

A METAPHYSICAL
AND SYMBOLICAL
INTERPRETATION OF

The Bible

by

Mildred Mann

*Thank you, and God bless
you.*

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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?

EZEKIEL, Part Two 3

DANIEL 30

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THE SOCIETY OF PRAGMATIC MYSTICISM

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What kind of a God do you believe in?
I am not being sacrilegious or facetious,
but very much in earnest. Each of us differs
in this, and we can see that difference
very simply. How? By the problems
we have.

Wherever there is a problem, fear or
doubt is the place we do not really
believe in God. We are subconsciously
worshipping the problem and giving
it more power than we give God at
this point.

Daniel clearly shows us that he
worshipped God and really put him
first in his life, - in every department
of it. This amazing man did not com-
promise his concept of God. He never
limited God.

Let's take a good look at ourselves and
see where we stand.

"I Am the Lord. Is there anything too
hard for me?"

"Thou shalt not limit the Holy One
of Israel".

H. M.

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)

[illegible][illegible]

prince shall "be cut off, but not for himself;" an army shall come and destroy the city and sanctuary; war and flood will bring desolation. The enemy leader will make a covenant for one week, in the midst of which oblations will cease from the temple and be replaced by abominations. This brings us to the end of the 70 weeks and the end of his vision.

These three chapters comprise one section dealing with a vision relating to the last days. CHAPTER 10, the prologue, describes the vision of, and conversation with an angel.

CHAPTER 11 relates the interpretation of a vision which is itself not given.

CHAPTER 12 is the epilogue which continues the interpretation through verse 4, and goes on to cover the final calculations of the time involved in the subject of the vision itself.

We are not told exactly what Daniel sees, but, and I quote from *The Interpreter's Bible*: "from the interpretation we learn that it was revealed to the seer that struggles among the nations here on earth are but the counterpart of struggles among their angelic patrons in the heavens, events here being determined by the pattern of events above." This is an old occult teaching which I was utterly amazed to see in anything as Protestant as *The Interpreter's Bible*, even though they only mention it and then quickly return to the idea that this probably dealt with Antiochus Epiphanes. However it is perfectly true that the battles in this war which has gone on from the beginning of time, are always fought on higher planes before we experience their effect here, although the methods used are quite different from those used in our physical battles. Every old religion teaches that these battles were fought by the gods in heaven and the outcome decided before they were fought here.

EZEKIEL

PART TWO

In the next chapters of Ezekiel we should keep one point in mind: the universal meaning behind archetypal symbols and the limitation imposed upon them by the individual's understanding. That this is due to the person's level of development is brought out very clearly in the final chapters dealing with the building of the temple.

CHAPTER 17. *The Interpreter's Bible*, which is compiled by the top theological minds of the Protestant churches, heads this chapter "The Two Eagles and the Cedar," and divides it into three parts: verses 1-10 are an allegory, verses 11-21 give an interpretation, and verses 22-24 provide a supplementary allegory. They believe the first eagle represents Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; the second, the Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt; the tip of the cedar is Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah is represented by the seed of the land which became a vine. He is criticized for his disloyalty to Yahweh, and they believe that the east wind represents Yahweh's judgment upon him.

This is one of the things that makes interpretation fascinating. What is symbolism, really? To me, symbolism is the pictured expression of an idea that cannot be concisely expressed by the normal use of language. Its difficulty lies in the fact that everybody has his own interpretation of symbolism. Your own interpretation, understanding and use of symbols is completely dependent upon your own level of consciousness. For instance, it is easy to see why *The Interpreter's Bible* takes this so literally, since Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned and certainly it is very applicable to the situation that existed at that time. But I think there is another, deeper and more important interpretation.

To me, the first eagle represents the Presence of God: the eagle is a bird that soars over the storm. The second eagle represents His creation, Man, who got completely out of hand (as we know he does) and consequently is temporarily vanquished. The tip of the cedar represents Israel. Israel means "prince with God," and a tree is the symbol for the human being in his physical as well as spiritual form. The tip of the

tree was plucked off, which meant that the individual lost his contact, either through his Karma or a willful straying. With a small understanding of subconscious symbols, we have a completely different interpretation.

A symbol cannot be confined to one narrow locality or point of time. The eagle is the symbol for the United States, but it is also a timeless representation of the idea it embodies. All symbols outlast their specific applications. The cross was a symbol for hundreds of thousands of years before Christianity, yet for Christians it symbolizes Christianity. Nevertheless the symbol of the cross will outlast any branch of Christianity, as the Star of David will outlast Judaism, for a symbol is completely timeless. The eagle is a very old symbol of the spirit which reaches to God and overcomes its problems by rising above the storm, as the phoenix is the symbol for rebirth. These, too, are archetypal symbols. The dove was the sign of peace long before the Flood, which was at least 14,000 years ago, and it still symbolizes this idea.

Often these basic symbols are narrowed down to apply to the small local situation of what is happening in Jerusalem, Babylon and Egypt: but this is not an allegory, it is a symbolic vision. This is another clue to Ezekiel's development, for a mystic's knowledge of symbolism is a greater one than that of the psychic who applies the symbols to the immediate situation.

However, there is one thing which is perfectly true. As you live your life according to the highest you know, you will find that you will have your own individual experience with symbolism; it is inevitable. For example, there is a member of our group who is approaching one of the great experiences, and certain things have been occurring to her which are of a deeply symbolic nature. One of her last symbols was a magnificent blazing red sun arising on the horizon. This is an archetypal symbol for the New Birth and it is telling her that the experience is near. How near? No one could tell her. It could be within the next few weeks, or the next few years. For a period of time a series of symbols came to her while she was meditating and then stopped for about four months. She asked me if she was losing her contact. Of course she was not. The life of the soul is very different from the life of the body. Now the visions have begun again. This is a pattern in the development of the soul of which most people

As we know, all evolution proceeds on a spiral. Each time we reach a certain peak in that spiral, what is below is seen to be the same as what is being experienced above it in a wider frame of reference. For the first time in the history of the world, the forces of Good won the War with the end of World War II. Certain danger points were not wiped out, which is the reason for the sporadic outbreaks such as Korea which may occur for several more years. Meanwhile, we should look at the internal events taking place in all of the countries of the world as evidence that the forces of Evil have been dealt a death blow. Although some of these events still present difficulties, by the turn of the century we should begin to see these difficulties ironed out, and the results of the victory of Good being manifested throughout the world, not only in a United States of Europe, but possibly of South America and even Asia. This will come to pass as little by little we cultivate a rapport with other people, and each nation gets rid of its own greed and dishonesty. We forget that evolution is viewed in terms of eternity, and we view it in terms of centuries. To us a lifetime is a long, long time, but on the other hand "a thousand years are as a day in thy sight."

To return to Daniel, in verses 13 and 14 we are given a specific symbolism in the celestial prediction of how long this "cleansing" will take. He is told it will be 2300 days. In the Jewish religion, evenings and mornings are the methods used to compute time, and since days alone are used here the figure would be 1,150, which reduces to a 7, the number of intuitive integration. This is borne out by the description in the verses which follow. We are told that this will be the last days of wrath and of the great tribulation and oppression of the Jews, which gives us some idea of the time involved in the vision since we have not yet seen the end of the oppression of the Jews. The chapter ends by saying that Daniel was so upset by the vision he became ill.

CHAPTER 9 tells us that Gabriel comes to reveal to Daniel what is to take place, and to explain the meaning of the 70 weeks. The 70 weeks are 70 hebdomads, or weeks of years, which would be 490 years before the "reconciliation for iniquity." Cabalistically, the 490 reduces to 13, which reduces to 4, and signifies a building up taking place. The hebdomads themselves fall into three distinct periods. There are seven weeks from the "going forth of the commandment" from God to the coming of the prince. Then there are 62 weeks for the building of the city. They are to be followed by 1 week of catastrophe. The messianic

could interpret it by saying there were at least four which precede the millennium. It is interesting to see that Daniel speaks of the complete victory of what are called the "saints" aided by the Ancient of Days. Of course the Ancient of Days is the symbol for Divine Mind, and the saints are the people who have put God first in their lives and have tried to live up to the highest they knew. This is what Jesus meant when he spoke of the Second Coming of Christ. For the Second Coming of Christ is not the return of Jesus: it is the Day of Pentecost for each of us, when we know, we experience, we feel the Presence of God in us. The symbolism of the beasts rising from the sea means that the evil as well as the good comes from the emotions, but in time these beasts are completely eliminated and the Presence of God comes forth in us and then we know peace on earth and good will towards men.

CHAPTER 8. It is interesting to see that despite the fact that Daniel's belief was so firmly grounded in the Jewish religion, even he unconsciously absorbed much of the atmosphere of Babylon. Here we see the subconscious symbolism of his dream in terms of the Babylonian society. While he interprets the ram as representing Persia, and the goat, Syria, it is also true that these are astrological symbols: the Ram is the sign of Aries, and the Goat, of Capricorn.

In his vision he sees a battle between a ram and a goat. According to his interpretation, the two-horned ram symbolizes the Medo-Persian Empire which nothing can deflect as it pushes to the west, north and south. A horn is the symbol for strength, as well as for news. The he-goat symbolizes Alexander and the swiftness of his conquests (from the Hellespont to Babylon, in the period from 334 B.C. to midsummer of 323). The goat has one horn, which is a rough version of a unicorn (the symbol of Truth).

This vision of the wars between these two nations could well stand as a symbol for the series of wars which we have seen throughout the centuries. It is perfectly true that the only thing which changes in wars is the names of the nations involved. Wars are always caused by greed for power and conquest, and it matters little if it be the Medes and the Persians or the East and West of our present day: it is always the same battle. Actually, I think this was a vision which occurred to a man called Daniel about the war between Good and Evil. There is an account in the Dead Sea scrolls of the war between the forces of Good and the forces of Evil which is quite similar to this.

are unaware. Prior to seeing the sunrise, she saw herself walking through a beautiful field with a mountain in the distance, then suddenly she was walking through a tunnel. She could see the light at the far end of the tunnel with the mountains still in the distance. Then she went through the tunnel, and came upon the rising sun. This is symbolism, and once you experience it for yourself you recognize what it means. It talks to you and tells you things you need to know.

