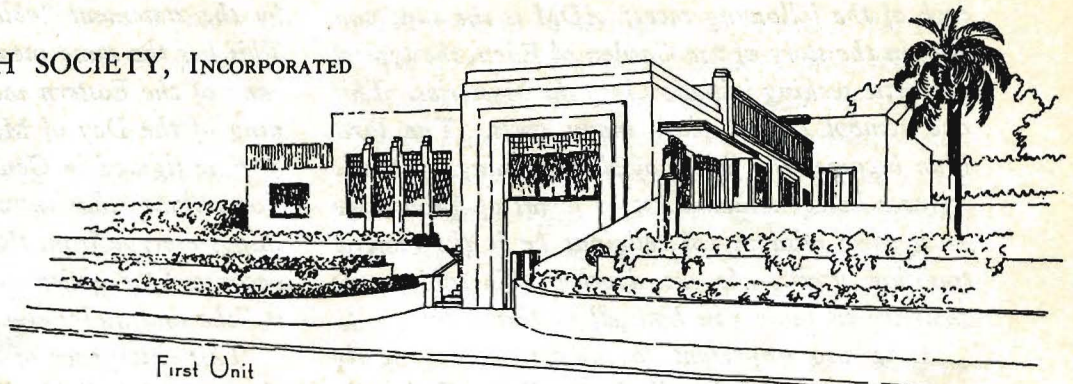


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THE STUDENTS MONTHLY LETTER

Letter No. 2

THE SECRET DOCTRINE IN THE BIBLE

Part II

Dear Friend:

We have already suggested that the story of Adam and Eve as given in the opening chapters of Genesis is an allegorical exposition of the cosmic processes which resulted in the differentiation of the human species.

It is important to realize that the secret doctrine concealed in the Bible must be discovered with the aid of certain keys... Each of the myths, fables and symbolic figures has at least seven complete and distinct interpretations. In other words, to open the door, that is unweil the secret, the key must be turned seven times in the lock. In the ancient Mystery rituals the key was an important emblem of discovery or enlightenment. Neophytes received symbolic keys as part of their investures. In the Mithraic Rites candidates were taken through seven doors, which they unlocked; and in the Egyptian Mystery of the resurrection of the soul the aspirant was brought to the gates of fulfillment and was interrogated by the keepers of the gates.

It may seem strange that one story or account may have several meanings, but such is the working

of the Cabala. In the original Hebrew there were numerical and letter cyphers to aid in the decoding of the hidden information. Translation and editing have destroyed these older Cabalistic patterns and it is now necessary to have recourse to the fascinating field of comparative religion in order to unlock the Biblical secrets.

ADAM AND EVE

As an example, ADM (Adam) is, first of all, species or kind, meaning a particular generation or genre. ADM is also a symbol of Adonai, the creating Lord. ADM is also Aries the first sign of the Zodiac; ADM is the incarnating ego, the father of the multitudes; ADM is the human principle perpetuated forever in the seed; ADM is again Protogonos, the ideal or archetypal pattern, Plato's Idea or Logos; ADM is the universe "whose body nature is, and God the soul;" ADM is the first race of humanity and by analogy the first sub-race of

each of the following races; ADM is the sun; and also, in the story of the Garden of Eden, the typical neophyte seeking initiation into the Mysteries. This one symbol indeed plays many parts. The First Man becomes the figure of all first things. Of the sciences he is mathematics; of forms of knowledge he is pure wisdom; of religions he is the esoteric tradition itself. As we develop this subject we shall try to show you how all of this is true.

It is also important to remember that nearly every personality described or discussed in the Bible is primarily a symbol and not an historical individual. It is a great mistake to believe that there is great spiritual virtue in the perpetuation of history or the worship of ancestors. The virtue lies not in the accepting of the sacred writings but in the discovery and application of the ever living truths secretly hidden in the Scriptural books of the world.

The creation of Adam is described in Genesis 2:7. The Creating Power formed man "of the dust." In the Cabala this man is called Adam Kadmon or the species formed of the red earth. The meaning of red earth in this sense is most obscure but certainly has no reference to physical soil. In a cosmic sense the universe is fashioned of a fiery nebula, and the whirling fire-mist from which the Cosmos was formed is the red earth.

