

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
Marriage, Divorce, and Celibacy



The Marriage at Cana (1563) Paolo Veronese, Louvre

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Occult meaning of the Marriage at Cana

John ii, 1-20

1 και τη ημερα τη τριτη γαμος εγενετο εν κανα της γαλιλαιας και ην η μητηρ του ιησου εκει
2 εκληθη δε και ο ιησους και οι μαθηται αυτου εις τον γαμον
3 και υστερησαντος οινου λεγει η μητηρ του ιησου προς αυτον οινον ουκ εκουσι
4 [και] λεγει αυτη ο ιησους τι εμοι και σοι γυναι ουπω ηκει η ωρα μου
5 λεγει η μητηρ αυτου τοις διακονοις ο τι αν λεγη υμιν ποιησατε
6 ησαν δε εκει υδριαι λιθιναι υδριαι εξ κειμεναι κατα τον καθαρισμον των ιουδαιων κειμεναι χωρουσαι ανα
μετρητας δυο η τρεις
7 λεγει αυτοις ο ιησους γεμισατε τας υδριας υδατος και εγεμισαν αυτας εως ανω
8 και λεγει αυτοις αντλησατε νυν και φερετε τω αρχιτρικλινω οι δε και ηνεγκαν
9 ως δε εγευσατο ο αρχιτρικλινος το υδωρ οινον γεγενημενον και ουκ ηδει ποθεν εστιν οι δε διακονοι
ηδεισαν οι ηνιηκοτες το υδωρ φωνει τον νυμφιον ο αρχιτρικλινος
10 και λεγει αυτω πας ανθρωπος πρωτον τον καλον οινον τιθησιν και οταν μεθυσθωσιν τοτε τον ελασσω ου
τετηρηκας τον καλον οινον εως αρτι
11 ταυτην εποιησεν την αρχην των σημειων ο ιησους εν κανα της γαλιλαιας και εφανερωσεν την δοξαν αυτου
και επιστευσαν εις αυτον οι μαθηται αυτου
12 μετα τουτο κατεβη εις καπερναουμ αυτος και η μητηρ αυτου και οι αδελφοι [αυτου] αυτου και οι
μαθηται αυτου και εκει εμειναν ου πολλας ημερας
13 και εγγυς ην το πασχα των ιουδαιων και ανεβη εις ιεροσολυμα ο ιησους
14 και ευρεν εν τω ιερω τους πωλουντας βοας και προβατα και περιστερας και τους κερματιστας
καθημενους
15 και ποιησας φραγελλιον εκ οχοινων παντας εξεβαλεν εκ του ιερου τα τε προβατα και τους βοας και των
κολλυβιστων εξεκεεν το κερμα και τας τραπεζας ανεστρεψεν ανεστρεψεν
16 και τοις τας περιστερας πωλουσιν ειπεν αρατε ταυτα εντευθεν μη ποιειτε τον οικον του πατρος μου οικον
εμποριου
17 εμνησθησαν δε οι μαθηται αυτου οτι γεγραμμενον εστιν ο ζηλος του οικου σου κατεφαγε με
18 απεκριθησαν ουν οι ιουδαιοι και ειπαν ειπον αυτω τι σημειον δεικνυεις ημιν οτι ταυτα ποιεις
19 απεκριθη ο ιησους και ειπεν αυτοις λυσατε τον ναον τουτον και εν τρισιν ημεραις εγερω αυτον
20 ειπαν ειπον ουν οι ιουδαιοι τεσσαρακοντα και εξ ετεσιν οικοδομηθη ωκοδομηθη ο ναος ουτος και συ εν
τρισιν ημεραις εγερεις αυτον

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Blavatsky Collected Writings, (NOTES ON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN - IV) XI pp. 498-503.

[Note by G.R.S. Mead: The following notes formed the basis of discussion at the meetings of the Blavatsky Lodge, in October, 1889. They were prepared by myself before the meetings, mostly from notes taken down from H.P.B. As it is impossible to throw the matter into any precise form, the notes must stand simply as hints for students, and especially as a useful example of H.P.B.'s method of interpretation.]