To return to Ezekiel, this next section contains a number of oracles with an interesting variety of symbols: a cedar tree, an eagle, a dragon and a lion. We know enough by now to realize that this is the language of the subconscious, which is also the language of the psychic. We found none of this in Isaiah or Jeremiah (with one exception). Their form of expression was, "the Lord said" such and such will happen. Here the subconscious symbols pour forth. It is quite fascinating and provides us with a good foundation for symbolism.

CHAPTER 18. This is a very typical prophecy and oracle warning them about their ways and telling them to turn back. The most interesting point here is that the old law concerning "an eye for an eye," (as well as the sins of the fathers) is no longer valid. We are told, you are responsible for yourself; whatever you do you in turn will get back, for good or evil. He makes it very definite that God is not interested in punishment. He gives instead a picture of a rather sad God Who says, "Why do you sin? If you turn yourself back to My way, you will be forgiven." For the first time, because it is much clearer here than in Jeremiah, we see the real beginning of a concept of a God of Mercy and Grace, although it is still a potential and not fully developed as yet. He also tells them that if a father is wicked and his son is good, his son will reap the good and the father will reap the wickedness, which completely differs from the old idea that if the father is evil the son would be punished for his deeds. This is one of the greatest steps forward in the teaching of the early Jews.

The Bible teaches, in both the Old and the New Testaments, that you and I are completely responsible for our own lives for good or evil. Its first appearance is in Deuteronomy where Moses said, Today I place before you good and evil;

life and death; choose good, choose life. He told them then that the choice was theirs. We encounter the God of Wrath and Fury throughout the Old Testament until we reach Isaiah and hear that if you choose good and turn to God your life will be different. The choice is yours. You are responsible. Jeremiah is even more forceful about it. Ezekiel is practically using it as the mainstay of his message. He repeats again and again; accept your own responsibility and return to God's ways and all will be forgiven.

CHAPTER 19 is a very beautiful lamentation expressed in subconscious symbols. The mother represents the seat of the emotions, and could also be called God as the Creative Force from which was created the early part of Israel. The lion is the symbol of Judah. This deals with the struggle of Judah within itself. I was interested to see what *The Interpreter's Bible* said: they call it "Two Laments," and believe that the first part refers to the fate of Jehohaz, and the second to his son Jehoiachin. Verses 5-9 speak of his fate, and verses 10-14 deal once more with the fate of Zedekiah.

Ezekiel was a trance medium and when he says "I was dumb and could not speak" it describes what occurs in trance. The medium does not speak but is used as an instrument for I Am Who speaks through him. This is extremely rare, but is again an evidence of Ezekiel's dedication to God. In most trance experiences the medium is "taken over" by discarnate entities. From the symbolism alone, we could say this lament is a trance vision. It deals with the various downfalls of Judah and with the dismay and discouragement at what has happened. The two lions symbolize the two different parts of the Israelite's history—before David and after his reign. Ezekiel speaks of the number of departures from their own religion. He tells them that if they had continued as they had been taught in the beginning all would have been well, but there has been such a constant series of departures and returns that even God is getting discouraged with them.

CHAPTER 20. Although the preceding chapters were also oracles, they completely differed from this one in that they were visions expressed in symbolism. This one is extremely simple, succinct and down-to-earth. It deals with the apostasy of Israel, which has been dealt with many times before by other prophets, and clearly defines which era is concerned. It is absolutely without visionary characteristics. He

that their enemies would be cut in pieces: Daniel's enemies and their families were cast into the lion's den. Darius praises the living God: Nebuchadnezzar praises the living God. True or untrue, it illustrates a point that is tremendously important, and that is, if one has chosen the path of God, he learns to walk in complete faith upon that path and nothing beside that path can disturb him. Another point is illustrated by this story. Particularly at the time of history that this took place, there was very little possibility of the Jews having public worship, even under the rule of some of the kings who treated them most kindly. The only way they could worship was in thought and word and deed, which was not seen or appraised by outsiders. This is a forerunner of what Jesus said some centuries later when he told us, "But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly."

In CHAPTER 7 we have a distinctly new approach. This is a dream of Daniel's. Until now he has interpreted the dreams of others: now we are given his own dream. We are told that this takes place in the first year of Belshazzar while Daniel was still at the court. This would be about 554 B.C. as Belshazzar was supposed to have reigned at least three years before the fall of Babylon. It is interesting to see that this dream was, in one sense, the beginning of Daniel's own personal experiences, for till now we have known him as the great, wise sage of Israel. (While Daniel has never been "officially" classed as a prophet, the visions that he had were extremely prophetic.) One of the first things that strike us when reading this is that his visions are not dissimilar from those of John in the book of Revelation. He mentions the four planes, the number 4, the four beasts, and in Revelation you have the four horses and in Ezekiel the four figures. The obvious interpretation is to attribute them to the kingdoms through which Daniel lived, but they have a much wider significance. First of all, we live on four planes in four elements: fire, air, water, earth. These are the component parts of the physical. In the individual they represent humanity in its physical aspect, its emotional trend, its mental outlook and its spiritual qualities, so that the number 4 is an inherent symbol of ourselves and our earth and everything that is on it.

The beasts, of course, represent the various catastrophes which happened to civilizations that have come and gone and we

is the fall of Babylon. However, there is no historical Darius the Mede.

CHAPTER 6. Here we come to the famous and very lovely story of Daniel in the Lion's Den. I am sure we all know the story. Darius instituted his own form of government which consisted of many assistants, and over these assistants were set three presidents, one of whom was Daniel. Daniel, because of his reputation and character, was the most important of these presidents, and had the closest access to the king. Needless to say this aroused much jealousy and, added to the fact that Daniel was a Jew, the jealousy and hatred grew by leaps and bounds. His colleagues decided "to frame him," as we would say, and put him in a position which would cost him his life for disobedience to the king. Of course they knew of his deep religious worship and so they asked Darius to sign an edict which stated that for 30 days no man could pray to any god except the king, and that if this edict was violated, the person was to be put to death. When Daniel heard it, of course he must have been troubled. But we are told he went to his chamber three times a day and prayed, facing Jerusalem. Geographically, Jerusalem is to the east of Babylon, and so Daniel prayed to the east, which symbolizes the Presence of God. His colleagues found him at prayer one day and rushed to the king and told him his edict had been disobeyed by this Jew. Of course the edict of the king could not be set aside. The king had become very fond of Daniel, plus the fact that he had complete confidence in him, and he was torn by the realization that he had put Daniel to the test. However he knew, or at least he said he knew, that Daniel's faith was so great he would come through unscathed. We are told that Daniel was put into the den with the lions, and the king went to his palace and spent the night in prayer and fasting. With the morning light he rushed to the den and called to Daniel, and found that he was alive and unhurt.

It is impossible not to see the similarity between this and chapter 3 with the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They were put to the test under Nebuchadnezzar; Daniel, supposedly, under Darius: they, because they refused to obey the king's edict; Daniel, likewise. An angel appears in the fiery furnace with them: in Daniel's case an angel shut the mouth of the lion. They were released and elevated to positions of great honor: this was also true of Daniel. The king decreed

is completely conscious and out of trance. He is definitely growing into a mystic, and this is an indication of his growth. The first four verses deal with the oracles to the elders and what he thinks of them. He then reviews what happened in Egypt, in the wilderness and in Canaan, and finally says that Yahweh will not be inquired of by them. This is particularly beautiful, because Yahweh was always "inquired of," and He answered and then Israel was purged, which never seemed to make much difference. He then says that the people will be restored to the land of Israel, which could very well pertain to our time and to the state of Israel. He could be read as a prophet of the new nation of Israel, and I have an idea it might not be too far afield. The last oracle, verses 15-49, is against the south, and here he returns to the subconscious symbolism. It is interesting to see the change, and also to note that this particular section ends with the question "Doth he not speak in parables?"

As we know, the Bible is written on four levels: historical, symbolic, spiritual and Cabalistic, but that does not mean, for instance, that every page of the Bible is Cabalistic. There is a good deal of symbolism in the book of Job and the Garden of Eden story, and we find much symbolism in Ezekiel's visions, but this is not symbolism, this is history. There is nothing here to indicate an evolutionary or involuntary progression of the soul. This is nothing more than an historical account of what occurred. It is as if we were to see the happenings of the world through the eyes of a newspaper correspondent.

CHAPTER 21. Now, ask yourself, is this an historic or symbolic account? You might answer it with another question, does any museum have the sword of Yahweh? This is of course a symbolic vision. Let us carry this line of reasoning a bit further. In verse 25 he speaks unflatteringly of Israel, and if Israel represents the soul who has conscious contact with God and means "a prince with God," and if this chapter is symbolic—what then? It becomes historical at that point. They were known as the Israelites but they certainly had gone far afield from what is meant by Israel: they were far from being "princes with God." What does the sword of Yahweh mean? The Law. He uses symbolism here to say that Yahweh is going to invoke the Law: the sword is falling. Actually it is not Yahweh Who invokes the Law, but the Law is invoked

as a result of the things we ourselves perpetrate which bring us our good and evil. This chapter is his way of saying the Law is about to take effect again. In spite of all the difficulties the Israelites had gone through, they had not learned. The sheath of the sword represents the time that elapses before the Law goes into effect.

CHAPTER 22. Again, is this symbolic or historical? It is definitely symbolic. Ezekiel gives three oracles, each of which is a strong indictment against Jerusalem. The symbolism in the oracle deals with a specific situation that did exist because Jerusalem was greatly degraded by the Babylonian rites which were performed in her most sacred shrines.

