcomings. If things went wrong with him, he knew he had brought these things on himself.

He was a king in every sense of the word, and yet because of his emotional weakness, he was unable to make the great and final step of finding the true union with his God. His emotional weakness stopped him before he even approached the portal. However, his son, Solomon (the very name means "whole; entire") reached this union. But David never achieved it although he did achieve the experience of the "Transformed Heart." David had a very logical mind, although he possessed no great wisdom. That is why we do not think of him as a man of outstanding intellectual attainments. The Psalms that he wrote are magnificent songs of praise, but they are completely emotional. He did not have the magnificent intelligence of Paul nor the keen mind of Isaiah. He did have a tremendous outpouring of a great love

East, in spite of its miserable living conditions, says: "Let the worst happen, for the outer world is not the real world." You see, the Eastern mind is open to concepts completely foreign to our way of thinking. One such concept is reincarnation, an idea that is just as valid as the ideas of plane geometry. Another idea the East accepts and one that is difficult for us to believe, is that a teacher even after he has passed on, may influence and work through his disciple from the next plane.

We know that Elijah chose Elisha as his student. In this section of the Bible you will note that the incidents are not related in chronological sequence, and there are apparent omissions in the story. Although we are given no details, there must have been a period of time that Elijah spent with Elisha, for they had the kind of relationship that only exists between a real teacher and a real student. The rapport between them is so close that the student and teacher act as one. Elisha is the complete physical expression — plus his own personality, of course — of everything that Elijah stood for. Even after Elijah's translation, Elisha actually is acting as Elijah — he is more like Elijah than he is himself.

If you notice, we do not have many prophecies from Elisha. It is always Elijah's influence working through Elisha; this is always the result of a close teacher and student relationship. Jesus and John is another example of this relationship. Between a real student and a real teacher there is a closer bond than any we could ever dream of in any other human relationship. The beautiful Hindu statement which expresses this relationship is that the cheelah, the student, is dear to the heart of the guru, the teacher. This relationship is based on understanding and a word we Westerners completely misunderstand — obedience. The first law of the real cheelah is obedience. He never questions his guru. He does explicitly what he is told to do. No book, not even the Hindu Scriptures, can give a complete picture of this relationship. It is an amazing thing to realize that knowledge imparted in this way has never perished from the face of the earth. Teachers have always given occult knowledge to their cheelahs by word of mouth. It is only in the last few hundred years that anything has been written about it.

ones who supposedly had the power with God. The prophets, for the most part, were truthful men, but they were involved in the machinations that went on at the court of the king. On the other hand, men of Elijah and Elisha's type felt they owed allegiance to no one but God and would never, under any kind of pressure, go against their belief. There must have been times when the attitude of Elijah and Elisha was a bit annoying; I am sure that they were not always tactful — and the fact that they were usually right in their prophecies, could not have particularly endeared them to the school of prophets. The whole situation is quite a human one, isn't it?

In this section we begin to see that although Elijah had foretold the death of Jezebel and the doom of the house of Ahab (Hazeel, Jehu, etc.) it is Elisha who executes these predictions. That is, Elijah worked consciously through Elisha.

In order to explain what I mean by the statement I will have to digress for a moment and discuss an idea which the Hindus rightly devote a great deal of time to. We of the Western world have most peculiar mentalities. We have certain fixed ideas which are dinned into us from the outside world and which we accept as law. We never deviate from these ideas, nor do we want to. Furthermore, we are apt to belittle things about which we do not have any knowledge. For example, I am always asked this question about reincarnation: "Can you prove it?" How do we know anything? When we study we accept certain premises which cannot be proved except theoretically; we accept the fact that an isosceles triangle has two equal sides. Now plane geometry is only a theory, yet we accept it unquestioningly. Yet when it comes to an idea like reincarnation because we know nothing about it and because it upsets our pictorial idea of what we think life is, we usually dismiss it as fanciful nonsense.

We do not stop to realize that there is a wide discrepancy between Western and Eastern thinking. The Western world — Europe and America — worship the mentality; but even more than intellect it worships "independence." Yet no one is less independent than Western man. He is completely dependent upon everything outside himself and he lives in a constant state of fear of the outside world. The

that he directed, for the most part, to his God. In fact in every department of his life he symbolizes the "Transformed Heart."

As we continue our study of the Bible we will find that each and every character in it portrays a different aspect of the Mystic Way. David portrays the way of love. He was never unkind to any of his wives or concubines. When you realize that the status of women at that time — they were no more than chattel — and the general primitiveness of society, this is an unheard of attribute. The Israelites were brutal and violent; they literally lived by the concept of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." Yet under David's reign — although never by any specific decree — the idea began to grow that people are responsible for each other and that it is wrong to take another human being's life.

This is very strongly brought out in the incident of the woman that Joab sent to David to absolve Absalom. The woman said that her two sons had fought and killed each other. Now her family had taken away all she possessed and "shall not leave to my husband neither name nor remainder upon the earth." David's attitude toward this problem was very enlightened even by today's standards. (Just think of the history of the South.) He began to put a stop to such family feuds.

David, like Moses, taught by example; he never actually forbade any specific thing. It was his ideas and attitudes, his complete non-violent acceptance of things that slowly began to influence his people. I don't even think he was conscious of the fact that he did more to bring out the character of his people than anyone before him. He was not a particularly brilliant man, but he was warm and lovable, an inspiration to the Israelites and they adored him. And he never became egotistical, for nobody was ever more humble in his heart than this God-inspired man.

To my mind, his most lovable trait was his absolute lack of self-pity. No matter what happened — even when Saul hunted him relentlessly or Absalom rebelled against him — never once did he say: "Woe is me." How many of us are free of any taint of self-pity? How many of our acquaintances, how many members of our families are free of it? We certainly can all learn a lesson from this little shepherd boy who rose to become the great king of Israel.

After the rebellion of Absalom was put down, things were never quite the same. The seeds of discontent had been sown, and David's reign was never as peaceful as it had been. He was seventy now and tired; friction was growing among the tribes of Israel, and lasted until Solomon ascended the throne. Solomon's story, you will find, is also very fascinating, but to me at least it does not have the human appeal of David's.

If we trace the history of all of the world's great religions, we will find that they were founded and guided by men who were inspired to find their God. But their followers completely lost sight of the spirit of their teaching and became deeply involved in a literal interpretation of the precepts of ritual and law; and so gradually its mystical basis became lost. Unfortunately, this is true of every religion. This inevitable decline is tragic and you will find that it is just as true today of Hinduism, Taoism and Buddhism as it certainly is of Christianity. Now we do not usually think of Judaism as a mystical religion. Yet it too began from a mystical premise – although, it is true, it was a pragmatic mysticism. The early Israelites had the same magnificent ideal, but they gave it a practical application. Such outstanding figures as Moses and David (later Elisha, Elijah and Isaiah) tried to bring the Israelites back to the concept of the one God; but the people had wandered so far from this original concept that they were incapable of understanding what was really being said to them.

We are now at a point in the Old Testament where we begin to see this take place. Jacob, after he wrestled with the angel, understood this tremendous concept. Joseph always understood it; and David too in spite of his weaknesses. But this fabulous man had a tremendous amount of good in him. Unfortunately, we do not meet people of his type very often. However we must not forget that David was also very much conditioned by the beliefs of his time. For instance, he did not believe that he could worship God except on the soil of Israel, for God lived only in Hebrew territory. (This idea did not originate with the Hebrews. It was one of the many ideas that the Jews had taken from other religions. Acceptance of such ideas show us how the original concept of Moses and Joshua had deteriorated.)