The ancient writings, in describing the generation of the physical bodies of the animal and human kingdoms, declare these vestments "coats of skins" to have been exuded from the auras or superphysical bodies of a divine race which dwelt in space, i.e., the earth's outer atmosphere. This teaching requires considerable explanation.

Man consists of three parts or natures. The first is the divine principle, a spiritual substance identical with spirit and space. The second part is a sidereal nature, sometimes called the soul, and constitutes a superphysical body—the "luminous chiton," the garments of glory, or aura. The third part is the sublunary nature, the objective body with its several systems—muscular, arterial, glandular, etc. Man as Spirit dwells in the substance of the One, or undivided from the Divine Principle. In the Bible this state of identity with the Supreme is expressed

by the statement "abiding in Abraham's bosom." This has the same meaning as the Samadhi or Nirvana of the Eastern metaphysicians. At the beginning of the Day of Manifestation—that great cycle of time figured in Genesis as the Seven Days of the Formations—the innumerable natures of living things emerge from the Original Unity, and "God" becomes "the gods;" whereas the Cabala expressed it, "the multitudes emerge from the simple unities."

This emergence of the gods is their descent into the state of individualized living things. The Primordial Sparks robed themselves in the "luminous chitons" or superphysical bodies. The gods are therefore described as spheres of light, and of this order of beings is man himself—inwardly a divine nature participating in the Supreme Effulgency. This is explained in the Bible by the placing of spiritual humanity (Adam—Eve) in the Paradisiacal sphere called Eden. Here souls dwelt garmented only in light and truth, the auras, as yet undefiled by contamination with physical matter. The records of this ancient time are preserved in the mythologies of all classical civilizations. It is beautifully described in the Gnostic Hymn of the ROBE OF GLORY wherein the paradisiacal state is represented as the homeland or fatherland which all exiled humanity is seeking. With this key, the mystery of Eden is easily unlocked.

EDEN AND THE ANGEL OF THE FLAMING SWORD

The Adamic being is given dominion over the Garden, always a symbol of the astral world, what Levi the transcendentalist calls the astral or magical light. The same allusion to the garden occurs in the story of Parsifal. Here Klingsor attempts to delude the Knights of the Grail by creating a magical garden filled with the enchantments of the senses. In some of the ancient books the universe is called a garden and the planets and suns are flowers blossoming in space.

With Adam (the human life wave) abides also the seeds and germs of the several other kingdoms. In Genesis 2:11 the Creating Power fashions the

Taoist dragons of China represent both the psychic forces of the soul and the initiates or sky-men... The Indians of the Southwest of America have serpent symbols of similar significance, and the Quetzalcoatl or Feathered Snake of Central America is a symbol of the initiated or high priest... The Druid priests of Britain and Gaul called themselves serpents, and these are the snakes that St. Patrick is said to have driven from Ireland.

The reader of the Bible should be acquainted with these facts for it is only depth of scholarship and breadth of understanding that can interpret correctly the serpent symbol in Genesis. The astral light over which Samael has dominion is the sphere of imagination and desire. In the Cabala it appears that Samael is the adversary, yet in the Authorized Version there is no explanation for the existence of the tempting serpent or why the all-wise Creator should have placed it in the Garden to corrupt this noblest work of God—man.

The key to the riddle lies in the metaphysics of the Persians which in turn was derived from the most ancient religious Mysteries of both the Near and the Far East. It is explained that good and evil so-called are but the aspects or qualities of One Principle. For example, creation brings into manifestation the innumerable hosts of lives which lie sleeping in the Infinite. In this respect creation is release or expression and therefore good. But creation also infers certain limits and boundaries being placed upon space. Thus the very world which is man's sphere of opportunity is also his living tomb and in a sense therefore evil or adverse to the luminous inner self that must dwell so long in the fetters of matter. Every action therefore of the creating power is described as bringing into manifestation not only a good but an evil spirit or angel.