According to *The Interpreter's Bible* the chapter is divided into three distinct oracles: verses 1-16 "The City of Blood," which deals with happenings in Jerusalem; verses 16-22, "The Fire of Yahweh's Wrath" and verses 23-31, "The Indictment of all Classes," which says that there is no one in the city who is good and worthy of being saved.

CHAPTER 23. For some reason or other, cities are always referred to as being feminine. If you speak of New York, "She's a beautiful town;" Paris, "Nothing like her in the world." It just would not sound right to speak of a town and say "He is a wonderful town." This chapter gives us an idea of the antiquity of this idea. Ezekiel uses this symbolism in comparing two cities to two lewd women, and he was quite correct in doing so. The continual occurrence which so horrified all of the prophets was intermarriage, and relations without the sanctity of marriage with foreigners. It was not immorality in this sense that aroused their ire (although they did not particularly approve of it), but immoral relations with non-Jews! Ezekiel expresses this judgment in a symbolism as old as time, and one used by practically all of the prophets, at times, when they are indicting Israel for her failures or acts of omissions. *The Interpreter's Bible* calls this section "The Unfaithful Wives of Yahweh: Samaria and Jerusalem." No one seems to know why these particular names are used, but Oholah means "she who has a tent," and Oholibah is "the tent in her." The word "tent" symbolically refers to the ark of the covenant, which throws a different light on this picture of the two cities and what they did. However, both interpretations stress a complete desecration of the concept of God. The indictment is expressed in the lowest

dreams as well as other feats of spiritual power. Another point of particular interest to us is that this dream, of course, is a warning dream. Whether it actually happened to Nebuchadnezzar or anyone else is not important: what is the important aspect is the fact that there are times when the subconscious will warn us through a dream that is extremely clear, extremely vivid, even though its language is almost inevitably that of symbolism. If we understand that dream and follow its direction, the warning has been of use: if we do not, we reap the results of pursuing our own ways. The dream also indicates, when it occurs in the human being, that there is much good in that person, and with a change of thought and action the good will prevail and the evil will vanish.

CHAPTER 5 is probably one of the most famous of the Old Testament: it deals with "the moving finger having writ, moves on." However, we rather suspect that the author of chapters 1 and 4 is the author of this section too, because historically it does not agree with the known facts.

From our point of view, the story is interesting from several aspects. In chapter 4 we see that Nebuchadnezzar really fell because of his spiritual pride: in this chapter Belshazzar falls because of his complete disrespect for the God of Israel, and his wanton use of the temple vessels, as well as his lust. The writing itself symbolizes the hand of God telling what is to happen to Belshazzar and his kingdom. The famous phrase, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," apparently required a man of Daniel's ability to read, since none of the other sages seemed able to do so. Certainly Daniel was the only one who had the ability to interpret. His interpretation was; "Mene, Mene" means the end of the kingdom as well as its rulers. "Tekel" pertains particularly to Belshazzar and states that he was "weighed in the balance and found wanting." In verse 28, the word Peres is used in place of Upharsin. The "U" in Aramaic represents the word "and" and "Parsin" is the plural of Peres, and the interpretation is "Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

The king then rewards Daniel. We are not given to know whether this was an indication that from sheer fear he had decided to change his ways, or not. However, according to the story, that night he was slain and Babylon fell, taken over by Darius the Mede. The date given is 538 B.C., which

huddled together, the parent bird usually spreading its wings over its young, and from these observations came the idea of protection. This was amplified into supernatural beings with wings who are now called angels, and who guard humanity. However, there are angels – not as many as we would like to believe – and there are those who have seen them. The description of those who have seen them is not unlike the description given in the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. The king describes the figure as like unto a son of God. He does not describe wings.

The three men, through their faith, were delivered. Their faith was so great that a divine being did come and protect them from being touched by the elements. In verse 29 of chapter 3 the king decrees that no one shall revile the religion of these three, because there was no other God in the universe but theirs, and for a short time there was no anti-Semitism in that part of the world.

In CHAPTER 4 we have the dream of Nebuchadnezzar. Following so closely on the episode of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, it is difficult to believe that Nebuchadnezzar himself was untouched by what happened. However, according to the Bible, he seemingly continued in his old way, feeling himself more powerful than anything in heaven and earth. *The Interpreter's Bible* points out that historically there is no record of Nebuchadnezzar having been afflicted by madness or having left his kingdom for any period of time.

The chapter is written in the form of a letter from Nebuchadnezzar to his court. The dream is extremely clear in its outline and in the interpretation which Daniel has given it. There is one thing to notice, however, and that is it is very similar to Ezekiel 31:3-14 "a passage in which the king of Assyria is compared to a cedar in whose branches birds of heaven have made their nests," (*The Interpreter's Bible*). There is one line in the text which has an important bearing on our interpretation, and that is the one in verse 9, when Nebuchadnezzar says to Daniel that he knows the spirit of God is in him and "no secret troubleth thee." That is the line that is important to us. That one phrase tells us there were no secret places of negation in Daniel's subconscious mind. He was completely, so to speak, in the clear, and in accordance with that inner clearance had been given the ability to interpret

possible form of adultery and harlotry, which had to be punished.

CHAPTER 24. Here, the cauldron on the fire symbolizes purification. Again it makes you wonder at the number of times Jerusalem is torn down and built up. We really have very little idea, although some indication has come to light through recent excavations, of the orgies which were perpetrated in Jerusalem during this period. It is startling to realize, especially because we tend to think of modern Jewish religion as being very clean and definite in its belief. Yet, time and again through the sieges, exiles and commercial dealings they appropriated the religious beliefs and rites of the people who captured them. It is remarkable that the Bible does not play it down. However, this section is not read very often, and so most people are unaware of what occurred. It was only due to a handful of zealous men like Ezekiel and Isaiah that the core of Jewry was retained and it was a truly remarkable feat. The most beautiful part of mysticism is the true Jewish ideal: the concept of the One God and the life of cleanliness that must be lived for the love of that One God.

Ezekiel certainly was a firebrand, but he had another more important characteristic: singleness of purpose. In verses 15-27 we are told that Ezekiel loses his wife, and yet not even the loss of his wife, who I am sure was very dear to him, could keep him from continuing his dedicated task of trying to bring the people back to the way of the One God. The meaning and symbolism of the chapter is fairly simple, and we see how completely his anxiety for the people overshadows his own personal loss. This man really obeyed the call of God. It is beautiful to see him do the one thing that Jesus said we all should do: put God first. This is a wonderful example of it.

CHAPTER 25. In chapters 25-32 we have a series of oracles against foreign nations which are similar to those in Isaiah 13-23 and Jeremiah 46-51. I suspect that this is not necessarily Ezekiel speaking, but that it was appropriated from one of the other sections by some of the later editors who may have felt that it was about time, since Israel had been dealt with so roughly, to deal roughly with Israel's enemies. It is not a question of the enemies not deserving it, but the great similarity in wordage and threat to Isaiah and Jere-

miah makes one question the authenticity. It is also true that all of these men were, first of all, lovers of God, and secondly, prophets. Since this pattern of condemning first the Israelites and then their enemies occurs so repeatedly in these books, I believe it was due to a number of reasons. First of all, they were against all war, and believed in living in peace. Too, killing is against the Ten Commandments, and it is appalling how cheaply life was held in those days. But more than that, I feel it is the beginning of a subconscious belief in brotherhood which emerges in the concept that if they share the good, they also share the punishment. Most of the people also believed that they should live in peace. On the other hand, any Jew who would dare say that the Edomites and Babylonians were their brothers would have been stoned to death: this, despite the fact that so many Jews had intermarried. The idea of admitting everyone to a fellowship in God even if they did not adhere to the Jewish rites is implied in the fact that the punishment is practically the same for the Israelites and their enemies.

This is an interesting concept which also has another important application. It is true that every time you or I go "off beam," as we say in metaphysics, or, to put it another way, every time we depart from what we know to be the way of Truth, we make it that much more possible for other people to "go off beam." Equally as important, when we hold resentments, or are negative in our contacts with others, since the tendency of the greater majority of people is to retaliate, we make it possible for them to retaliate—"an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth"—which doubles the wrong. Of course it is also true in a positive sense when we make demonstrations. This is another aspect of what Ezekiel is trying to express. The question that interests me is, was this his conscious intent or not? Was he putting it in a more or less subtle form because he feared the reaction of the people who heard him, or did he realize what he was saying?

The cities mentioned in this chapter have specific meanings and give us a clue which we would not have otherwise. For example, Rabbah means "multiplied, numerous;" Edom means "standing on end, bustling, fearful;" Dedam means "the physical."

CHAPTER 26. This is a very dire prophecy, but I do

I doubt if there has been anyone who has not been familiar with it. The king has decided, for reasons of his own, to erect a tremendously magnificent gold statue. We are not told whether it is of himself, or if he has decided to picture one of the many gods who were supposed to guide the dynasty. However, at its completion, everyone was summoned to bow down and worship: if they did not do so they would be thrown into a fiery furnace. As the group assembled, it was suddenly discovered that there were three men who refused to bend the knee. These three were: Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego. They were seized and brought before the king, who was absolutely infuriated. He demanded to know why they had not obeyed his order, and their reply was that they only bowed down to their God, Who was the God of all Israel and of everyone else in the world. Whereupon the king ordered them seized, as you know, and flung into the furnace, and he, with the rest of his court gathered around to watch them burn. To his astonishment, not only were they unscathed, but suddenly the king saw a fourth figure with them.

Again we may ask ourselves, could it happen? As I said before, I believe it could, I believe it did. I believe that the power of faith in the human being can be so great that it can control every element and these men demonstrated it. The question that has come down through the ages is, who was the fourth figure? That the king saw the fourth figure is definitely stated in the Bible, but whether the vision was reserved only for him, or whether his attendants saw it, we do not know. Nevertheless, the question remains, who was the fourth figure? *The Interpreter's Bible* states that they believe it was an angel, and, very frankly, so do I.