In fact, at the time of David the Israelites had reverted to the ideas and customs that were practiced even before

spoke directly to anybody; he only spoke through his servant. Silence is one of the powers of magic, but Elisha carried it to an extreme length.

Elisha knew that silence, if properly used, is a powerhouse – and it is. I always suggest a period of silence for a few minutes after meditation. It is only through silence that you will really have contact with your God. In the beginning of the practice of meditation a minute may seem like an hour; but when you become used to it, you will find that it is the most marvelously refreshing thing you have ever done in your life. (But only remain in silence for three or four minutes; do not go into trance.) In this complete silence you wait, your mind focused on God. This is the beginning of contemplation, and contemplation means that you are the listener and the Presence of God is the speaker. Once you master this ability to be still, you will find it does wonderful things for you; you will be able to regenerate your body, you will have a complete feeling of well-being. Sometimes you will find that at the end of your quiet period some information will come to you, some knowledge of what you should do. Unless you cultivate that silence, you will never obtain this illumination.

At the beginning of the book of II Kings, we find that that Jehoram has succeeded Ahaziah, the son of Ahab. We are told that Moab had revolted. There is a very human story in this section. Ahaziah fell from the top of his house and was so badly hurt that he was bedridden. He sent for Elijah and asked to be healed; but instead of being healed he was told that he did not have long to live. After his death his brother Jehoram took over. Jehoram persuaded Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah who was apparently in some degree of servitude to Israel, to assist him in his war against the Moabites. Before they left for battle they asked the prophets what the outcome would be and the prophets said they would be successful and only one voice was raised against them.

Here we have an interesting incident – a tug-of-war between Elisha and the school of prophets. The people revered the prophets and believed in them, for do not forget that the Jews were quite superstitious by nature. Furthermore, these people never forgot that the prophets were descendants of the Levites, the priests. They were the

side. The intuitive initiate — the natural initiate who achieves power through meditation — goes through his experiences without any outside restrictions or promptings. He does it interiorly and alone. That is what Jesus showed us by His life; it is the meaning of His teaching.

Elijah and Elisha had this kind of interior experience, but it is interesting to note that throughout their lives they were always associated with the schools of the prophets. Yet none of the prophets coming out of these schools could measure up to them; they were spiritual giants. An initiate has been accurately described as "one who is master of the subject in which he has been trained". Elijah and Elisha were masters. These two completely intuitive initiates could do things that were quite fabulous, things which were quite spectacular. The initiates in the world today remain hidden; they do things "behind the scenes"; but here, in Elijah and Elisha, we have two very dramatic examples of initiates working in the public eye. In this respect they were very much like Moses.

Sometimes it is a bit puzzling to find that at times Elisha and Elijah were quite ruthless. We are inclined to believe that the path of initiation is the path of Love, and it is. However, I want you to realize that it is possible to be an initiate, at least to the point that these men had reached, without being on the path of Love. We can obtain power just for the sake of power but it will carry us only so far. Now neither Elijah nor Elisha were lacking in a realization of God, but their interpretation of God was often one that boldly proclaimed "I am the Law". A highly advanced initiate, such as Jesus, never would say that at any time. Quite the contrary, for Jesus insisted that: "I of myself can do nothing, but the Father within, He doeth the works".

Notice that when Elijah and Elisha wanted to perform miracles to impress the people or to get themselves and others out of difficult situations, they would say: "Lord God, do this thing for them." God, of course, did help them at this point; but an initiate who follows the path of Jesus will merely make room within himself for the Presence of God to work through him; he will merely get his physical self out of the way.

I am not denying that Elisha did some wonderful things; but he also has quite a good opinion of himself. He drew a circle of silence around himself and he very rarely

the time of Moses and Joshua. David tried to bring them back to the original concept of the one God and he was partially successful. But from now on in our study, we will watch — with a few exceptions — the mystic concept of Judaism slowly being buried. We cannot help feeling deeply moved by the tragedy of it. We will see the reversion in so many instances to old ideas, old beliefs and old forms of worship. The Israelites still believed in Yahweh, but due to their mingling with their pagan neighbors — either through trade or captivity — they paid homage to many other gods and they worshiped them. And this was true even at the end of David's enlightened reign.

But let us go back a little. You will recall David's profound sorrow at Absalom's death, and yet he did rather a remarkable thing. He was completely overcome by the murder of his son and only wanted to sit in mourning and be alone with his grief. This reaction is very understandable but it is not a healthy one. Joshua Liebman says in *Peace of Mind* (which some of you may have read) that the best way to obtain relief from grief is to cry and scream. This is a strange and erroneous idea because crying does not help; it only intensifies the grief because you are impressing it upon your subconscious mind. The Hindus are very wise when they say: "What you think upon grows." When grief is accompanied by an emotional outburst, it will become much stronger and become more difficult to eliminate. David reacted in just this way; he wanted only to mourn.

When his friend Joab roused him by appealing to his sense of duty, David did a most unusual thing: he pardoned the leaders who had rebelled against him and he even elevated some of them to be his trusted assistants. He was an extremely tactful man, but I think this action goes beyond tact, don't you? You will also recall that twice David had the opportunity of repaying Saul for the many injustices Saul did to him. He easily could have killed the king but instead he spared Saul's life and now he not only pardoned his enemies but gave them positions of honor in his court. But David was human enough to replace Joab who had killed his son Absalom; furthermore he was clever enough to do so under the guise of bettering public relations between the north and south of Israel. By putting one of the great leaders of Judah in Joab's position of command, David was bringing the tribe of Judah back into the fold. This is ex-

tremely logical, but I doubt whether that was David's basic reason. Joab, who was devoted to David all his life, was removed as "captain of the host" because David wanted to avenge his son's death.

Then there was the petty quarreling among the politicians that usually takes place after a war is over, but even this settled down and the kingdom of Israel was united once more. David now had the reins of government firmly in his hands and held things in order. Things ran along smoothly until Sheliah led an unsuccessful revolt against David; many heads had to roll before the insurrection was finally stamped out.

In this section of II Samuel we begin to see the growing concept that God lives in a certain place; Yahweh can only be worshiped in Jerusalem. David had forbidden the people to worship at shrines; they had to come to Jerusalem. If one could not find Him there, one would not find Him anywhere. The Israelites had absorbed this idea of worshiping God in only one place from the Canaanites, the Amalakites, the Amorites and other pagan tribes with whom they came in contact. It is certainly not a Judaic idea.

Chapter 22, David's great psalm of Thanksgiving, is almost identical with the 18th Psalm. This psalm is a perfect form of prayer, for it contains the steps we should incorporate in our daily meditations. First of all is the statement that God is All in All, the Source to which we should look, that He is Perfection. "And, he said, The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; The God of my rock; in Him will I trust; He is my shield, and the horn of my salvation; my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence" (22:2-3). Then we are told of the protection we shall get from our faith in God: "I will call on the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies" (22:4). This continues until Verses 21-31 tell us what we must do to warrant His help; and the remainder of this magnificent Psalm informs us about what has been done through the aid of God, Verses 32-51.

In Chapter 23 we have another Psalm. David is nearing the end of his life, and in these verses he admits that he has not lived up to all that is within him and he knows that he should have done so. But God had made a covenant with him which is beautifully stated in Verses 5-7: "Al-

that Elijah has been thrown out of the chariot and they decide to look for him. Elisha does not think this has happened. The prophets, aware that Elisha is a bit jealous that Elijah might return, make him feel ashamed and so he tells them to look for Elijah's body. Needless to say, their three-day search on the mountain was fruitless and they are at last convinced that the same thing happened to Elijah that happened to Moses.