A simple example of this is the modern problem of invention. Whenever a man invents some new and useful improvement, to make life more secure and comfortable, abuse inevitably follows. Good laws are perverted by selfish men; great ideals are brought down to a thousand purposes inconsistent with the original dream. Primitive men realized this and the earliest scriptures teach that the universe is a battlefield of good and evil impulses

which they termed "gods" and "demons."... Even as God was the Chief and Lord of all the benevolent forces, so the evil agencies or negative attributes are personified in one offending being variously named Satan, Lucifer, Yama, Loki, Hades, Kali, etc.

In the 3rd chapter of Genesis the adversary is Samael, the Serpent, and like Mephistopholes it is "a spirit of negation; part of the power that still works for good while ever scheming ill."

In the Pythagorean formula unity alone is perfect wisdom, for wherever there is division desire is born. Desire is only possible under a concept of diversity, for possession is one of the first of the illusions. Desire leads to an innumerable array of other evils and is itself rooted in ignorance which in turn is man's inability to perceive the sovereign Oneness of all things.

The chapter further explains that there are two trees growing in the Garden of Eden. One is the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and the other is the Tree of Life... The symbolism of the tree must also be briefly explained. The World Tree is the earth's axis and occurs in nearly all ancient mythologies. Trees are also symbols of evolution and unfoldment because all life, tree-like, emerges from one root and seed and extends itself into a diversity of manifestation. The Cabalistic Tree of the Sephiroths with its ten symbols is based upon the Tree of Life in the midst of Eden. The tree is also the symbol of racial development and nearly all forms of evolution are even now diagrammed under the form of a tree. So also are genealogical systems. The tree becomes the symbol of continuity. Special trees have particular symbolism, as the pine tree of Atya which has become the modern Christmas tree, and the Cedars of Lebanon which was a title bestowed upon an order of ancient priests. According to one derivation the word Druid means tree and the dryades were the tree-spirits of the classical Greeks. All these interpretations are significant to the present subject. But there is another even more immanent in its inferences. There are two great systems in the body of man: the tree of life which is the arterial with its roots in the heart; and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, i.e. the nervous system which has

its roots in the brain. These two "trees" are physical manifestations of a complicated network of branching energy currents in the aura or superphysical bodies.

In medieval art it was customary to represent the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the form of an apple tree. In fact this fruit has been concerned with two important episodes in the history of man. There was the apple that Eve ate and the apple that fell on Newton's head. These two apples have changed the course of history. The older mystical writings show not an apple but a pomegranate, and Greek statues of Kore and Persephone frequently depict these fertility goddesses holding pomegranates. This fruit also had a place in the rituals of the Eleusinian Mysteries and seems to be the original of the Chaldean "apple."

Madame Blavatsky in *ISIS UNVEILED* showed that the 3rd chapter of Genesis was part of an ancient Mystery ritual representing the drama of initiation into the higher grades of the esoteric school. In the Cabala Adam is described as attending a school of the angels in heaven. It was in this celestial academy that the first man received the keys to that secret doctrine which has descended through an unbroken hierarchy of initiated priests since the first dawning of human consciousness. The angel Raphael visited Adam and Eve in the Garden and discoursed with them concerning the mysteries of the soul. According to Madame Blavatsky the disobedience of Adam and the eating of the forbidden fruit represented an effort to secure the esoteric wisdom without being properly and duly initiated. In other words, it was a violation of the laws of the Mystery Schools—an attempt to storm the gates of heaven. For this violation primitive humanity was exiled from the spiritual state and the symbolic Fall occurred.

By another interpretation equally significant the serpent tempter represents the intellectual principle. This is evident from the words of Jesus in the New Testament, "be ye wise as serpents." The intellectual principle leads to the experience of conscious self-responsibility. This is exile from the Edenic garden of innocence or spiritual infancy. The evolving intellect of primitive man brought with it a gradual

extroversion. From an inward contemplation of spiritual principles man came to recognize an external life. Slowly the inner senses were dimmed and the perceptive powers correspondingly strengthened. The result is man's present state in which he has little if any inward life and is entirely over-conscious of the significance of outward circumstances. The inner life is the Paradisiacal or Edenic state. The outer life is the relapsed or fallen state. The resurrection promised by the Messianic dispensation is the restoring of the inner life and the conquest of the external or sensory sphere. All this is clearly shown in the Buddhistic teaching and is an essential part of the Platonic dicta.