This brings up an interesting sidelight. The question often arises, Are there angels? Most people will answer without hesitation, definitely yes, and immediately have a picture of a very magnificent tall being with great wings. The idea of angels with wings, and angels always being protective of humanity, undoubtedly had its derivation from the most primitive forms of worship. As you probably know, the earliest forms of worship came from fear. The idea grew in the minds of almost animalistic men that when the elements raged there were powers in the sky that sent the storms, the lightning, the thunder, the snows, the floods, and these had to be appeased. People took refuge under trees and also noticed that birds, in time of trouble,

The figure portrayed in the dream is quite remarkable: a head of gold, breast and arms of silver, belly and thighs of brass, legs of iron, and feet of clay and iron. The interpretation which Daniel gives is the story of four kingdoms. Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom is represented by the gold head; Darius the Mede, by the silver; Cyrus, by the brass; and Alexander's empire, by the iron, and the division of his kingdom is represented by the two parts of clay and iron. He tells the king that, beginning with his own kingdom, each succeeding kingdom will grow weaker until they "break in pieces." The figure is broken by a stone which "was cut without hands" and we are told that it will culminate with God setting up a kingdom that will "never be destroyed."

These are the only two references to Spirit in either the dream or Daniel's interpretation. Since our purpose in this study is to be able to apply what we learn to our own lives, it might be well to briefly discuss the question of interpretation at specific levels. For example, we know gold generally symbolizes spirit, but in the context of this dream it pertains solely to Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. In other words it refers to a specific thing on a specific level, and has nothing to do with the kingdom of God here.

The reason I mention this is that it is a question which often arises with students' interpretations of their own dreams. For example, a student recently told me of a dream her husband had, in which they were both in a plane and could not see a pilot. They were about to land when the plane caught fire, and he was concerned about her safety. There was only one parachute, but they both got down safely. I told her it was a very beautiful dream about their marriage. She said, "I thought it represented his subconscious: the woman always represents the subconscious." This is true in symbolism, but it is not true in dreams. When people dream of someone close to them they will see that specific person.

In the epilogue, verses 46-49, we are told of the results of Daniel's interpretation. It is fascinating to see the great similarity between the story of Joseph in Genesis 41 and this story in Daniel in both the symbolism of the dreams and the results of their interpretations. Joseph, as you recall, was also elevated to a high position in Egypt.

In CHAPTER 3 we come across one of the most famous and beloved stories in the Bible, the story of the fiery pit.

not think there is anything unusual in the chapter itself. Actually there are four oracles here against Tyre: verses 4-6; 15-18; 19-21. Its fate is not a pleasant one to behold. Tyre was a great seaport and power in that part of the world, and it is to be wiped out because of its sins, which did take place.

It fascinates me to see the variations in mood, temperament and inspiration in this man who, of all the prophets we have met, with the possible exception of II Isaiah, is the most normal human being. He gives the impression of having a more balanced mind than the other prophets. One of the things which gives me this impression is his symbolism, particularly in his visions: he never violates logic. An individual's symbolism can be quite violent, since it is the language of the subconscious (or emotions), in giving a dramatic portrayal of the ideas it seeks to communicate. He is a remarkably logical and well balanced man for those days or today, in spite of the flamboyancy of some of the visions. This was a man who knew and really understood the Law of Karma. We do come across a couple of wild chapters that do not sound like him at all, and *The Interpreter's Bible* suggests that these are the works of the editors. He had a spiritual integrity which was magnificent. He also had one of the most remarkable psychic gifts that I, personally, have ever read of or seen. The clarity and logic in his visions is amazing, and the percentage of truth that came through his prophecies is equally so.

CHAPTER 28. Most of this chapter is repetitious, and it makes you wonder why it is even included. Probably because, to the Jews, the Bible is a sacred book which closes with the book of Malachi, and nothing can be added to it or taken from it.

Basically the chapter deals with the prophecies concerning Tyre and Sidon. There are four main divisions: verses 1-10, against Tyre; verses 11-19, a lament over the king of Tyre; verses 20-23, against Sidon; and verses 24-26 deal with the restoration of Israel and the fall of her enemies. One of the things that comes out very clearly in the book of Ezekiel is his idea that the things that happen are due, not to the fact that Israel herself had enemies or was eventually victorious, but to the action and Will of God. Actually it is the power of the Law which we ourselves have invoked, but

he makes it appear as though even those who were victorious were so because God willed them to be.

We have been given here a painfully clear example of what it means to live "under the Law." It is Paul who says we are not to be in bondage to the Law like the Israelites, but we are to be masters of the Law.

CHAPTER 29 contains two oracles against Egypt and the Pharaoh. It is again repetitious and very similar to Jeremiah 46 as well as to other parts of Ezekiel. The mythological sea dragon is the symbol for the Egyptian Pharaoh. Ezekiel prophesies that Nebuchadrezzar's wages for his thirteen year siege of Tyre will be victory over Egypt, and the great dragon, Apries (Pharaoh Hophar), will be exiled.

CHAPTER 30 deals with the coming doom of Egypt and the dire things which are going to happen on the "day of Yahweh." *The Interpreter's Bible* says that this day was perhaps New Year's Day, and they mention that Amos spoke of it as the day of Israel's doom. Once more we hear that Yahweh will destroy Egypt, in verses 13-19, and all of the cities of Egypt will be torn down. The last verses, 20-26, say that the Lord is against Pharaoh, and will break his arms and cast the sword out of his hand.

CHAPTER 31 continues to deal with Egypt, but the symbol for her is changed to that of a great cedar tree, and the growth of this tree is used to represent Egypt's fabulous history. However, in the last verses (10-18) the tree falls and descends to Sheol and is done for.

CHAPTER 32 is comprised of two oracles against Pharaoh and Egypt. In verses 1-16 Pharaoh is pictured as a dragon who will be caught in a net and destroyed by Yahweh. The symbol of the dragon is familiar in the more visionary prophets as well as in the New Testament. Sheol literally means "utter oblivion" and refers to what Thomas Troward calls "the etheric ice-box." Ezekiel says that Egypt will join her enemies in the nether world. One more interesting point which is brought out here is that many of the Egyptians practiced the rite of circumcision, for the prophecy states that the circumcised Egyptians will be saved. It could also refer to the experience termed the Circumcised Heart (The Transformed Heart) which occurs just prior to the First Initiation, called The New Birth.

CHAPTER 33 deals with the restoration of Israel. It

power, that of the king, or that of God? This is the second choice to confront Daniel, and he has complete faith in God and so he not only reveals the dream, but interprets it.

Incidentally, magic was the most important part of the religious belief in the Babylonian Empire and there were quite a variety of practitioners at the court. It is amusing to see that the Chaldeans, who were the astrologers in court, are referred to by nationality rather than by their profession.

In verses 14-19 we are told that Daniel is called to appear before the king. He requests a delay which is granted. It is interesting for us to glean a bit of information about Daniel's methods of work as we read these chapters. We are told here that the vision comes to him at night. In other words, when he relaxes in bed, he prays, asking to be shown the answer, and because of his complete faith he receives the answer.

In verses 20-23 he expresses in his own words the prayer we consider to be the greatest of all: "Thank you, God." He sings a hymn of praise to God. He gives thanks *before* he makes his demonstration, which in his case is to reveal and interpret the dream to the king. When Jesus raised Lazarus—his greatest accomplishment before his own resurrection—he prefaced it by saying, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always: . . . Lazarus, come forth." It is perfectly true that if we had enough faith and enough gratitude when we prayed, all we would ever have to say is "Thank you, God." We do not have that kind of faith yet, but Daniel had it.

He is then granted the power to read the king's subconscious mind, as well as his own, in the interpretation. This is one of his gifts. In modern parlance, we call it the ability to "tune in on the subconscious." It is nothing more than concentration, but it takes quite a bit of training to develop that degree of one-pointed concentration. If you have achieved it you can, at any time, sit down quietly and visualize a person before you and be able to discover what is consciously or subconsciously in his mind. This is the same ability which is achieved through the power of prayer. Daniel asked for guidance, gave thanks for receiving it, and was then able to understand and explain the king's dream.

Verses 24-25 relate the dream and its interpretation.

After the four had completed their training, they were installed as pages at court with certain duties to perform. Additional training, this time in esoteric knowledge, was part of their duties. We are told that Daniel, like Moses before him, already knew these things, and had greater vision, power and knowledge than the other three. Incidentally, it was supposed that Daniel, from the tribe of Judah, was the son of Zedekiah, one of the great kings of early Israel.

CHAPTER 2. This chapter, in its various aspects, stresses an important point which is emphasized throughout the entire book: the worthlessness of human wisdom as compared to God's Wisdom. Or, in other words, "Man proposes, but God disposes." Each story in this book deals with some aspect of the power of man when pitted against the power of God. The conclusion of each story is that if a man has faith in God he will be victorious.

Another point which is brought out by the dream in this chapter as well as the underlying teaching of the book, is the theory of historical development. We find here, as in Isaiah, the concept is of an evolutionary spiral continuing through kingdom after kingdom and cycle after cycle, and ending with the kingdom of God, not the kingdom of Man.

Verses 1-13 form the background of the story, and we gather that the king was a very shrewd man. On the surface it would appear rather ridiculous to ask a group of psychics to reveal his dream when he himself cannot remember it; however it seems obvious that he is setting a little trap. I think this was his way of testing them to find out if he could rely on their interpretations. No matter how good a psychic was it would be a rather difficult feat, if the king had actually forgotten it, to bring it out of his subconscious. There was also the psychic's fear that if the king did remember, he could still deny it, if he wished.