At that time, as well as our own, the idea of supernatural power (which is a very bad phrase for spiritual power) seemed such a miraculous thing that most people, even those who were supposedly devout and well-trained, thought that only God or the Devil could do these things. What we must realize is that never before this time or after was magic so deeply studied and so widely used, — that is, historically, during the five hundred years after the time of Moses until the time of Elisha.

In the next century, during the reign of Josiah, we will find that spiritual belief was far more intellectual. But Moses and Elijah and Elisha studied magic and they knew the secret of being able to use the elements of the various planes of being. Being well trained in the art they achieved a tremendous power in it and exercised it.

I have mentioned before that Moses studied at one of the arcane schools and that Elijah and Elisha received this knowledge by living the meditative life. Do you realize that if we meditate sufficiently — say an hour or two hours a day, morning and night — and really live by it, we will be able to develop this power and be given the knowledge of how to use it? This is what I mean by "the intuitive approach." Elisha and Elijah did this; they searched for God within themselves. We can do the same thing, and the results will come more quickly than if we had studied at one of the great mystery schools. Why? Because this is the direct approach. There is no more rapid or more intense training than what we receive by turning inward towards our Self. Nothing in the world can deter our progress.

People who studied in the occult schools were confined to a schedule and a certain amount of time was allotted for work in each field. I have mentioned before that the tests these occult students had to take were psychological experiences imposed on the candidate from the out-

symbolizes the physical body and literally the word means "rolling away, chaff, stubble." Bethel symbolizes the spirit and literally means "House of God". Jericho symbolizes the trained mentality and literally means "destruction and transformation through the power of thought." The Jordan stands for the subconscious mind or the emotions.

"Translation" is a tremendous undertaking but I have long since come to the conclusion that the moment you or I look at it — or anything else as a "tremendous" thing, that moment we make it difficult. When we make a physical healing, we have effected a change in the physical body. Then why should it be a more "tremendous" thing to be able to change the entire human body rather than just a part of it? After we die, the physical body is either buried or cremated. (I prefer cremation, for I think the body should be completely dissolved.) But here the Bible shows us another way — a beautiful way, providing we have complete control of our physical body. We can dissolve it by sheer will power. This is what the Resurrection means; for it is actually what happened after Jesus was crucified.

Elijah, like Jesus, had developed such fantastic spiritual power that he had complete control of his body and when he was translated, Elisha was then endowed with that power. You might ask, did Elisha's power actually come from Elijah? The Bible states, very beautifully: "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha" (2:5), but it is my opinion that the spirit of Elijah ascended with him and that it was Elisha's faith in his own spiritual power — that is, his belief in the efficacy of the cloak that Elijah had given him — that enabled him to go forth to do his "mighty works of valor".

Verse 2:14 is a very interesting description of the parting of the Jordan and how the chariot with horses of fire descended and took Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind. Remember this was not only seen by Elisha but also by the sons of the prophets who stood on the shore and watched. Symbolically, the whirlwind signifies the action of God; horses are a symbol of spiritual power and fire a symbol of spirit. God spoke to Elijah out of the whirlwind and it is the vortex of the whirlwind which brings about the separation of body, mind and spirit. This is what happened when Elijah was taken up.

There is a lovely passage when the prophets are sure

though my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow. But the sons of Belial shall be all of them as thorns thrust away, because they cannot be taken with hands: But the man that shall touch them must be fenced with iron and the staff of a spear; and they shall be utterly burned with fire in the same place."

In 24:10 David says to the Lord: "I have sinned greatly in all I have done." The reason he felt that he had sinned was that he had ordered a census to be taken of all the prisoners captured in war. These thousands of human beings were to be allocated and used as slave labor. Suddenly he feels guilty, for he knows that he has become a little power mad. But God allows him to choose his own punishment. This is a beautiful way of showing him that God's power is the only power. No matter how great or powerful a king has become, in seven years, in three months — in fact overnight — everything can vanish. "Dust thou art and to dust thou shalt return" is the meaning of the chapter. None of us should ever forget it, either.

While the Bible uses the word "sin" with reference to any deviation from the Law of God, there really is only one "sin". That is the sin of spiritual pride. Everything else that we do wrongly is the result of stupidity and fear.

David found himself suddenly being touched by it, but upon his realization of it, instead of brushing it aside, he did his best to eradicate it.

We are all, regardless of our position in life, in danger of being touched by this, even though we may not be aware of it. If there is the slightest bit of prejudice in us against any color, race or creed, we are guilty of it, and sooner or later, the Law of Karma will seek its payment, unless we immediately overcome it.

We do this by meditating on two words - the opening words of the Lord's Prayer - "OUR Father".

M. M.

things as problems and obstacles. We all have them, but we are all too ready to give into every little ache and pain that we have. We constantly keep saying: "Woe is me," and then wonder why we don't progress.

The men whom we are dealing with in this section of the Bible had attained occult power and knew how to use it. It would be difficult to find anywhere else in the Bible two such fantastic persons as Elijah and Elisha. I think, of course, that because we have more information about Elisha, we have a closer rapport with him than we do with Elijah. Elijah seems rather austere and sometimes unpleasant. But they were both extremely unusual men, and powerful occultists.

For example, Elijah was the first person recorded in the Bible as having translated his body. We have an idea that Moses did so too - personally, I am positive he did. In Genesis we were told that Melchizedek did the same thing; but in the second chapter of II Kings we are given a very beautiful description of Elijah's translation.

The relationship between Elijah and Elisha his student is very touching. When we reach the point of spiritual development and understanding reached by such men, we become aware of many of the things that are going to happen to us. We will certainly know, when the time comes, that we are going to leave this earth plane. Elijah certainly knew it and took farewell of Elisha. Elisha insisted upon going with him and there were four places to which they journeyed - Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho and the river Jordan. At each place they stopped, Elijah wanted Elisha to leave him but Elisha refused to let him do so. But at the Jordan, Elijah said farewell and disappeared.

Symbolically it is extremely interesting that Elijah ascended after the waters of the Jordan had been parted. You remember in our study of the creation (Genesis I) that the waters were drawn from the waters. This is what occurs here at the Jordan. The waters represent the soul, the subconscious mind, the emotional nature; it is always the creative power of the emotional nature that enables us to do anything. Elijah was able to translate after he had utilized the creative power of his subconscious mind.

In the four stops made by Elijah and Elisha on the way to the Jordan we have a very definite key - the four stages of the disintegration of the physical body. (Gilgal

II KINGS, Part One

I think we will find these chapters quite fascinating from the metaphysical point of view. You will remember that when we discussed the "miracles" Elijah and Elisha were able to perform, we found out that what they had done could be done by anyone, provided he had enough power of concentration. This is the secret of all metaphysical training and power. But before we can achieve any results, we must first have faith, a very great faith. If we do not really believe in what we can do, we will never do it. Everything depends on the extent of our belief, what we really believe – *everything* from performing magical tricks for our friends to controlling our life and making it what it should be in terms of health, success and personal relationships.