The Creating Power in its aspect as the laws of nature now pronounces a curse upon the disobedient mortals. They are doomed to the cycle of birth and death. They are no longer supported and sustained by the inward light but must struggle to survive in a universe of doubts and fears. Ixion is bound to his wheel, and the cycle of necessity has gained dominion over the divine spark—the hosts of Adamic souls.

In Genesis 3:21 it is described that the Creating Power fashioned for Adam and Eve "coats of skin." These are the physical bodies—the mortal vestments of immortal life. Man's memory of his heavenly state is obscured by the world of matter and he is cast forth from the abode of peace. At the gate of Eden the Creating Power placed Cherubims and a flaming sword to guard the sacred Garden that Adam and his progeny might not return to it again. It is interesting that Solomon, when he built the "everlasting house" should have placed upon the doors of the temple Cherubims with the flaming sword. This is the key to the whole mystery. Eden is the first Holy of Holies. Its significance is identical with that of the Adita of ancient temples. It is the heart, the sacred place. It is also symbolic of the state or condition of sanctity. The temple is not a building but a state of consciousness, an inward realization. He who attains to this realization enters the holy place which is guarded from the profane by the keepers of the gate—the testers or initiators. Philo Judaeus declared the Cherubims to represent clouds or obscurations which conceal Eden

from the profane. These clouds are the ignorance, benightedness or perversion of the unredeemed which must forever obscure sacred things.

CAIN AND ABEL

In the 1st verse of the 4th chapter of Genesis, Eve says, "I have gotten a man from the Lord." The ancient Jewish Mysteries declare this to mean that Cain was the child not of Adam but the archangel Samael, the serpent, the mysterious luminous power at the root of all human perplexity. In the Authorized Version the translation is so obscure that both Adam and the Lord are referred to as the fathers of Cain, but the early rabbins knew their Scripture better than 17th century theologians, and the old commentaries insist that Cain was the son of Samael, and Abel was the son of Adam. Cain was therefore the embodiment of cosmic fire and Abel the son of the agrarian principle. It was for this reason the Chasidim explained that the offering of Cain was not acceptable to the Lord, leading to the first crime—the murder of Abel. That this story also relates to the Mystery rituals is evident from the words of Voltaire that the Samothracian Mysteries were the account of a brother slain by his brethren. Early efforts were also made to identify the drama of Osiris and Typhon with the Abel-Cain story. The murder of Abel is one of the most difficult of the allegories to interpret, but in substance the story is as follows:

If we understand Adam to be man, the incarnating ego, the one father of all the bodies that are manifested by an entity during its life cycle, we will realize that by the FALL is described the descent of this egoic vortex into the sphere of generation. It first produces phantom forms in the astral light, a progeny of demons by Lilith as explained in the ancient Commentaries. Later by union with the humid principle, Eve, it begins the generation of bodies, this mystery cunningly concealed under the genealogy or the descent of the Patriarchs. In the process of generation, polarity must first be established. In the Chinese cosmogony, which by esoteric interpretation is also anthropology, the crea-

tion arises from the endless strivings of two principles termed YANG and YIN. In the Greek system Æther and Chaos are the polarities from the minglings of which the Cosmos is fashioned. As the physical universe is engendered from the opposing of polarized forces, in like manner the soul arises from the strivings of the polarized will and by an alchemy within the consciousness itself.

Jacob Boehme, the German theosopher, depicts this striving within the Self by a series of symbolic figures showing the eternal battle between light and darkness, between action and inertia, wisdom and ignorance, etc. Later Johann Gichtel illustrated Boehme's principles with a series of curious engravings, now extremely rare, but the best mystical key ever prepared for the interpretation of the Scriptures.