Fear naturally colored the interpretation, since the king had the power of life and death over his people, and people were killed for little or no reason. Since the king had absolute power and you were not sure how long your safety would last, the act of interpreting a dream became quite a ticklish question. Should you try to please the king by telling him something he would want to hear, knowing it was not true? Or should you risk your life and tell him what you really believe? Again it becomes the question of choice: which is the greater

places a most definite emphasis on the individual responsibility. We have seen in Isaiah, and previously in Ezekiel, the dawning of the new concept that Israel is no longer considered as a people and Yahweh as a God of Wrath, but that each Israelite is responsible for himself; his punishment and reward is the result of his own actions. Once more, in a very subdued way, we see the formation of that concept which is foreign to the Old Testament and the great gift of the New Testament: the concept of Grace. Grace is a strange thing in that it seems almost every creed and individual has a different conception of what it is. Nevertheless, we always have that Love which is epitomized in the action of Grace, but it is up to us to appropriate it. Grace is probably the most misunderstood word in the whole Bible. In one respect it is Illumination, and the Presence of God is always within us as Illumination. One difficulty in understanding this concept is due to the general misconception concerning the text "God so loved the world that He gave His Only Begotten Son...". Almost everyone thinks it refers to Jesus. Certainly he was the son of God, but so is every human being, in the sense that the Presence of God is the Only Begotten Son, and not the human being who encases that Presence. We hear "by Grace" this or that happened, and most people interpret it as meaning that God was suddenly in a good humor and performed a miracle—"a lucky break." I think it is about time we outgrew concepts like this. By Grace we receive Illumination. One might also say that the Grace of God is manifested in the perfect plan that He has for every human being and in our privilege to enjoy and appreciate it in its fullness. However, that is our own choice. Grace refers to something that is always there. My objection to general religious ideas is that Grace refers to an exceptional incident. I think this is very wrong because it creates great barriers between man and his God. If you feel that only once in a while is special dispensation granted you to perform a superhuman task with God's help, it puts you in a formal and fearful position with God which is not true to begin with.

However, returning to chapter 33, it not only speaks of the individual responsibility, but that of the prophet. He is called the watchman over Israel. It infers that he is equally responsible if the people do not obey, which is rather

unfortunate since nobody in the world, not even Moses, was capable of controlling them. One of the old Hindu concepts states that the guru (teacher) is responsible for the soul of the chelah (student). Every metaphysical teacher feels a responsibility for his students in guiding them rightly. There all responsibility ends, as we are all free agents. However, Ezekiel speaks of himself as the watchman, and declaims his responsibility which eventually costs him his life. Then follows a discussion of the nature of God; is it one of Justice or Mercy. In verses 21-22 we are told that a fugitive brings news of Jerusalem's fall, a tragedy Ezekiel has been anticipating. Verses 23-29 tell of the punishment of those remaining in Judah.

Really, although the Israelites were a stiff-necked people, they received so much punishment that one wonders how they were able to survive at all. In every book we hear of the "fire and brimstone and damnation" that is going to follow them, as it actually has through the centuries. In one sense it is the story of the slow evolution of every nation, and of every human being. We must also ask, why is it that we do not learn? Even though the Jews departed from their religious belief from time to time, they were still very proud of their religion, and believed very strongly that they were a chosen people, and yet they did so little to conform to it. When things got really tough they rushed to the temple and made their offerings and prayers to get out of difficulty. It is certainly equally true in other religions where we find people who are very proud to be a member of a certain religion, almost violently orthodox in their adherence, and yet they do things which no decent human being would possibly do.

At any rate, it is interesting to see that Ezekiel voices his displeasure at not having been listened to with much respect (verses 31-33). The attitude of the people towards him is that he is a singer of love songs, which certainly must have been extremely galling to him. They go to hear him and then do nothing about it, and for once he has something to say about it.

CHAPTER 34. These two chapters are really the most confusing in the Bible, for in one chapter he is responsible and in the other he is not. However the meaning is still that every leader is responsible for his flock. The chapter itself

in which all nations are a part. One thing we can learn from this idea as it is expressed in these stories is that retribution is from the Law, and not from battalions or H-bombs. When we do wrong, we pay for it, and nobody does this to us but ourselves.

In addition to faith, the keynote of this book is an absolute, undivided loyalty to God. There is no room for the feeling most of us have of, "Me first, and then I'll think about God." Here we are told: "God first—always." In stressing this idea, Daniel also shows that it is possible for a man to be ritually pure and ethically unclean. We must never forget that the most important thing is what is within you, not what you show without.

Our stage is set for CHAPTER 1. It was apparently customary at that time to take the fairest and most intelligent of the captives and train them as royal pages at the court. This is what happens here to Daniel and his three friends. It was also customary, while they were in training, for the king to provide them with room and board. These four young men felt that they could not eat the king's food since it was not kosher and would defile them. As they were quite young, 21 or 22, it certainly took a lot of courage to stand up to the eunuch and say, "No, we cannot eat that food; give us vegetables and water." Of course the eunuch was afraid they would lose their strength and he would be held responsible, but they knew that if they preserved their own belief and integrity, they would be perfectly healthy on this diet. The result was that they bloomed more than those who ate the king's fare.

With Daniel and his three friends, a total of four, we have the pattern of the number 4 being established, which continues in the 4 kingdoms, 4 metals, 4 winds, 4 beasts, and so forth. This tells us that the four aspects of man are touched by faith and raised to a higher level of consciousness which in turn manifests on the physical plane. If you remember, in the fourth card of the Tarot the Emperor sits on a cube which symbolizes the earth, or the material plane, over which he rules with harmony and ease.

We are also told that the names of the four men were changed to names in the Akkadian language which was spoken at court. The name Daniel means, "El has judged," and Haniah, "Yah has been gracious." Daniel's name was changed to Belteshazzar, which means "may he protect his life."

signs and symbols, which is an interesting point. Let me quote from Mark 8:12, "Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you there shall be no sign given to this generation." A sign is used in this text in the sense of an omen, a superstitious concept. The book of Daniel does not deal with prophecy in that sense or with superstition: it is a clear symbolic explanation of what can transpire as a result of belief. This is emphasized in the book because the courts were filled with representatives of just about every form of magic that existed, which the Jews were strongly against.

Another concept which is brought out here is that of immediate achievement versus the long range achievement of faith. Are we going to grab at the good we see simply because it is there in the present, or are we going to have the faith to wait for the complete fulfillment of that good? It is a question that is distinctly applicable to our time when we so often hear, "A bird in the hand. . ." and "Don't take any chances. Don't move now, because it is safe here." We have been impressed with the idea that it is very rational and intelligent to hold on to what you have because "you don't know what may happen tomorrow." This book says that is a ridiculous idea. You must risk your life to save it, to paraphrase the words of Jesus. In order to find your life, you must die, not physically, but to your old concepts, your old fears and your old beliefs. You can never find your life if you are hemmed in by your fears. This book illustrates this very clearly. It deals with the fear of the future by showing us that we should live one day at a time. It says, in effect, that faith in tomorrow belongs to God, which is a very beautiful thought.

Daniel has a very wonderful faith which colors his entire life. He believes, along with the old Hebrew tradition, that God has a Purpose and Life has a Plan. *The Interpreter's Bible* expressed this idea very well: "The world thinks very little about the ancient empires of the past, but it cannot forget the small nation at the east end of the Mediterranean Sea, or Athens. . . because of the visions of purposes in which they participated, and of which they became a part." It is remarkably true that great ideas do not necessarily come from important or powerful people. It would be worthwhile to give some thought to the fact that God is not a tribal God. His is a one world plan

deals with judgment upon the shepherd, who is demoted, and Yahweh becomes the Good Shepherd. In one sense this is completely true in our individual lives. Overall there is God, and there is God in every human being, but we all have had people come to us asking for help, or wanting to know what metaphysics is about; then we in turn become the shepherds. Certainly Ezekiel was a wonderful shepherd, but Yahweh is always the higher Shepherd. Here we are given the idea that he and all the other shepherds have been demoted because they have not done their job. Despite the fact that the idea of individual responsibility is stressed here, once more, the shepherds are the ones who are supposedly blamed.

In verses 23 and 24 there is a hint of a messianic kingdom with a new shepherd, and the idea of the king as the servant. The chapter ends on a covenant of peace.

CHAPTER 35 is an oracle against Mt. Seir. Mt. Seir is in Edom, and the enmity between Edom and the Israelites dates back to the time of Jacob. This is merely an oracle of what is going to happen to them.

CHAPTER 36 is composed of three oracles. The first is extremely interesting for many reasons. Ezekiel is speaking of the restoration of the mountains. We know that mountains symbolize an uplifted consciousness, and this says in effect that a change must take place in the mind before it will demonstrate in the physical.

Verses 1-15 give the oracle concerning the mountains, and verses 16-30 deal with the Israelites. Israel is again punished for the profanement of Yahweh's name among the nations, and is restored, not for her own sake, but for Yahweh's sake, Who gives them a new heart and spirit. It once more brings forth the individual responsibility, which is another way of stating the Law of Karma, and the action of Grace, which occurs through repentance and right action.

We have now come to that very famous and fascinating CHAPTER 37. There is quite a discussion in *The Interpreter's Bible* as to how much was written by Ezekiel and how much later editors contributed. However, I do not think there is much difficulty in determining which passages originated with Ezekiel, particularly since we will find quite a Cabalistic pattern, as well as a deeply esoteric pattern here. Remember

once more that Ezekiel was a tremendous psychic who was very close to the mystic realm: we might call him a "border-line case." We have mentioned the seven cosmic rays before, and the fact that we all live on one of these rays, or two of them if we are bridging the step, say, from the philosophic to the mystic, or from the spiritualist to the mystic or occult. Each of these rays is represented by a specific color, and I am sure that in Ezekiel's case we would have seen a blending of the magnificent emerald green of the psychic with the indigo blue of the mystic's ray, to which he was so close.