I am sure you know the saying: "They said it could not be done, but I, poor fool, not knowing that, went ahead and did it." If we are told that we cannot do something that we want to do, we will not know why we cannot do it until after we have tried. It is really a question of whether we are courageous or stubborn. The two are very closely related. We often call this quality tenacity, and if we have tenacity we can accomplish whatever we desire because we will never be defeated. When we have some degree of belief that we can do something and have a desire to do it and concentrate all our effort to putting it into practice – if we keep on in spite of all obstacles standing in our way, we can never be defeated. But what usually happens? We make an attempt and we stop. We take two steps forward and then we slide back a step and a half; then we take two and a half steps forward and slide back two. And so at the end of our lifetime we say we did not get very far. But we have no one to blame for our failure, no one but ourselves. This does not mean (and I can't emphasize this enough) that we should not recognize the fact that there are such

I KINGS, Part One

The books of I and II Kings were compiled around 610 B.C. in the reign of Josiah and thoroughly revised in 550 B.C. It is quite apparent that whoever is responsible for the writing of them certainly knew how to tell a story – particularly the beginning of I Kings, for it reads like a novel.

The history of these books is fascinating. After the fall of the Assyrian empire the temple of Jerusalem was resurrected and in the crypt of the temple the ancient Deuteronomic scroll of Moses was found. (This might be termed the original discovery of ancient scrolls.) When Josiah discovered what the scroll contained – it was sent to him by the priests – he realized to his horror how idolatrous worship had become and how far the Israelites had wandered from the teaching of Moses. He brought his people back to the basic concepts of their religion. And we find the writer of Kings completely influenced by and in sympathy with the Deuteronomic idea – love the Lord Thy God with all thy might and with all thy heart; you may not have any other gods before Him.

Furthermore the author of these books was intensely critical (and very rightly so) of the various kings of whom he writes. So many of the texts of Kings and Chronicles will remind us of Deuteronomy. Both of these books tell in detail the historical development of Israel; for it was during the time of Solomon and Josiah that the Jewish kingdom was once more divided between the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel. There were four figures during this period who wielded tremendous influence – Ahab, Elijah, Elisha, and the one who is not mentioned but was the most important of all – the first Isaiah. It was these men who began to guide Israel back to what it had once been.

First Kings opens with David on his deathbed, and we are told that although David was covered with clothes he could not get warm. So they sent for the most beautiful girl

in the kingdom in the hope that she would revive him. This incident again makes us aware of how very primitive was the belief of the Israelites, for in spite of the scope, power and beauty of the Mosaic concept, they absorbed and practiced the phallic worship of their neighbors. A girl was brought to David to see if he — a man of seventy — could be aroused. For if the king could not be, he had to voluntarily dethrone himself. A ruler could not be impotent. The idea that the fertility of the land depended upon the fertility of the king was inbred in these people.

So David stepped down for Solomon. It is amazing to realize that these people with their profound heritage still believed that the fertility of the king was the reason for the fecundity of the land — that they did not realize that the source of all things was God. So we have the pathetic story of this famous, magnificent person, a man who had done fabulous things for his people, being forced to give up his crown because he was no longer sexually potent.

By today's standards, Adonijah, the eldest son of David — remember Absalom was dead — should have been the heir to the throne; but the Jews at that time believed differently. They believed the king could appoint anyone he wanted to succeed him. Adonijah tried to grab the throne, but his plot, in which he was helped by David's old friend Joab, was foiled by Bathsheba and the prophet Nathan. We do not know whether or not David had actually made a promise to Bathsheba to make Solomon his successor or whether he was so feeble that she and Nathan were able to pull the wool over his eyes.

In any case, David in his last will and testament appointed his son Solomon to the throne and strange as it seems, David who had shown mercy to almost every human being who had harmed him tells Solomon to search out Joab and kill him. Joab had been David's dearest friend, one of his most trusted men, and yet he tells his son to put him to death. Why? Because he believed in the primitive idea of bloodguilt. Even the merciful David believed that only in this barbaric way could the dishonor done to his house be avenged; he believed that only then would God bless Solomon and make his reign over Israel successful. Blood had to be shed and Solomon had to kill Adonijah, Joab and Shimoni as his father commanded. The other conspirator, Abiathar, was not murdered; he was exiled because he was a priest.

"This is the Way, Walk ye in it" — is one of the basic directions of the Spirit. Why is it so difficult for us to follow? It is simple, — direct — but whether it is the case of Solomon, his sons, the men of God or our Twentieth Century selves, — we choose another path, if only temporarily.

The Way we know. It is the Road of Positive Thought and it is paved with Right Action. But somehow or other, we always seem to prefer the detours. Detours are always troublesome, and take much time and energy, as we well know, and it isn't until we find ourselves back on the Way, do our lives straighten out.

M. M.

know that you cannot kill another human being. All you can do is change the form of the body. David had no fear of death nor did Solomon. You remember that when the child of David and Bathsheba died his servants were afraid to tell him. When they finally did so he stopped praying and fasting and said: "Bring me fresh linen, I want to wash and shave." He knew that his child had merely lost his bodily form and would acquire another body and come back again to live out another incarnation on earth. It is only after the fourth century A. D. that the concept of death, as total extinction, began to really develop. This completely wrong idea is based, of course, on man's lack of faith in God; if you really believe in God, you have no fear of death - you know the Truth. You know that there is no death - there is merely a change of form; and you - the real you - continues just as alive as you are now, on a different plane of consciousness.

In Chapter 3 the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and said: "Ask what I shall give thee," and Solomon replied: "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?" (3:9) The Lord was pleased and said Solomon would have honors and riches such as have never been seen.

Now this is a tremendous lesson for all of us to study. We are being told the Law: "Before you can receive you must give." And the greatest thing we can give is help to other human beings. The neurotic person is egocentric; the only thing that worries him is his own petty problems. The healthy-minded person on the other hand is conscious of the troubles and problems of other people as well as his own. David was, to some extent, egocentric - although I certainly would not call him neurotic - for he was quite concerned with his own particular problem. He surely was emotionally disturbed when Absalom died. (We can fully understand why.) Solomon was quite different. His greatest love and interest were never centered on his own problem but on the problems of his people. So God not only gave him what he asked, but an extra dividend - a most important dividend. He gave him an understanding of himself.

In the last verses of Chapter 3 (16-18) we have the beautiful story of the two harlots and the child. Each of the women had a child but one child had died and they both claimed the living child. Solomon settled the dispute by commanding that the child be cut into two pieces and shared between the two women. One woman refused to allow this to be done and her immediate emotional response revealed she was the mother of the child.

It is quite possible that this tale has a very different meaning - a political meaning. The Bible does not mention it, but it is historically true that the tribes which had revolted under David began to become a little restless. The Bible does not mention it, but it is historically true that the tribes which had revolted under David began to become a little restless. The two women could symbolize these factions: Judah in the north and Israel in the south. Solomon's words would then mean that if one of the tribes rebelled, the other would be drained. Political unity is symbolized by the living infant because such unity had only shortly come into being.

But no matter on what level – psychological or historical – this legend is read, it reveals that Solomon had that most magnificent of all gifts that comes to the individual who finds God – the gift of instantaneous perception. A person who has the gift knows immediately what is in the heart of another person. When Solomon judged a case, he was not swayed by what he heard or saw, as this legend of the two harlots shows. In his great wisdom Solomon knew that so great was a mother's love for her child that she would rather have it given to another woman than to have it killed. He was able to look into the heart of the matter and find the truth there. And in the Bible itself we find this beautiful description of him: "There was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee" (3:12).