Cain and Abel represent the first discord or confusion arising in the superphysical organism of man. It is evident that the allegory has universal application or it would not be part of the Mystery rituals of many ancient orders. Furthermore it is a known fact that all these rituals relate to the unfolding of the human soul, so Cain and Abel must be some part of the consciousness of man. Boehme creates the terms "divine will" and "self will" with which to designate the two parts of man's consciousness which are ever in a state of mutual striving. The allegory of Lucifer and his battle with Michael the Archangel has similar interpretation, the war in heaven being merely the conflict within the soul or superior nature as contrasted to the body which is the earthly nature.

It is evident that in this allegory Cain represents self-will or the active principle and his descendants became builders of cities (bodies) and workers in metals (the sense perceptions). Tubal Cain, described in Genesis 4:22 and who later occurs prominently in the Masonic allegory, first pounded swords into ploughshares. Here he represents self-discipline as an aspect of self-will by which the destructive emotions are refined and tempered. The descendants of Cain were all wanderers and artisans and of the race of builders, and in the 23rd verse of chapter 4 it seems that the crime of Cain is repeated by Lamech his descendant. A study of this

chapter will show that in the cycle of the Patriarchs the principle of recapitulation is ever present. In the same way Noah is a second Adam.

This is explained by the Chinese who declare that the cycle of existence is represented by the Zodiac. At the end of each great age of manifestation the universe is dissolved in the sign of Pisces, or the Deluge, and is reformed or reborn in Aries. Aries is the sign representing Adam, Taurus is Eve, Cain and Abel are the twins or Gemini. The Eternal Principle is reborn at the beginning of each cycle even as it is stated definitely in Genesis that Adam was not the first man but merely the first man of the cycle, or an incarnation of the Eternal Man, the Protogonos of Plato. In Genesis 1:28 the Law (Lord) said to Adam: "Be fruitful, and multiply, and REplenish the earth." This is exactly the same thought expressed in the ancient Confucian metaphysics. All creation is a replenishment in space, a new manifestation of eternally existing principles.

If we realize that the signs of the Zodiac are the Patriarchs even as later they are the Prophets and the Apostles, we shall perceive that creation so-called is the movement of the Ego or consciousness, whether microcosmic or macrocosmic, through the twelve signs or parts of the SOULar year. This SOULar year is the Manvantara of the Hindus, the Day of Brahma, the flowing of the Great Breath. This Breath is also mentioned in Genesis 2:7 where the Law (Lord) breathed into the nostrils of Adam the breath of life. There is much commentary material in the Zohar, the Hebrew Book of Splendors, concerning the significance of the Great Breath, but only a suggestion is possible in the space at our disposal.

If, then, Cain and Abel are the light and dark halves of the human will, born like Castor and Pollux from the single Golden Egg, the Ego, we can understand why the Greeks symbolized the soul as a sphere made up of a gold and a silver hemisphere joined together. We know that in the ancient Mystery temples certain disciplines were given for the perfection of the human soul. The Ancient Wisdom was disseminated throughout the East and the Near East by means of ritualistic dramas called the Mysteries. Lao Tze the Chinese

sage, as librarian of the Chou Dynasty, read the ancient books brought to China from India. We are told also that Osiris, the great leader of the Egyptian faith, was brought from India in the form of a golden bull. This is again a reference to the Secret Doctrine having been brought from Asia and circulated throughout Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean civilizations.

Eastern metaphysics (and the Jewish religion is Asiatic) are based largely on the glorification of the passive principle. In the Hindu books we learn of the sage who, by sitting quietly under a tree, discovered by inward contemplation what all the strivings of the outer life could not attain. Lao Tze taught the sovereign dignity of doing nothing. You have to do nothing very intelligently and profoundly, however. It is not superficial laziness that is a spiritual virtue but rather a perfectly enlightened inward tranquillity that can come only with the mastery of all external forces and circumstances.