As far as *The Interpreter's Bible* is concerned, this section consists of a lot of numbers and specifications as to how temples are built. However, with the clue to the symbolism, what is being said becomes very evident. Nevertheless, there are reams of meaningless rituals, because they, Ezekiel or the editors, could not leave that building alone without decorating it a bit too much.

There are two visions in chapter 37: the first is "The Valley of Dry Bones," and the second is the oracle of "The Two Sticks." The reason for the inclusion of the two oracles in one chapter is that the second one shows the possible result of the first. The Valley of Dry Bones is possibly one of the most famous sections in the whole Bible. We are given the same scene as that given in his vision of the wheels in chapter 3. This could pertain to Israel's exile as well. The big question at that time concerned Israel's survival, and apparently Ezekiel had his doubts about it too. Israel was at its lowest ebb: the people were in captivity with only a handful remaining in Jerusalem in a state of starvation. Most of those in captivity were enjoying their lot and assimilating the habits of the Babylonians, and, to Ezekiel, the great question was, could Israel revive spiritually. How could it be done? Then came this vision.

Many people believe Ezekiel was actually led to a valley which had been a battlefield where the skeletons of the fallen remained; in other words, that the vision itself was preceded by a physical view which stirred the dramatic impetus of the subconscious. On the other hand, as we know, his prediction came true and Israel was reunited.

There is nothing more expressive of death than dried

accomplishment as anything else Daniel did, was that he remained a Prime Minister under four kings. That is quite something. Can you picture four presidents in succession retaining the same Secretary of State? Daniel was retained because each king he served realized his wisdom and his value. In spite of the fact that his religious belief was completely different from those of the men he served, he lived in safety and honor. In those days religion was a most controversial subject, and yet he very proudly stated that he was a Jew and nothing was going to interfere with this belief.

Before we begin to deal with the structure of the book itself, there are a few other interesting points connected with the historical background. As we have seen, a tremendous attempt was made to Hellenize the Oriental and African conquests of Alexander, which succeeded to a great degree. The Jews became acclimated to this influence to the extent that Greek became their language for quite a while, and the Old Testament itself was translated into Greek. However, there were some Jews who resented the Greek cultural invasion, and these were called the Hasidim, or "the godly ones." The Hasidim were the original Cabalists, and this book is written in a Cabalistic pattern (you will find the number 4 repeated throughout). This is another reason why I think this book was written in the seventh century. I am inclined to believe that it was written by one of the Hasidim, even though it is couched in very worldly terms for their belief and their times. The Hasidim objected to the Greek influence so strongly that they developed their own isolated community in Palestine. After the breakup of Alexander's empire, Ptolemy of Egypt captured Jerusalem, and his was an extremely liberal and kind rule. Then after a series of wars between the Ptolemies and the Seleucids, Antiochus the Great of the Seleucids finally gained control of Jerusalem.

As for the book itself, chapters 2 and 7 were written in Aramaic, and the others, in Hebrew. The reason for this is still not known. It is composed of two parts; chapters 1-6 are a collection of stories about Daniel and his friends, and chapters 7-12 comprise Daniel's visions. *The Interpreter's Bible* says that the stories stress the inevitable triumph of the faithful to Yahweh and the confusion of their enemies, and that the first six stories deal with the difference between

are possible. I believe, and I hope I will never be put to the test, that it is possible to regrow an amputated limb or an organ which has been removed. We find this example in the animal world, and we know the pattern is there if, IF, *we* have the faith.

However, we come to a book like Daniel where there are a number of episodes which *The Interpreter's Bible* says tax the credulity of the individual mind. I believe these things can happen if someone is that high in consciousness, but the important phrase is: *if he is that high in consciousness*. That is our aim and our goal. It sometimes happens that under the terrific stress of a particular problem we reach this consciousness and have what we call a miracle. We have had, for that moment, such tremendous faith, even though it is of desperation, that the demonstration is immediately made. This happens.

I hope you believe this too, for this is the sort of belief that makes metaphysics work. Jesus said very simply that you must become like a child again, not childish, but child-like. However, when we first begin this study and come across a few strange happenings, the twentieth century mind, raised as it is in the belief in the power of outer things, says, "This is all right for them, they didn't know any better." Nevertheless, we are gradually getting back to the belief which the ancients held, and little by little we will come to the understanding that, although it is couched in different languages, the real idea remains true.

Gradually we are returning to the concept that all is Mind. When we can clear our minds to the degree that there is no fear, then we can emerge from the lion's dens and fiery pits unscathed and do all these things. This is one of the reasons why Daniel has always delighted me. The greatest lesson we can learn from this book will come when we can say, "I think it can happen."

We must also realize that, while it is a book about faith, it is also about wisdom. Through all these episodes the figure of Daniel moves with a certain dignity. One of the things that happens to many people in the metaphysical field when they think they know the Law is that they do not endow it with dignity. Dignity comes as a result of having the wisdom to see, not just the use of the Law, but its context. Another thing, apropos of wisdom, which was as great an

bones, and they are not the most pleasant objects in the world to regard. He sees them by the thousands. He was not completely entranced because it says, "And the word of the Lord came unto me," which indicates that he heard the information given here in consciousness. He is told to prophesy to these bones and to command them to stand bone to bone, and then to put sinews, muscles and flesh on them. They remain dead: then God tells him to breathe on them and the Spirit of the Lord enters them and they live.

Someone is bound to think "Did it happen physically," and of course it did not. I certainly think that God could do this, but it would be stretching a point for Ezekiel to do so. It is completely symbolic. First of all, the fortunes of Israel were restored. But what is so beautiful about this section is that it speaks so clearly to each and every human being at that point where his whole life seems completely desolate, where everything is wrong and it even seems as if it would not matter whether he lived or died. If you find yourself at this point and read a chapter like this, you realize that despite the picture of death the miracle of the Lord can take place: with prayer, meditation and a change of consciousness, the pattern is rebuilt to what it should be. For this reason it is one of the most beautiful and most important chapters in the whole Bible, because it tells us that no matter what our situation may be, no matter how hopeless or black it may seem, even though our conscious mind cannot see where help can possibly come from, it is always there. In the same way, in the New Testament, we have Jesus' resurrection to prove that one can rise again even from death. In this vision we are told that it is possible to resurrect from the point of complete desolation and destruction.

This is a chapter which every good metaphysical student should read at least once a month, and particularly when he is feeling low and has that "woe is me" feeling, or thinks "Maybe I am kidding myself about metaphysics; it only works when things are going well." Then he should read this chapter and ask himself very frankly, "Do I believe this?" Ezekiel did one thing: he spoke the Truth as it was given to him. And there is one thing which is totally and always true: the Word of God always demonstrates Itself.

Ezekiel describes a dramatic scene of utter desolation;

a land crowded with skeletons, the most powerful symbol of death, and he sees them come to life. That is his vision. The Greek word for the breath of God is Pneuma. Ezekiel is shown the action of Pneuma step by step through the bones, sinews and flesh. Symbolically we might say that the bones represent the mentality, which can be very "dead" when we feel desolate. The sinews symbolize the modes of action, which really represent the subconscious, and the flesh represents the physical world. There was no life in them because the consciousness had not yet been stimulated to the point where the breath of Spirit could enter them and bring them to life, so that they could stand on their feet (understanding) and be active. This is also a description of the way we change our consciousness before we make a demonstration. "One door closes and another door opens" – if we believe it. We find in this vision the complete reassurance that resurrection must follow the death of an old condition, and from this point of realization he receives the vision of the Two Sticks.

In the Bible's text, one stick represents Judah and the other Israel, which are no longer united. The messianic idea has been very strong in the concepts of the Jewish people since the time of Moses. Their constant wish has been: if only there were another Moses. They expected their Messiah to be a man of action such as Moses. In the Bible David is spoken of as the sire of the Messiah and the frequent references to his name also refer to this concept.

This has a very definite bearing on the vision of the Two Sticks for it symbolizes the messianic kingdom which is to come, and follows the vision of the Valley of Dry Bones which symbolizes the resurrection. The meaning and order of these visions tells us that the action implied in these two concepts will continue to take place in our lives until they are united and become one at the time when we each find the Messiah, or Christ, within ourselves. Although we are not given the time that elapsed between these visions, we get the impression that they happened in almost immediate sequence. Too, although it will eventually be true for the individual in the overall pattern of humanity, Ezekiel was also correct for his own reference, for it did take place in the uniting of the two kingdoms

book has much to say to us on many levels, and although it comprises only twelve chapters, it is one of the most exciting in the Old Testament. We can learn what a person who really believes in God does with his faith. We can learn a great deal about symbolism. Incidentally, if this is not Daniel's own story then the man who wrote it was quite close to being an initiate because his description and understanding of the symbolism of the soul is quite fantastic – it is very close to the book of Revelation in the use of many of its symbols. Too, psychologically it touches on the really deep motivations of the soul under all kinds of pressure, and for that reason alone it is a fantastic study. We could spend weeks on Daniel as a psychological figure, a Biblical figure or, from the point of view of his activity without exhausting the ramifications of one question: Were these things possible under the Law of God, or is it asking too much of that Law to believe they occurred?

In other words, the basic theme for the entire book really asks one question of us: Do we believe that all things are possible with God? All things. That "all" in the book of Daniel is a tremendous "all." It not only includes the usual flare-ups which we have in human life, but it goes quite a bit further, even to the point where he asks to be tested, he is so certain of the outcome. I do not think, no matter how great our faith may be, we would be interested in proving our faith by being thrown into a lion's den or a fiery pit. Whether he did this or did not do it, as well as whether he lived or not, are not the important issues. What is important for us is to determine how far our own faith goes. If we are going to get anything from this book, we must ask ourselves individually: How far would I go under similar circumstances? Or, even in ordinary circumstances, do I meet my lion, or do I run like the wind in the other direction? Or, do I pray while I keep on running? The substance of the book of Daniel is the concept of faith.