Chapter 4 deals with Solomon's tremendous wealth, the way in which he governed his people and the various officials whom he appointed. There is a very beautiful text, Verses 20-25, that says that all the tribes sat under the fig trees and all were at peace from the north unto the south. His kingdom prospered for many years but due to his building programs and personal extravagances, there did come a time when he was, as we say today, "unable to balance the national budget."

You will remember that it was David who dreamed of building "a house unto the name of the Lord his God." But he had been told that he would not do so. His son would build it instead. Now in Chapter 5 David's son began the building of the temple; and he felt this would be the greatest achievement of his life. It is quite interesting to watch this building being constructed. Solomon arranged with Hiram of Tyre, who had been a very good friend of David's, for the delivery of cedar and cypress timber. He was an equitable man and he paid well for what he received. Stone was quarried in the hill country of Ephraim and only the best was utilized for the house of the Lord. Thousands of men were put to work.

Incidentally it is interesting to note that we are given three distinct reasons why David was not allowed to build the temple. First, in Deuteronomy it is stated that it is contrary to the Law to build a house for God. David, being a good student of Deuteronomy, really never intended to build a temple. Second, in II Samuel, David was too busy estab-

you think a real angel came and told him that? I don't think so. We are merely being told symbolically that if Elijah had power to control the elements, he certainly could provide himself with food. There are amazing things the body can do if we once develop power over it.

Possibly the loveliest passage of this section is 19:11 when the word of the Lord comes to Elijah in the cave and tells him to "Go forth and stand upon the mount" for God would speak to him. He does so, and the winds came and the earthquake and the fire. In the King James version, the translation is: "But the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." But in the original Hebrew, "a still small voice" is expressed as "a sound of gentle stillness," which is more descriptive of the psychological meaning of the event. God tells Elijah what to do - he should anoint Elisha to be the next prophet. Elijah had done his job well but now his job is finished and there is work for someone else to do. Elijah does as he is told and Elisha begins his mission.

Elisha, too, was quite an occultist. One of the things that we are never able to find out, and it would be interesting if we could, is where these men studied. That is - if they did study. Now there are two means of spiritual development. We know that Moses studied at the great esoteric university of On in Egypt. Others who have developed great spiritual power have done so purely through meditation. The two approaches are perfectly possible. It would be interesting to know if Elijah and Elisha were trained in schools or whether their power was developed through natural growth only. Certainly Moses could have obtained his knowledge by natural growth but because he was trained at a university he acquired his spiritual power "scientifically." On the other hand Elijah and Elisha seem - I say seem, for we have no exact proof - to have acquired their knowledge intuitively. But regardless of how such knowledge is gotten, the Power is the same. We know from our reading that Elijah defeated all the very highly trained priests of Tyre, and that he had absolutely no scruples about mass slaughter. He realized the pagan priests were offending his God; therefore, there was no reason they should not be killed.

Another thing I think we should touch on here – because it must be admitted that this section of the Bible is often rather bloody - is the subject of death. People who have spiritual power know that there is no death. They

Nothing can stop us from developing and using it, and once we have it we can write our own ticket into the future. Unfortunately too many people become power-mad; it goes to their heads. Sooner or later (frankly, never soon enough) their misuse of occult power boomerangs and they are overthrown. Unfortunately they usually pull an awful lot of people down with them.

This has been true of the world's history since the beginning of time. All of the battles that have ever been fought on the physical plane are merely the outpicturing of the battles that have been fought on the etheric plane between the forces of Evil and the forces of Good, known as the black and white magicians. I want to say here very emphatically that there will never be another war. The die was cast in the Second World War when, for the first time in the history of mankind, the forces of Good won the war over the forces of Evil. This does not mean that evil is completely finished; but it does mean - in spite of the daily headlines - that the forces of good are now in control. We have turned the corner. Yes, there will still be dangerous outbreaks in many parts of the world because there are still many evil minds at work - both in and out of the body; and there are still those who are powermad and who have tremendous occult power. But, very fortunately, there are many other minds at work that also have this power - minds that have a much different concept of God.

This mind is exemplified by the mystic who is selfless; he fights for God and with God on his side. The occultist fights only for himself and for personal power. The mystic says: "What I do I do by the grace of God; and I do all things for him." The occultist says: "I am God." We have no better example of a power-mad occultist than Hitler. I would like to say parenthetically that not every occultist is evil. Not at all. But I do want to stress what can happen as the result of the misuse of occult power because this is what we are dealing with in this chapter of Kings.

Which brings us back to poor Elijah. Jezebel threatened him and he lost his nerve and ran away. (Even if this could happen to a good mystic like Elijah, there is one consolation - a mystic does not experience fear for very long.) So, he went back to Judah, the country from which he had originally come, and fell asleep under a juniper tree. An angel of the Lord appeared to him and said: "Arise and eat." This passage is not difficult for us to understand. Do

lishing the Israelite kingdom. He had to bring the twelve tribes together and solidify their union; therefore the temple could not be built until the nation was at peace. Unfortunately the nation was never actually at peace until David was nearly at the end of his life. So the building of the temple had to be undertaken by his son. The third reason is mentioned in Chronicles. David had too much blood on his hands; he was not pure enough to build a house of the Lord.

Of course, we do not know which of these three ideas that we find in the Bible is the correct one; we can only speculate. But at any rate in Chapter 6 a very detailed description is given of the temple Solomon built. We are told that the construction of it began 480 years after the Exodus (sometime between 900 and 800 B.C.). It is also interesting to note that it took seven years to be built. It was started in the fourth year of Solomon's reign and was finished in the eleventh year of his reign. From our knowledge of the Cabala we can learn much from the measurements of the pillars, etc., that are given. If these figures are totaled, in almost every case they equal nine - and nine means the dramatic conclusion of the cycle. We could spend months studying the symbolism of this chapter, for it concerns not only the structure of the temple of the Lord, but the temple of the human body.

In Chapter 7 we learn that after the temple had been completed, Solomon began to build a house for himself and, in the court of the temple, a palace for his wives. This took thirteen years. If we total 1 and 3, it equals 4, and 4 symbolizes a concrete manifestation. This means that it took thirteen years for Solomon to manifest the idea in his physical being. The thirteen also means abstract thought (1) crystalizing through the idea (3) manifesting on the physical plane (4). The reason why we are told that the construction of the temple was begun in the fourth year of Solomon's reign is to inform us that the idea of building such a temple did not originate with Solomon but with David. Solomon faithfully carried out his father's plan and the 13/4 tells us that through the physical realization of this idea, Solomon was spiritually maturing.

Another interesting point is the lengthy description that is given of the two pillars that stood in front of the temple - Jachin and Boaz. Theologians think they represent

a remnant of a belief in phallic worship, a belief which the Israelites had assimilated from neighboring tribes; Jachin on the right side of the temple representing masculine power, Boaz on the left side representing feminine power. Metaphysically, Jachin and Boaz represent the two hills one had to pass through in order to enter the Promised Land. The two hills were on the northern side of the Land. The Promised Land is the symbol of the Third Initiation, and the two hills represent the two parts of the spinal column which brings up the fire (energy) that is situated at the base of the spine. The north symbolizes the head. So we are being told that this temple is the human body and that the spiritual creative energy is carried through the two pillars of the spinal column until it enters the top of the body (the house of the north). This is exactly what does take place when the human being has reached that tremendous peak of spiritual development known as the Transfiguration. It can only occur when this particular episode takes place, and this is what the temple of Solomon represents.

