

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY



The Stigmata

By JANE TEMPLETON



And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?

And they cried out again, Crucify him.

Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band.

And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head,

And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews. (Mark 15:12-18.)

Having passed through the Baptism, the Temptation, the Transfiguration, the Last Supper, the Footwashing, and Gethsemane, the Christian Mystic is ready for his next step: the Stigmata.

By the union of the head and heart faculties which takes place in Gethsemane he has been prepared for this significant experience. The development of the stigmata is necessary for the crucifixion or final liberation from the body, and a clear understanding of what takes place necessitates a knowledge of the true nature of man and his bodies.

Occult philosophy teaches that man is a spirit, having several vehicles invisible to ordinary physical sight. The physical body has crystallized into a matrix of these finer bodies, having solidified along the etheric lines of force of the invisible vital body, which is bound to the physical body until, for the ordinary person, death brings dis-

solution of the tie. Initiation, however, whether of the mystic or of the occultist, involves the liberation of the spirit from its lower vehicles so that it may function in the higher worlds at will, and before this can be brought about, the interlocking grip of the physical and vital bodies, so strong and rigid in the greater part of humanity, must be severed.

Initiation, it should be remembered, is a process by which the spiritual aspirant is taught to use the power he has accumulated within himself by his efforts to live the life of love and service to others. This power cannot be bought, nor can it be given. It comes only by the arduous efforts of the aspirant himself, and is beyond price.

In the mystic the points where the bodies are most closely bound (in the hands, feet, and head) are loosened unconsciously as he constantly contemplates the Christ and endeavors to imitate Him in all things. The manifestation of the loosening is visible in the mystic, but in the occultist there is no visible manifestation, he being taught to accomplish the severing consciously.

However, as is taught in the Western Wisdom Teachings, "whether the stigmata are visible or invisible the effect is the same. The spiritual currents in the vital body of such a person are so powerful that the body is scourged by them as it were, particularly in the region of the head where they produce a feeling akin to that of the crown of thorns. Thus there finally dawns upon the person a full realization that the physical body is a cross which he is bearing, a prison and not the real man. This brings him to the next step in his initiation: the crucifixion."