We have seen many people throughout history who have this sort of inner knowing which is really based on faith. I believe it is possible to have a materialization – and I am not speaking of a discarnate entity appearing at a seance – as an answer to a desperate need, say, for money when there is no other way open. I have had that experience myself: the exact amount which was needed appeared. I believe these things

DANIEL

We now come to one of the most controversial books in the whole Bible, the book of Daniel. The three books which have caused more controversy than any others are, Job, Daniel and Revelation, for very few people understand them. There is also an argument as to whether Daniel really existed or was a literary figure invented during the Maccabean War to depict a man who acted on the courage of his convictions, devoutly believing in his God and withstanding all pressure to make him change that belief. There are some minor points which could bear this out, for instance, the spelling of Nebuchadrezzar as Nebuchadnezzar, and a discrepancy in the dates which are used. For example, the capture of Jerusalem did not occur in 606 B.C. (the third year of Jehoiakim's reign) as stated in the text, but in 597 B.C. under Jehoiachin.

Looking at the date of origin from *The Interpreter's Bible* point of view, its background would be placed during the period after Alexander the Great's tremendous conquests which had culminated in his victory in the Orient. The result of this was that the entire area, Syria, Babylon, Palestine and the smaller surrounding countries, was greatly influenced by Greek thought, action, dress and belief. There was also an intermingling of population.

If *The Interpreter's Bible* is correct in their views (and there are no archeological discoveries as yet to substantiate this viewpoint), the purpose of the writer of Daniel is once more to preserve the integrity of his people. He fears their being swept under by the Hellenistic influence and deserting the Lord God (the concept of Yahweh had been changed by the time this was written). The book was written to reassure the people that all is possible to him who believes. You will notice in each of these chapters there is a prologue, the body of the story and an epilogue. They are written identically, form for form, which again suggests it may have been written to keep the inspiration of the people high since its literary form is very pronounced and very beautiful. Whether he lived or not, the

of Judah and Israel.

CHAPTER 38. This chapter and chapter 39 contain seven oracles which are related. The occasion of these oracles was the attacks on Palestine by the armies of Mesach and Tubal, which was believed to have aroused the fury of Yahweh. He threatens to destroy them with sulfur, brimstone and fire, and they will fall on the mountains of Israel to be devoured by beasts as a sacrificial feast to Yahweh. We will find quite a bit of symbolism here. The oracles deal with Gog and Magog, both of which mean "his hordes." When we came across them in Genesis they were equally venomous.

It interests me to see that Yahweh is not given an aspect of Love here, but is rather portrayed as being a bit more wrathful and bloodthirsty than usual. The thought which arises in my mind—of course there is no way of proving it—is that Ezekiel could have been violently aroused over an aggression against Israel and in his anger may have attributed to Yahweh what really came from himself.

Symbolically you can take it to mean that the carnal side of man, which sometimes leads us very far afield, is destroyed on the mountain (the upraised consciousness). It is true, particularly when a fear is quite powerful, that people have gone through the emotional experience symbolized by being burnt out and going through hell before they reach a higher state of consciousness. This can be a very living thing. However, the oracle itself does not fit in with the tone of the others. On the other hand we must not forget that the concept of a God of Love was not known too much at that time, except for a God Who loved Israel and even then punished her brutally.

Evolution is an amazing thing. Often what appears to us as something very horrible, and in an overall pattern actually is—in the eyes of the cosmos, so to speak—usually takes place to make us build to a greater self. It may be necessary to tear down in order to build up. It is a very hard Truth, but it is true none the less. It is impossible to picture God as being unkind, cruel and unjust, yet how often have we heard people ask, If God is good, how can He permit things like...and we get a list of Humanity's misfortunes. We know this is the action of the Law which we invoke, consciously or unconsciously, but very few people realize this. Most people remember the plagues and how

Moses got the Jews out of Egypt, but how many remember the words Moses spoke about Love, and about the Law, when he said, "I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; . . . therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live" (Deut. 30:15-19).

CHAPTER 39 is the end of Ezekiel's prophecies, and is in very many ways a recapitulation of what has happened before. From here on he is interested in the restoration of the fortunes of Israel. The city of Hamongog means "tumult" and represents an upset mind. Bashan means "substance, fertility" and refers to physical and animal forces. We are told of the promise of the annihilation of all those who have oppressed Israel and yet were the arm of the Lord in action, which as we have seen is the Bible's way of referring to the Law of Karma. It is repeated so frequently that the Bible could well be called the book of Cause and Effect.

The last eight chapters, dealing with the restoration of the temple and of Israel, provide us with some of Ezekiel's important symbolism.

CHAPTER 40. *The Interpreter's Bible* calls this last section (40-48) "The Vision of the Restored Community." This chapter does sound rather like an architect's plan, doesn't it? It is, however, a description of the inner temple of initiation, and is written in a completely Cabalistic pattern with the numbers 7, 8 and 1 predominating (6 is mentioned in the first section).

From Ezekiel's point of view, he is talking about the restoration of the fortunes of Jacob, meaning Judah and Israel, and he gives the doctrine of "For His Name's Sake." Ezekiel was not in trance when he saw this vision: he does not say that he was lifted up in Spirit, but that he was taken by the Spirit and guided, in this case, by the Divine Architect. The entire section deals with the restoration of the temple, the rites of the priests, and what it means. Of course the actual temple in Jerusalem was not built according to these specifications. What he sees is a symbolic picture of what is going to happen within the individual. The temple is a building and the building is the body of God, for, as Paul says, our bodies are temples of the living God.

Here he gives a description of the perfect arrangement

As we study Ezekiel we find the most important point in it is the dawning of a new concept of God. The power and the wrath of God is slowly becoming tinged with the ideas of grace and brotherhood. Needless to say, it is not spelled out for us as it is in the New Testament, but it is here.

How much Ezekiel himself realized it we do not know, but if it was not conscious, it certainly was subconscious.

As we read the oscillations of his people, we find a great sympathy for this man who tried so hard, and did not know the meaning of defeat for his message. And he was right - for his message, because it was for his own time, is the most quoted in modern Israel today.

M. M.

Dan, the son of Bilhah, her slave; on the west by Gad, Asher, sons of Zilpah, and Naphtali, also of Bilhah. It is well worth your while to look up these names in *The Metaphysical Bible Dictionary*, for it will throw even more light on what is being said. Twelve foundation stones have been actually added around the gates of Jerusalem and named for the twelve tribes.

Then we are given the new name of the city, Yahweh-Shammah, which means "the Lord is there." They finally realized that He is in the temple, whether it be, for them, the temple they erected, or the temple of the living God, the body.

of this temple. The guide lays out a line of flax. A line symbolizes creation and direction. A reed is actually four cubits long, and the number 4 refers to the physical plane.

In the first five verses his guide takes him into the temple and we are given a description of the temple area. The inner court forms a perfect square. The square is another symbol for the physical plane as well as for our earth. We realize that this is a chapter which deals solely with what happens on the physical plane as a result of what has already taken place in Spirit. Directions of the earth are given and constantly emphasized and we know that they symbolize: north, mentality; south, emotions; west, manifestation; and east, Spirit. We are told that the inner sanctuary is inside the east gate.

Then in verses 6-16 we are given a description of the east gate of the outer court. The outer court represents the physical body. There are seven steps (vs. 22 and 26) to two gates to the outer court, which has two thresholds. The gates represent the conscious and subconscious minds. This is the east gate, which tells us there is the beginning of unification between the conscious and subconscious in order to have direct communication with the Presence. The little chambers represent the various qualities of the subconscious. We are told that in crossing the threshold to the gate one walks across a passageway with three recesses on either side, and then arrives at the gate. The passageway represents the spinal column and the six rooms represent the six glands. They also refer to the fact that there are certain preliminaries which are rather psychologically upsetting before you arrive at the conscious experience of the First Initiation. There are six of these before you reach the final step, the seventh, which is the conscious realization of what is happening.

The length of the gate is 8 cubits, and the overall width is 25 cubits (which reduces to a 7, the number of mystic integration). There are 30 chambers around the court, and the number 3 symbolizes manifestation of the idea. We are told that thought is really being used to reach the level of Spirit and is beginning to be spiritually productive in bringing the person to the point of initiation. The north and south gates are on the outer court and they represent the avenues through which we absorb everything

from the outside. Their measurements are the same as the east gate. In verses 28-37 the three gates of the inner court are reached by 8 steps instead of 7 and the vestibule represents the entrance, or waiting room, for the initiation; and the fact that it is found on the opposite end indicates that there is still a step to go before the initiation takes place.

In verses 38-43 he tells us that the sacrifice tables are found at the north and east gates of the inner court, which tells us that the mind has finally assumed enough control to bring itself under the leadership of Spirit. This is a voluntary act on the part of every human being, even though he may not consciously realize how voluntary it is. However no one can put you on the path until you decide to put yourself there. Verses 44-47 again give us a description of the chambers of the north and south. The singers represent the fact that the person is bringing himself into alignment with Spirit happily and thankfully, which is the effect of the realization that something is about to occur, even though he does not know exactly what it is. In verses 48-49 he stands in the vestibule (or on the porch) of the temple ready for the experience.

It is a fascinating chapter, I am sure you agree. *The Interpreter's Bible* says that it would be difficult to build a temple on these specifications since the whole circumference, including the prince's quarters and those of the priests, is $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles, or ten times the size of the sanctuary. It would be a good-sized temple, and they excuse it on the grounds that this is a vision. However, it is interesting to one who knows something of esotericism to find that the numbers and description fit very completely into what is called the temple of God in the form of the human being.