None of our modern temples of religious worship employ this symbolism; there is not even a trace of it in the architecture of any of them. It is tragic that this symbolism has been so completely lost. But in the days of Solomon a temple was built that glorified the form of the enlightened human being. Centuries later, of course, cathedrals were built in the form of the cross. This too is a symbol of the human body, but its meaning is quite different, as we shall discuss when we study the New Testament.

The top of the pillars of the temple were adorned with pomegranates which symbolize fertility. Fertility in this sense, however, is not phallic but represents the power of the Word manifesting that which it desires to create; a person reaching this stage of development has the power of the Word. Thomas Troward speaks of this very ancient symbolism as the *Law and the Word*. The two pillars also symbolize the active side (right) and the passive side (left) of the human body. In the human body, of course, the nerves that transmit energy do not go upright along the spine, they entwine. That is why the caduceus of Mercury is another symbol for the two pillars.

Chapter 8 is exceptionally beautiful; the temple is completed and Solomon dedicates it by offering a prayer to

At this point Elijah said: "This has been going on long enough; do something." Still nothing happened. Elijah beat them at their own game by performing an act of ceremonial magic. He went to the altar and sacrificed a bullock; then he had a deep trench dug around it filled with water, and poured water on the sacrifice and on the altar, and fire came down from the sky (lightning) - and so he lit the altar. Meanwhile Elijah was praying for rain. Many people think that he put water in the trench and watered the altar to show how powerful his God was, for it would be harder for God to ignite a wet altar than a dry one. But that was not the reason he did so. He put water in the trench because he was using a basic law (which we always use too) - the law of "like attracts like." Elijah knew that the water in the trench would attract the water from the sky; and it did so. Elijah prayed to his God and the earth was deluged.

Elijah was a mystic not an occultist, but *there is nothing an occultist can do that a mystic cannot also do*. Please remember that. A mystic, through his development, has the power to perform any feat of occultism. He knows that, at times, force must be met with force. Unfortunately this has been true all through history for there is always a war going on between Black Magic and White Magic. It was the basis of the feud between Jezebel (Black Magic) and Elijah (White Magic). The people of Israel believed that Elijah's pleas for rain was an act of God; Jezebel, the daughter of a pagan did not. Her one desire was to get even with Elijah. (This avenging attitude is typically occult, too.) She was not the least bit impressed by Elijah's success. In fact in verse 19:2 she threatened him: "Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying: So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." She frightened poor Elijah and he fled into the wilderness.

Unfortunately, many people like Jezebel, have cultivated power just for the sake of having power. This is very dangerous and it is the way to hell. Actually, what happens is that some achieve occult power before they know how to use it properly - this is the danger of most occultists.

As I have said before the key to obtaining power is in the word concentration. If we make up our minds that we are going to develop a tremendous concentrative power, we can develop it whether we are a saint or a devil.

cultism that very much believe in ceremonial magic.) Now what exactly does "magic" mean? The secret of any success in life from becoming a successful shopkeeper to becoming a great occultist is contained in one word. That word is concentration, *concentration of mind*.

These people who believed in and practiced magic knew how to control the power of the mind. By concentration I do not mean gritting your teeth, tightening your muscles, becoming tense all over and saying: "I am going to concentrate if it kills me." (It probably will.) No, the kind of concentration I am referring to is the power to choose a thought and the ability to retain that thought as long as you want. When you develop that kind of power - and this is going to surprise you - you can control the elements. There are many things in the universe that we have not yet discovered, and one of these is the power that resides in the person who has the ability to concentrate so intensely that he can control the natural elements. Moses had that kind of power. (In Exodus we discussed some manifestations of his power - the ten plagues and the water gushing from the rock, etc.) The prophet Elijah had that kind of power. And as we begin to grow spiritually, we begin to develop this power in ourselves; and this power that lives within each and every one of us is greater than all the H-bombs ever made. But the only way we can ever attain this power and release it is through our learning to concentrate and dedicate ourselves to the God who lives within us.

In these chapters of I Kings there was a tug-of-war going on between Jezebel, the high priestess, and the man of God, Elijah. In Chapters 16 and 17 we read that a drought was destroying the country. In Chapter 18 the Lord commanded Elijah to: "Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth." And when Ahab met Elijah, he said to the man of God: "Are you he that is causing the drought?" Elijah replied that on the contrary it was he, Ahab, who was responsible; for he had forsaken the Lord's commandments and was worshipping the pagan god Baal. Elijah then challenged the priests of Ahab to end the drought, knowing perfectly well that they could not do so. We are then told how the priests erected an altar and performed every trick they knew. They worked themselves into a frenzy and slashed their bodies until they bled; they prophesied all day long and called on Baal to make it rain. But nothing happened.

God. This prayer is very wonderful and it indicates that there has been a tremendous growth in the understanding of what monotheism really is. When Solomon says: "There is no God like unto thee in heaven above, or on the earth beneath," (verse 23) he is implying that there are other gods in the universe. You remember in Exodus and parts of Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, Yahweh was in one sense competing with all of the gods of the pagan tribes. During this period the Israelites thought of Yahweh as a God of vengeance - in short, a God who just happened to be a bit more powerful than anybody else's God. But here in Samuel for the first time we begin to get the idea that the people - I do not mean their great leaders, who always knew this - begin to realize that Yahweh is a God of Omnipotence and Omniscience. Solomon does not deny other tribes their gods, but who has a god like this God? The concept of Yahweh has grown and even the people are beginning to understand that He is the Infinite Godhead in action.

There is another thing, too, that is quite lovely. In his prayer Solomon cites that if a man who has done wrong returns to God, he will be forgiven. For the first time in the Old Testament we have the beginning of the doctrine of forgiveness by grace. This is really quite amazing, for do not forget that this was written 800 or 900 B.C. No one had ever mentioned such an idea before. The Jews at that time still believed in an "eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" and "I am a God of Vengeance saith the Lord thy God." Yet here was Solomon saying "If you turn back to God you will be forgiven no matter what you have done." Solomon was indeed a wise man; not even Moses dared to teach the Jews that Idea, although, of course, he was well aware of it. Moses knew very well that the Jews of his time would have had no interest in or understanding of that kind of God. Nor did Joshua, Samuel or David teach this doctrine; Solomon was the first one.

There is also another line in the text that is quite beautiful. In the beginning of it Solomon says: "But will God indeed dwell on the earth? behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house I have builded?" (8:27). Here again we see the beginning of a completely new concept. Is God to be confined to a house, or is God Omnipotent? Is God everywhere? We now begin to see that Solomon did indeed develop a magnificent

wisdom; he really did begin to find his God.

Now if the Bible teaches us anything, it teaches us that our growth and progress are as steady as we want them to be — but until we reach a certain peak of spiritual development, we can be in psychological danger. This is what Jesus meant when he said: "Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil." Even Solomon got into difficulty. He became quite egotistical and probably because he had so many wives outside of his faith, their influence resulted in an adulteration of some of his ideas. Solomon was a peaceful, kindly person and did not ask his wives to give up the worship of their own gods and worship only his. In Exodus and Deuteronomy there were laws against intermarriage, although Moses himself married out of his faith. Solomon too saw nothing wrong in it — in fact he imported 700 wives and several hundred concubines for himself.

However there was also another reason for this mass importation. The first woman he married was the daughter of the Pharaoh of Egypt. Egypt was his neighbor and a very powerful country, and it was probably political expediency that led him to marry the Egyptian princess. No doubt he married many other foreign women for the same reason, (notice he married women from all the neighboring tribes) for he was quite a diplomat and knew he could keep peace by letting his wives and their people worship in their own way. If he had not, no doubt there would have been a terrific upheaval that might have resulted in his own downfall.