Abel, in the allegory, brings his offering, the "firstlings of his flock," and offers them to the Law. By these are meant the animal propensities of his own nature. Such is always the meaning of the burnt offerings referred to in the Scriptures. Because he brings the "animal" his offering is accepted. Cain, on the other hand, brings the fruit of the ground and this is not accepted. The fruits here represent not principles of the soul but merely the consequences of action. Cain's offering represents the same type of superficial gift that the rich man gives when he presents a stained glass window to the church but continues to cheat the widows and orphans. Cain gives of what he has, for fruits represent accumulation or possessions; but Abel gives of what he is, the "firstlings," his transmuted animal nature.

Cain, incensed, slays his brother, reminding us of the words of the Indian classic, "the mind is the slayer of the real." Thus the allegory has an eternal significance. It is the very key to the whole Mystery Religion. It is the reason why most faiths are today empty of esoteric wisdom. It is the key to that ceremonialism of the superficial life which obscures the inward perceptions and brings creeds down to a useless war of sects and bigotries.

SETH AND THE PATRIARCHAL LINE

The 5th chapter of Genesis is devoted to the genealogy of the Patriarchs from Adam to Noah. It will be observed that in this chapter there is no mention of either Cain or Abel. Seth therefore is established as the founder of the races of the earth, begotten in the image of Adam his father, even as in his turn Adam was begotten in the image of the Lord—the creative hierarchy. Much has been made by Biblical students of the extraordinary length of life attributed to the Patriarchs. In chapter 5, verse 5, Adam's age is given 930 years, and in verse 27 Methuselah is recorded as living 969 years. It should be understood that these numbers are Cabalistic and refer not to the span of individuals but the duration of families, clans and blood records. Also in the Jewish system of metaphysics each of the numbers is symbolic of certain Hebrew letters. These letters form words according to the ancient hieroglyphical system attributed to Moses. The proper decipherment of these symbolical "ages" reveals the astronomical and cosmological import of the Patriarchs and their lives.

Realizing that Adam is not an individual but the human life-wave, it follows that his children and their children unto the tenth generation are the branchings and forkings of the racial tree; also the differentiation of the cyclical currents by which the life of man and the life of the world are sustained. This explanation solves such problems as arises in Genesis 4:15 where the wife of Cain is mentioned, yet the Scriptural accounts infer that at that time Cain and Abel were the only progeny of Adam, supposedly the only man in the world. Also in the same verse Cain builds a city which he names after his son. One man could scarcely build a city nor could the abode of one man be termed a city. But when we realize that Cain is a race, we then understand that the story of his wanderings is an account of racial migration.

By Seth is to be understood a new generation, one which takes the place of the earlier creation that had failed and destroyed itself. An account of this earlier race is to be discovered in both the Chaldean and Chinese writings. The historian Berossus describes the monsters that were formed in the primordial ILUS, the slime-born, the monsters with many heads, a strange order of prehistoric COMPOSITA which vanished away in the dawn of time. In the Gnostic REMAINS it is described that the Demiurgus, or creating power, fashioned innumerable bodies while experimenting with the cosmic substances. Most of these bodies were incapable of containing a mind. They were the night-born, the false birth, the monsters of the Abyss. This account is based upon the Hermetic legend wherein it is described that these first creatures were destroyed by the gods because they could not be the vehicles or bodies for the incarnation of intellectual entities. Of such an order also are the giant-kings of Edom who "perished in the void." Also these are the Sheddai, the antedeluvian kings recorded in the Zohar. The third of the children of Adam, Seth is the third race known in the occult tradition as the Lemurian.

It was in the later sub-races of the Lemurian race that the human being we know as man was differentiated from the animal prototype. Thus in Lemuria the true man came into being. Man having been formed as the vehicle for the "thinker," we have the explanation for the opening verses of chapter 6. The 1st verse describes that men began to multiply on the earth; and in the 2nd verse it explains that the sons of God (the intellectual egos or conscious entities) gazed upon the bodies that had been formed (the daughters of men) and took wives from among them, i.e. joined with them to become the true humanity that we know. Thus Seth is the physical archetype of man, even as Adam is the spiritual archetype of man.

Sincerely yours,

Manly P. Hall