CHAPTER 41 repeats many of the numbers used in the previous chapter. *The Interpreter's Bible* heads it "Nave, Inner Room and Other Appointments," and says that it is the general plan of the temple which has a threefold division. Verses 1-4 describe the nave of the temple. The vestibule measures 20×12 cubits, or $35\frac{1}{2} \times 20\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The nave measures 20×40 cubits, or $35\frac{1}{2} \times 70$ feet. The inner room is 20×20 cubits or $35\frac{1}{2} \times 35\frac{1}{2}$ feet: in other words, the inner room is a square, and is sometimes called the oracle. You remember in the early days of the Old Testament the high priest, wearing an

representation of course, for there is no river which flows from the temple, and it culminates the vision of the temple itself. The sacred stream has its source beneath the threshold of the temple, and it flows south of the altar and east gate to the Dead Sea. Although unfed by any tributaries it grows deeper as it goes towards the sea, being unfordable at 4000 cubits. It turns the Dead Sea waters fresh and nourishes everything along its banks. If we utilize the picture of the temple being the integrated human body, the perfected being, this will mean a great deal more to us. This will then represent spiritual knowledge and power, and could also refer to the spinal column and its glands. When we begin our spiritual growth the glands become activated from the base of the spine progressing upwards, and here we are told the movement begins in the temple and proceeds downwards. If you are in the temple you have had the initiation, so this indicates that this is taking place after the Third Initiation. It tells us that spiritual power and knowledge nourish all four aspects of life and vitalize the unregenerate consciousness, and all levels of life become completely fructified.

It is a fascinating symbolism and another reason why Ezekiel stands out as a remarkable visionary in the Old Testament. In verses 1-12 the sacred river symbolizes, in terms of the text, the new age and paradise. The name Engedi means "fount of the kid" or love consecrated to God. And En-eglain means "the fountain of the two calves," or, the increase of idea. We are then given the boundaries of the lands among the twelve tribes, and their meanings will provide you with a number of attributes.

CHAPTER 48 deals with the allotment of the territories among the tribes. The tribes are arranged on the north and south of an area of 25,000 cubits including the prince's property, and the whole forms a square. Its location is between the Mediterranean and the Jordan. There are seven tribes on the north, the level of pure materialism, and five tribes on the south, those who are to some degree still tinged with it.

The city of Jerusalem is bounded on the north gate by Judah, Reuben and Levi, the sons of Leah; on the south by Simeon, Issachar and Zebulun, also of Leah; on the east gate by Joseph, Benjamin, the first two sons of Rachel, and

Yahweh Himself no longer would do battle and protect them as they believed He had done before. It is interesting because this dates back to 300 or 400 B.C. and for the first time the concept of Yahweh was being removed from the position of being an actual physical presence. The east gate in Jerusalem is known as the Golden Gate and is walled up today so that no entrance is possible.

In verses 4-5 the prophet is brought before the temple through the north gate, symbolizing his rise in consciousness, which gave him greater understanding even though he himself could not participate. Verses 6-9 give the rules for outlawing foreigners from the temple, as well as temple slaves and the uncircumcised in heart and flesh. Verses 10-14 describe the service of the Levites of the temple. They are to act as ministers and gatekeepers, make the sacrifices and care for the people, rather than the foreigners. Verses 15-31 are the rules for the Zadokites: they alone may serve Yahweh. They must wear linen garments and are told when they can marry. They must judge at court and stay away from the dead. They are also told what is to be their share of the sacrifices.

CHAPTER 45 deals with the temple district and its environs and concerns the allotment of land. The sacred district around the temple and the possessions of the city are the property of the princes. Verses 10-12 give rules for weights and measures. Verses 13-17 deal with the oblations to the prince, and verses 18-25 give the rules for the feasts of the first and seventh months. It all deals with the various sacrifices and forms of prayers and symbolically refers to the raised mentality.

CHAPTER 46 gives further regulations and continues with the ritual specifications and with the prophet's tour of the temple. Verses 1-8 tell of the prince's offering on the new moon and the sabbath; only at these times is the inner court open. Verses 9-10 describe how to leave and enter the temple; verses 11-15 give regulations for sacrifices, verses 16-18, the gifts and inheritances from the prince's property and verses 19-24 are the cooking arrangements in the temple.

CHAPTER 47 tells us of the river which flows through the temple or, symbolically, the stream of Life. If you recall, in Genesis we discussed the one river which divided into four, and it is similar to this. It is a completely symbolic

ephod, was supposed to get sufficiently high in meditation for an oracle to speak through him when asked a question. Here we find an inner room known as an oracle where questions are asked in meditation. The word "oracle" is from an old Hebraic word meaning "to speak," and its Arabic meaning is "back" or "rear room." Now the oracle comes from within you, or from the depths of your being, so you begin to see how words take on a different meaning as they are translated through the centuries.

The narrowness of the entrance, or vestibule, is symbolic of the statement that straight is the gate and narrow the way and few there be that find it. The entire description deals with an esoteric experience, and in verse 3 we are told that Ezekiel is allowed to enter the nave but he cannot enter the inner room. He is allowed to see it, and its description and measurements are given him by the guide, but he cannot step within the inner room. In that case, why does he receive this vision? Certainly he was very close to the experience, but he was still not allowed to step into the inner room, which he is told is the most holy place. In the New Testament Jesus tells us to go into our room in secret: again it is the inner room, the holy of holies, the inner core of consciousness, which is what is described here.

The side chambers were built around the three sides of the temple and were three stories high, having thirty rooms in each. *The Interpreter's Bible* points out that in I Kings 6:6 the breadth of the chambers is given as 5, 6 and 7 cubits respectively for the three stories: here the breadth of those on the first floor is 4, and 5 and 6 cubits for the other two floors. Nevertheless, it speaks of the evolution of the individual. It is fascinating when seen in this light, because it becomes quite clear that these are not just physical measurements. Then in verse 12 the structure on the west side is mentioned, and *The Interpreter's Bible* is concerned because its function is not explained. However, we do know that the west signifies demonstration. Verses 13-15a give the measurements of the temple yard which we do not have to deal with specifically, and verses 15-26 give the details of the temple decorations. This description is possibly part of his vision, but it is also possible that it is the subconscious memory of prior scenes of temples or plans for temples which were supposed to have been built.

In I Kings there is a description of the temple of Solomon which is similar to this and Ezekiel must have been familiar with it, but the description of the inner courts and gates and the delineations of the measurements are not given in I Kings.

CHAPTER 42 describes the priests' chambers, and the priests symbolize the purification of consciousness. Verses 1-10a describe the chambers to the north (the mentality) of the temple yard where the priest first begins to receive his instructions. Following that there are corresponding chambers to the south (emotions) which tells us that the instructions seep through little by little into the subconscious. Verses 13-14 tell of the use of the chambers, which is beautifully Levitical, the priests store their robes and share of offerings and eat there. They had to change robes frequently, with special robes for worship and others for sacrifices, and they were not allowed in the temple unless they were dressed in these robes, nor could they leave the temple with these robes on. Then once more he gives the overall measurements of the temple area. You will find these measurements break down into Cabalistic numbers which in turn will indicate the various stages of development which are incorporated in the temple as a whole.

CHAPTER 43 deals with the altar of burnt offerings and the fact that many years before (see chapters 10 and 11) Ezekiel had seen the vision of the glory of the Lord leaving Israel, and now he sees it return, and Yahweh entrusts him to describe it to the people. At the end of the chapter we are given the usual references to the types of burnt offerings which are to be used. Of course the real sacrifice is not the physical one but the mental one, and once we look through the physical details we will find a description of what is to be required of man. In those days, especially to the rank and file of Hebrews, physical property was considered of most importance, and so they were told how to sacrifice and what to sacrifice. In our time, although it was equally true for them except that they could not comprehend its importance, the sacrifices are our own fear, resentments and mental and emotional bad habits, in other words to rid ourselves of these things. If you read the chapter in this light it has an added importance.

In the beginning (verses 1-5) he describes the return of

Yahweh. It is a very beautiful description which was probably part of his vision although it is not preceded by the statement that he was lifted up to heaven, but that he was brought to the east gate. Then in verses 6-12 Yahweh speaks from His own sanctuary. In verses 7-9 we are told that Jerusalem itself will be the throne of Yahweh, and we know Jerusalem really means "the city of peace, peace of mind." It is only when we are completely at peace that we hear the inner voice. This is also a very beautiful symbolic indication that Ezekiel was quiet enough to be able to hear this rather than see it, or that he may have been able to do both. Then comes a description of the altar of burnt offerings which reflects many of his own ideas. The top of the altar, which is the mountain of God, or the cosmic mountain as it is sometimes referred to, is divided from the lower stage which is the bosom of the earth. The top of the altar is reached by steps on the east side. Verses 18-27 deal with more Jewish ritual concerning the laws for the consecration of the altar. Verses 23-27 speak of the types of offerings, which are those given in Leviticus except that the four horns represent the four elements of earth, water, air and fire.

CHAPTER 44 is headed by *The Interpreter's Bible* "Ordinances Concerning Ministers in the Sanctuary," and we once more dip back into the old Levitical law. But it is interesting to note, in verses 1-3, that the gate is shut, which is yet another indication that Ezekiel was not an initiate. We are told that the princes may "sit in it to eat bread before the Lord." In other words, the door of mysticism is closed to all but the prince, or, he who lives the life who may take his knowledge within. Then we are told who may come to minister to Yahweh: those of the Levites who had contacts with idolatry were no longer permitted entrance, as well as foreigners, but the Zadokites had full rights because they "kept charge of My sanctuary when the children of Israel went astray," (verse 15): they are now the leaders of the Hebrews.

As we have seen, verses 1-3 say of the closed outer gates that no mortal man can pass through them. *The Interpreter's Bible* says this could also mean that "Yahweh would never again leave the temple for the new age had arrived." You remember that the Hebrew concept, which still persists, was that Yahweh would send a Messiah in the flesh because