No other king amassed as much wealth as Solomon, and he did another remarkable thing also. He made Israel tremendously strong by building a mercantile fleet. This was quite a fantastic accomplishment and in those days, even though he did take a tremendous fall at the end of his life, we must not lose sight of the fact that in the prime of his life he was a most amazing individual. Remember he ascended the throne when he was a young boy of eighteen or twenty and reigned until he was past eighty years of age.

In Chapter 9 we find Solomon in debt to Hiram the king of Tyre who had supplied him with timber and gold when the temple and other buildings were constructed. Solomon had sold Hiram twenty cities in Galilee and Hiram came to inspect his land. He was not at all happy about the cities and said to Solomon: "What cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And he called them the land of Cabul

Catholics do leave the church, those who do believe in Catholicism believe in it completely and sometimes unthinkingly. Nobody can dissuade them from their belief. A really devout Catholic will not deviate in the slightest. They may not even profess to really understand their religion, yet they obey all its laws.

Leaving the field of ritual and going into the area of metaphysics, people who are true metaphysicians — I do not mean those who just play around the edges — will never live by any other philosophy. Nothing in the name of God can deter them from metaphysics. They are not only aware of what they want, but they know why they want it and where they are going.

But to return to the Israelites, in spite of a beautiful ritual wisely given to them by their leaders, and in spite of miracles that were performed for their benefit, they were lured away by the beliefs of outsiders. The Israelites at this stage of their development did not possess a genuine love for their religion, the kind of love a devout Catholic has or a really sincere metaphysician. I don't have to tell you that if you love your religion, you want to go out and tell people about it. You are so filled with enthusiasm for it, that you exude it; and most certainly you do not incorporate in your religion the beliefs of an alien tradition. Unfortunately it is quite apparent that most people have no interest in a religious belief except a belief in fear, and the Jews at this time were no exception.

In the chapter of I Kings under discussion we see the results of the falling off of their religious faith. Also in this book we see a consistent degeneracy in the line of the kings; such outstanding men as David and Solomon are now extremely rare. This continues until we come to Ahab, his wife Jezebel and a man of God called Elijah.

Jezebel was the daughter of Ethbaal, the king of Tyre, who was also a priest. The religion of Tyre was the worship of Baal-Melkart and the people of Tyre were believers in magic. Today we look at magic and say: "What child's play," and the story of this section is one that we are not quite prepared to accept and certainly one that we do not fully understand.

But let us take a look at this thing called magic. The tribes that surrounded Israel were great believers in the ritual of magic. (Even today there are certain branches of oc-

country and put his life in the hands of the enemy; but although he could speak for everyone else, he was unable to speak for himself. Isn't it strange that although he undoubtedly had spiritual power and understanding the angel of the Lord appeared to the prophet instead of to him. Perhaps this was because he did not do as he was told; he disobeyed the commandment of the Lord. While no one is omniscient, the man of God had been told what he was to do. He obeyed the Lord until he met the prophet. This was his test of discrimination and obedience. He seemingly never questioned within himself whether the prophet told the truth or not. In other words, when the Presence within - I Am - gives directions, we should follow them!

These last chapters of I Kings are concerned for the most part with magic. Perhaps you say: "How ignorant and superstitious these people were!" But aren't we often just as foolish and misinformed in our own worship of God? We have discussed before how greatly the Israelites were influenced by the religious cults of the pagan tribes who were their neighbors. Yet the Israelites who had a culture that was now four or five hundred years old, and a religious history that was phenomenal, made no impact on the beliefs of these pagan people.

We believe that God is Truth and that Truth always prevails. But why is it that the Israelites, who believed themselves to be a chosen people and who were completely true to the concept of the one God - at least when their leaders were strong enough to keep them in check - did not make an impression on other cultures?

Why is it that they were always at odds with the Syrians, the Amorites, the Pezzerites, the Canaanites, etc.? If they had not had a Moses, a Joshua, a David, an Elijah or an Elisha to guide them, would their belief in the one God have persisted? These leaders were strong men who had been touched by God and they ruled the Israelites by sheer force; but when the people were without a strong leader they immediately reverted to pagan practices. But before we become too critical of the Israelites we should not forget that people still fall away from the religious beliefs of their parents. It is true, of course, that they do so for quite a different reason than the Israelites, for the climate of our times is much different. On the other hand, there are many people whose faith is unshakable. For instance, although some

unto this day" (9:13). Now the word Cabul means "rubbish" and it is from this incident that the origin of the phrase "can anything good come out of Nazareth?" arose. Some 900 years later we find it in the New Testament referring to Jesus.

In Chapter 10 the famous visit of the Queen of Sheba takes place. She was the most elegant woman of her time and was very intrigued with the glamour and romance of Solomon. She arrived in Jerusalem laden with gifts for the king; and they evidently had some very lively philosophical discussions, for she came, as the Bible puts it, "to prove him with hard questions." But apparently Solomon was easily able to answer all her questions, for Verse 3 reads: "And Solomon told her all her questions; there was not anything hid from the king, which he told her not." Incidentally, although the Bible glosses over the fact, Solomon and Sheba had quite a romance before she returned home. Nor did she go away empty-handed; Solomon gave her many gifts before she left.

In the book of I Kings, the vicissitudes of human nature are clearly depicted in the lives of the various kings we are studying. We are constantly reminded in this section that David, the greatest of them all, walked with God. And although he made one serious mistake (his affair with Bathsheba) he had the courage to face what he had done and repented. His son Solomon was also a remarkable person and extremely successful during most of his life. He was a terribly wise man, very kind and completely sincere in his search for wisdom; and he was also very human. But the Bible says "he loved many strange (foreign) women" and this was his downfall.

The writer of this story, which is more biographical than historical, would have us believe that all of Solomon's troubles came at the end of his life. But this is not quite the case. The building of the temple, the building of the palace and the maintenance of his thousand wives and concubines were so costly that the nation was perpetually in debt. So he was forced to levy higher and higher taxes and the people, naturally resenting this, became discontented.

Solomon, a sophisticated man of the world, was also very friendly and kind; he did not like to deny anybody anything. This was particularly true of his wives and concubines. He had married Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian and Hittite women and each wife had a shrine that

was sacred to her own god. Then in 11:4 we are told: "For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father." You will remember that we read in the Pentateuch that the moment a person sinned he was immediately punished by God. So we are not surprised to find that the Lord was angry with Salomon and said: "Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding, in the days, I will not do it for David thy father's sake, but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son" (11:11-12).

So after Solomon's death, his son Rehoboam was made king and Solomon's powerful empire was torn apart. But because of God's covenant with David, and in order that the seed of David might be preserved, one tribe was given to the house of David, the tribe of Judah. The other tribes of Israel then rebelled against Rehoboam. This was the beginning of the civil war that split the Jewish empire into two kingdoms – Judah versus all the other tribes of Israel.

We also find that Jeroboam, who became king of Israel, and Rehoboam, who became king of Judah, wandered far from the teachings of the early Hebrews. This is particularly true of Rehoboam, an extremely hard-hearted man who became an idol worshipper. When he ascended the throne, the tribes of Israel came to him and said: "Thy father made our yoke grievous; now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee" (12:4). Rehoboam went to the older wise men of the tribe and they told him: "Deal with them gently and they will do anything for you." He then went to the younger group of wise men, men he had grown up with, and they said to tell them that: "And now whereas my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father hath chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." (12:11).

