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Subject:

Buddha, the Divine Wanderer

BY

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BUDDHA, THE DIVINE WANDERER.

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When we study the character of the Prince Sidartha, upon whom descended or rather within whom was evolved, the power of Buddhahood, we find we are again dealing not only with an historical but an individual and a cosmic myth. While there is little doubt that he lived, the real mystery of the wanderer upon the face of the earth and the wondrous Initiate who won the yellow robe is not the literal tale but the individual application to the unfolding of consciousness in every individual. We often refer to Jesus as the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, and it is also interesting to note that Buddha carried the complimentary title of Sakyasinha, which means a lion. It is said that Buddha was the son of a great king who renounced his material throne in search of an answer to the problems of human destiny. It is related of the youth that when he saw so much misery about him he decided to devote his life to the answering of the great problems: whence came we, why are we here and whither are we going? At first he was considered insane, but he lived to see one of the world's greatest religions, founded upon his doctrines, attain great influence and power. He finally burned his own body on his funeral pyre at about the age of eighty. Now let us consider the result of his years of study.

Buddha, the Compassionate One, who, after mastering the lower desires of life, opened within himself the Buddhic Eye, as related in his legend of the Bodhi-tree, finally decided that two great laws were the real explanation of the mystery of being. They have survived to this day as the law of Reincarnation and the law of Karma, which were the basis of his teaching; and Buddha himself is said to have remembered over five hundred of his incarnations.

In order to really understand and to derive full benefit from the study of the lives of the great Initiates, it is necessary for us to place ourselves in the position of each of them. All of these celestial demi-gods are not only personalities but represent principles of which Buddha typifies the striving and wandering of each individual in search of truth, and also the internal spiritual consciousness in its great search for its lost throne.

The spiritual consciousness in man is a wanderer on the surface of the lower worlds, climbing eternally upward, holding out its tiny almsdish to catch, the life that it needs for its growth. In all the East we hear of the yellow robe, that gown which the Eastern mystic is eternally seeking to become worthy to wear. While preparing for it and wandering through unknown lands, we also find him with his three-strand braid with which he belts or girds his garment or wears around his neck close to his heart. This is a rope up which he will climb some day, a rope many times stronger than any of its single strands. It is composed of his spirit, his mind and his body, braided into one rope strong enough to support his consciousness while he climbs upward from the ruined temple of the lower man.

The yellow robe is the transmuted life energies which radiate out through the vital body and form around the Initiate a halo of golden light, and there never will be a Christian too good to wear the yellow robe that the Buddha earned the right to wear. We are all of us Princes of India, regardless of nationality or creed. Each of us must some time give up the kingdoms of earth as did the Prince of India, and go seeking the light which is the life of men.

Far down in the centers of the lower man, in those parts of his be- ing which call eternally for comforts, desires, and the happiness of t moment, there is a kingdom which in time each of us will give up, not because we are compelled to but because we feel there is something more; and as the young Prince ourselves, seeing the suffering and un- happiness in our own bodies and among those whom we love and honor, we will realize the necessity of giving up these things and searching for the treasures which are eternal. Then we, too, will cast off the royal robes of materiality and start our pilgrimage slowly up the grea mountains that lead to the home of the adepts amid the crags of the Himalayas. We, too, will have read the message of the Lotus and have seen the glory of its unfolded blossom and recognized within ourselves that we are still but buds.

So in all climes, in all countries, Buddha, as yet unchristened by the great power of spiritual illumination, seeks the answer to the problem of human consciousness. From one great adept to another he goes, amid the caves of Northern India, but his search is ever in vain until finally within himself he finds the answer to the eternal riddle of the ages. His own body purifed by prayer and meditation, which in this sphere of consciousness is service and daily mastery of problems, has become so ethreal through the absolute removal of dross that the golden light of spirit within him shines forth and he is robed in gar- ments no king can buy. A great eye opens, the esoteric duplicate of his exoteric organ, and to him is shown a phase of human need; the answer to suffering and death is found, an answer which shows the divine omnipotence and all-guiding care of a righteous and merciful God. It is the same with man as an individual, when he, or rather his center of consciousness, rests under the Bodhi-tree of his spinal column and masters the ethereal forms and tempters that come to break his solitude; he then liberates his spiritual consciousness from the lower bodies and the eye of spirit, opened by his pilgrimage, sees the great plan which brought him into being.

Millions of years ago, when the first wave of life began upon our plane, we saw one manifestation of an eternal pilgrimage. Millions of years before that, in forms and ways that we cannot cognize now, the pilgrimage was under way. Millions of years into the future we shall still be the eternal wanderer, seeking ever greater and fuller under- standing; the opening of each new eye, showing us with greater certain ty others yet unawakened, the developing of each new faculty, showing us still more plainly the great number of faculties still in latency.