Unfortunately, Rehoboam took the advice of the young men and the tribes revolted. From that day on the kingdom of Israel rebelled against the tribe of Judah. This was the end of the kingdom of Israel as far as the tribes were concerned.

he had sinned; he told Jeroboam that he was going to lose his kingdom and that his dynasty would end with his son. Jeroboam, who was sacrificing at the altar at Bethel, turned and indicated with his hand to have the man seized.

Suddenly Jeroboam's arm became paralyzed, the altar was rent in two and the ashes spilled to the ground. Jeroboam pleaded with the man of God to restore his hand and promised to do anything he commanded. The man of God relented and restored his hand. Jeroboam begged him to return to the palace and dine and stay with him; but the man of God assured Jeroboam that he could not do so. The Lord God had told him he was not to partake of any food in this land and that he was to return by a different route from which he had come. So the man of God departed.

Now there was an old prophet (not a man of God), an Israelite, who lived in Bethel. His sons were at the shrine where the incident with Jeroboam occurred. They rushed back and told their father what had happened. He asked his sons which way the man of God had gone and mounted his donkey and went out to overtake him. He invited the man of God to sup with him, but the man of God told him exactly the same thing he had told Jeroboam. Then the prophet said to him: "I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him" (13:18). The man of God went home with him and they had meat and drink.

Suddenly the Word of the Lord came to the old sage. The man of God was quite disturbed when he received the message of the Lord relayed to him by the prophet. "Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the Lord, and hast not kept the commandment which the Lord thy God commanded thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the Lord did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcass shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers" (13:21-22). The prophet gave the man of God a donkey and sent him on his way and soon after the man of God was attacked and killed by a lion. When the prophet heard of it he went out and brought the body back to be buried in Bethel. He then asked his sons to bury him, when he died, in the same grave as the man of God.

The man of God had the courage to come to an alien

you will be amazed to see what happened.

But never forget the lesson we are being taught. We only demonstrate that which we believe in at a particular moment. We only progress *if and when we want to*. (Obviously most people do not want to.) This was just as true 2900 years ago as it is in our time. You know the old saying: "history always repeats itself." It most certainly does; more than we realize.

There is a passage in 8:32 that bears on this point. When Solomon dedicated the temple he said: "Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head; and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness." For the first time the idea is advanced that man is responsible for his own grief as well as his good. God is not the cause of it, man is. Man is an individual and is responsible for whatever he does; but if he does wrong, he can find his way back to God by admitting he was wrong and asking forgiveness. Remember we discovered before - in this same chapter - that it was Solomon who first voiced the idea of Grace. He described what can happen through the Omniscience of God. This was a very surprising idea for Solomon, a materialist in every sense of the word, to express. He was a fascinating and brilliant man, famous throughout the world for his urbanity and wisdom. He certainly was very different from his father. David was a thorough romanticist, as the inspiration of the Psalms plainly show. But here at the moment of the dedication of the temple we find that Solomon, the sophisticate, suddenly became spiritually inspired. This was his moment of illumination; all of a sudden the clouds rolled away and he got an idea of what Reality and God mean and how the Law functions. This is the only time in the story of Solomon that this happens.

But let us return to the immediate chapters of our discussion. Chapter 13 is quite an unusual story; it deals with two prophets. Did you notice that only one is called a prophet (13:11)? The other is called a man of God (13:1). The reason why a distinction was made between the two men - remember that in those days prophets were greatly revered - was that the man of God was always right, but the prophet could have been a false prophet. The man of God who came from Judah to Israel went to Jeroboam and warned him that

Solomon has always been famous for his wisdom, and never was he wiser than when he asked God to give him an understanding heart. He knew that the ability to know - in the real sense of the word - God, his fellow-man and himself was the greatest gift he could be given.

We all can obtain the same gift if we really put God first in our hearts and minds. We do this by always being aware of Him in the same way we are always aware of ourselves. No matter how deeply engrossed we are in daily affairs we are always aware of who we are. Let us train us ourselves to be equally aware of the Presence within us.

"I will keep him in perfect peace,
whose mind is stayed on me; because
he trusted in me". Isa. 26:3

M. M.

I KINGS, Part Two

Jeroboam was made king of Israel. In order to prevent the followers of Rehoboam from returning to Jerusalem to worship, he set up shrines at Bethel and Dan and placed a golden calf in each place and said: "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt" (12:28). Here again we find that the Jews were influenced by the alien cultures around them. The worship of the golden calf shows the influence of phallicism. You remember that when we studied Exodus and Leviticus, we discovered that the Canaanites practiced phallic worship; and when the Jews invaded Canaan, the Promised Land, they incorporated some of the symbols of this worship in their belief. Aaron the brother of Moses erected a golden calf when Moses was consulting with the Lord on Mount Sinai. This particular practice was again revived and the Jews began to degenerate spiritually. The practice of sodomy was also rampant at that time. Later, in the New Testament, we will find in the first chapter of Romans that Paul writes to the Romans about this subject and bluntly tells them what he thinks.

This whole subject of unnatural sexuality is very difficult for us to understand. Certainly it is wrong from the point of view of the morality of a human being. And today we are shocked by many ideas that in those days were considered perfectly normal. For instance in early Hebrew culture - as in early Egyptian culture - incest was considered a proper thing. The same thing is true of the phallic worship of the Hittites, the Amorites and the other surrounding tribes. Their temples were built and designed for the worship of phallicism. This was true also of the ancient Greek temples where this worship was practiced; the "workers of the temples," the priests and the vestal virgins were consecrated to this way of worship. It is not surprising therefore to see the same belief creep into the Hebraic religion.

It is interesting to speculate on the question: Was it moral decay that caused the downfall of the Jewish empire of that time? Or was this worship practiced because the people were not happy under the governmental rule of two tyrants? They no longer had Solomon or David; instead they were ruled by Rehoboam and Jeroboam. I personally think it was the breakdown of their morals, the breakdown of the focal point of their religion, that caused the deterioration of the Israelites - because from now on, with few exceptions, they are held in captivity by other nations. Never again are they established as an empire. I believe that any nation outpictures its strongest qualities through the leadership it chooses and obeys. But in spite of this, the Jews are undeniably remarkable. Do you realize that despite its "right and wrong" history, no people have made a greater impact on Western culture? And they have done so in spite of the fact that since the time of Solomon they did not form an empire or a nation until the founding of Israel in 1948.

I think our study of the history of this particular time proves that you cannot take a race or a nation and make it live by a higher set of principles than its people are able to understand and absorb. In a group, as a whole, no matter how large or small it may be, there will always be people of different levels of understanding. There will always be those who have no understanding whatsoever and who are completely uninterested in the highest levels of attainment, individually, politically and spiritually. This was true of Rehoboam, a man who had a wonderful father (Solomon) and an outstanding grandfather (David). Rehoboam was a wastrel who had no feeling for religion or culture. (But on the other hand, his son Asa was a man of great culture and ethical belief.)

So we find that people are more or less divided (actually they divide themselves) into two types - those who desire to progress and do so, and those who do not. The same thing is true today. This is one of the reasons why I say that evolution progresses so slowly. Here in I Kings we see a nation, the Jewish nation, retrogressing, even though they believed they were a people chosen by God. The Jews have always had a magnificent concept of the one God, and yet in spite of their fantastic history only a handful of them could live up to this concept and grow with it and carry it forward. When we study the lives of Isaiah and Jeremiah,