It is said that Buddha was called the Lion, and the lion is the king of beasts. For many centuries all members of the cat family, of which the lion is king, have been held sacred. There are two reasons for this: the first is that when a cat lies down it forms itself into a ball, usually with its head and tail touching, and because of the magnetic currents which run through a cat's body, it is said to be symbolical of the eternal union of the head and tail of the spiritual circuits. For this reason they were held sacred by the Eygptian priests of Bubastes, particularly three-color cats. The second rea- son is that the cat and all members of the feline family are said to have the power of seeing in the dark, representing the spiritual sight which sees in the darkness of the lower world.

That is one reason undoubtedly why the Buddha and the Christ alike are spoken of as lions, because the lion is the king of the cat family Also, the lion is the symbol of courage and those who lack courage soon lose in the great search for illumination.

The little pictures we see at the present time and little statues of Buddha which we find in store windows usually show this great man with a small, round, golden globe between the eyes, in the center of the forehead. This represents the awakened center of spiritual consciousness or the divine in man which is said to be located between the physical eyes just above the root of the nose. Also, in the majority of pictures, you find many symbols well worthy to study. For instance, the beautiful blossoms and flowers supposed to be embroidered upon his draperies symbolize undoubtedly the spiritual centers spinning and revolving within his aura. In many statues we find one of the Buddha's hands up and the other down, which is very significant.

In Greece we find statues of Plato and Aristotle, one pointing to the sky and the other to the earth. One says, "We were born of earth" and the other, "We are of heaven;" and in Buddha the balance of these two is symbolized by his hands, one of which draws down from above and the other which lifts up from below. In others we see his hands folded upon his lap in the form of a great circle and his feet crossed beneath him. These are symbolical of the completing of the two great circles of energy working within the body and between them they form the figure "8" or the strange figure engraved by nature upon the head of the cobra.

Although Gautama has long vanished from the surface of this earth, there is little doubt that the members of his religion out-number any other, and there are a great number of Christians embracing the Buddha's faith in recent years. This is the natural result of a misunderstanding because the average individual fails to realize that Christianity, when considered as a doctrine, contains within it all other religions. Much of its broadness has been lost through the narrowness of so-called Christians, but the time will come when every student will be glad to find truth wherever he can; and will realize that all the knowledge that a Christian may gain from the religions which went before him will, if properly used, not hinder him but help him to become a better student of the Christian faith.

In the teachings of the Illuminated One will be found many of the links missing or, rather, concealed by narrow-minded individuals. Buddha was one of the Sons of the Great Flame. He was sent out as a worker from the Great White Brotherhood. Faithfully he carried out his work as a messenger of the power of Light; and regardless of creed or doctrine, all the world owes homage to those unselfish ones who have labored for its betterment. There are few who have given up more in the name of truth than did the Prince Sidartha, and in his teachings he has unselfishly and without fear expressed the truths that he believed. As Jesus tore the veil from the temple at Jerusalem and gave to all mankind the mysteries of creation, so the Buddha, the Light of Asia, tore the veil from the Brahman temple and gave to the Sudras tthe truths which are now spread over three-quarters of the known world. In days gone by, the priests of Buddha entered Korea, China and Japan and spread the doctrine of compassion and love to millions of suffering souls.

Each of us must feel what a glorious thing it was to be able to give help to so many suffering ones. We today are the wanderers, the mendicants, wandering through life; we stand where Gautama stood at the time of his great renunciation. Before us stretch the two great paths---that of selfishness and that of sacrifice. He chose the latter and gave all. Which shall we choose?

The Great White Brotherhood works with man through his fellow-man, not through angels from the skies. When we so devote our lives to the service of others that we become a possible channel for the carrying on of good, then the powers of Light make use of us. The more, then, we improve ourselves with that great motto and motive as our guiding thought, the sooner the time will come when Christhood or Buddhahood will descend upon us; and from being unconscious channels, we become conscious channels and mediums for the spreading of truth according to the faculty development which we ourselves have gained as the result of our pilgrimage.

So when we think of this great adept, Buddha, let us always see in him ourselves in the robe of the mendicant, our purified bodies, seeking to change that garment for the yellow robe of Buddhahood. Let us realize that, like the Prince of India, we may carry our little bowl with us, asking alms eternally, asking guidance, strength, and truth, and praying that we may catch in this little bowl, in the name of the divine, the energies and life forces which we now waste.

"Om mani padme hum."

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