The first eleven verses in the second chapter [of *John*] contain the allegorical representation of the last and final Initiation; herein we find mention of all the divine and human "principles" veiled in allegorical language, and personified, and of the purification wrought in them by Initiation; the incident ends abruptly and mysteriously, so much so, that we have reason to suspect that more was originally added. A very superficial knowledge of the laws of esoteric allegory shows it to be so.

The main point of the allegory is the turning of "Water" (the Astral) into "Wine," or Matter into Spirit.

1. And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there. [499]



In all the Mysteries, after the *four* days of trial or temptation, came the *three* days of descent into Hades, or the tomb, from which the Glorified Candidate, or Initiate, arose.

“On the third day,” therefore, means that the time for the final Initiation had come, when Jesus, or the Neophyte, would become Christ, or the Initiate; that is, at one with Buddhi or the Christ-principle.¹

(With reference to the 4 days mentioned above, it is interesting to note that Jesus is said to have been tempted for 40 days. Here the nought is a “blind,” for in mystery-numbers ciphers can be disregarded and changed according to the rules of the method employed.)

“There was a marriage in Cana” — that is to say, that the Disciple was joined to his Higher Self, the marriage of the Adept with Sophia, Divine Wisdom, or the Marriage of the Lamb, in Cana.

Now Cana or Khana is from a root which conveys the idea of a place consecrated or set apart for a certain purpose. Khanak is the “royal abode,” or “the place of the ruler,” with the Arabs. Cf. *Devakhan*, the place consecrated to the Devas, *i.e.*, a state of such bliss as Devas or Angels are supposed to enjoy.²

“And the Mother of Jesus was there,” this means that the Candidate was there in Body, or at least the lower “principles” were present; for from this aspect the “Mother of Jesus” is especially the Kāma-rūpic “principle,” that is to say, the vehicle of material human desires, the giver of life, etc. This must not be confounded with the higher aspect, Buddhi the “Mother of Christ,” the so-called Spiritual Soul. The distinction is the same as that between Sophia-the-Divine, and Sophia-Akhamoth, the Terrestro-Astral. [500]

2. And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

That is to say, the Higher Manas or Ego (not Self) which was now dominant in the Candidate, and his disciples³ or lower principles were present as necessary to the purification of the whole *Man*.

3. And when they wanted wine the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

The mother of Jesus here signifies his now purified desire aspiring upwards. The verse means that the human material passions of the lower self, the guests at the festival, must be made drunk or paralyzed, before the “bridegroom” can be married. It is the lower Manas (Sophia-Akhamoth), that says to Jesus, “They have no wine,” that is to say, the lower “principles” are not yet spiritualized, and therefore not ready to participate in the feast.

¹ N.B. — In diagrams where the principles are symbolically represented by a triangle superimposed on a square, it should be remarked that after the “second birth” the “principles” have to be re-arranged.

² [This error occurs in more than one place and should be corrected. *Devachan* is a Tibetan word; when transliterated from Tibetan characters, it would be *bde-ba-chan*, meaning a sphere or realm or state of unalloyed happiness. It is a term analogous to the Sanskrit word *Sukhāvati*. The Sanskrit word *deva* does not enter into the composition of this Tibetan term. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

³ The 12 “disciples” are the 3 aspects of the 4 lower principles, the [triangle] reflected in the [square].



4. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

Woman (Matter or Water, the lower quaternary), what hath the Spirit-Ego to do with thee at this hour? There is no unity as yet between me and thee, my hour of Initiation is not yet come, I have not yet made myself one with Buddhi, my Supernal Mother, when I shall be able to associate with thee without any danger.

5. His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

The servants are the lower “principles,” their thoughts, instincts and passions, the Lhamayin, or elementals and evil spirits, adverse to men and their enemies.⁴

6. And there were set there *six* waterpots of stone after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

The six waterpots typify the six principles, the seven without Ātma, the seventh or universal principle — six from the earthly standpoint including the body. These are the [501] containing principles from Ākāśa to the Astral; also the four lower principles (the others being latent) filled with Astral Water. The Lower Manas sports in the Astral waves.

7. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

In the Lesser Mysteries all the powers of the four lower planes were brought to bear on the Candidate to test him.

The six waterpots were filled with Water — the symbol of Matter — that is to say, that during the Neophyte’s trials and temptations before Initiation, his human passions being made full to the brim, he had to conquer them or fail. Jesus, the Higher Manas, in changing that Water into Wine, or Divine Spirit, conquers and is thus filled with the Wisdom of the Gods. (See ch. xv, “I am the true vine,” etc.) Lustral water was given to the Neophyte to drink and turned into Wine at the last moment; in India it was turned into the Soma juice, the Water of Life Eternal.

8. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

The “governor of the feast” was the chief official who had the direction of the feast and servants and the duty of *tasting* the food and drink. Here it typifies the conclave of Initiates who do not know whether the Candidate will succeed or fail, and who have to test him. This explains the sentence in the next verse, “he knew not whence it came,” that is, did not know until the Candidate had been fully tested.

9. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom.

The servants, or lower “principles,” and the lower powers that had been subjected to the purified will of the Christ-man, knew that the great change was accomplished and that the lower “principles” were purified and spiritualized.

⁴ Cf. *The Voice of the Silence*, note 17 to Part III.



The “bridegroom” is, of course, the Candidate, who is to be married to his Higher or Divine Self, and so become a Son of God.

It is curious and interesting to remark in the ancient cosmogonies, especially in the Egyptian and the Indian, how [502] perplexing and intricate are the relationships of the Gods and Goddesses. The same Goddess is mother, sister, daughter and wife to a God. This most puzzling allegory is no freak of the imagination, but an effort to explain in allegorical language the relation of the “principles,” or, rather, the various aspects of the one “principle.” Thus we may say that Buddhi (the vehicle of Ātma) is its wife, and the mother, daughter, and sister of the Higher Manas, or rather Manas in its connection with Buddhi, which is for convenience called the Higher Manas. Without Buddhi, Manas would be no better than animal instinct, therefore she is its mother; and she is its daughter, child or progeny, because without the conception which is only possible through Manas, Buddhi, the Spiritual Power, or Śakti, would be inconceivable and unknowable.

10. And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

“At the beginning” means when the Mānasa-putra first incarnated.

Every candidate as he progresses needs less and less good Wine, or Spirit, for he becomes that Spirit himself as his powers and knowledge increase the new-won strength. At the entrance of the Path “good wine,” or the spiritual impetus, is given, but as the disciple mounts the ladder such help is no longer needed, for he tends ever more and more to become All-Spirit.

11-13. Narrative.

14. And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting.

This represents the attitude of the Initiate to exoteric religion and his work after he has attained the victory. The “temple” here signifies all externals, exoteric creeds, or bodies of flesh.

“Oxen” typify material things, the physical man. In all symbology, the bull has the significance of bodily strength and generative power. “Sheep” typify the passions and desires which are subdued and tamed, and “Doves” spiritual [503] aspirations. The “money changers” are those who traffic in spiritual things, the money-seeking priesthood.

15. And when he had made a scourge of small cords [symbolizing that which binds the passions], he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers’ money, and overthrew the tables.

The “scourge,” which appears so often on the Egyptian monuments and cartouches, signifies the means whereby the passions and lower nature are tamed. The noose of Śiva has the same signification, symbolizing that whereby the passions, desires and fears are bound together, tamed and subdued.

16. And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father’s house an house of merchandize.



Those “that sold doves” are the traffickers in spiritual knowledge. “My Father’s house” is the human body which is the temple of God, that which should be naturally the temple of the Holy Ghost.

17. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

The domination of the lower man had devoured the higher.

18. Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

By what authority do you endeavour to reform the popular religion, what right have you?

19. Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

That is to say, that he had passed through Initiation, and had died to his old life, and risen again from the “dead” in a “new birth.”

20. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

Wilt thou with the three Fires do more, then, than with the forty-six? — There are in all forty-nine Fires, 7×7 .

H.P.B.



Peasant Wedding (1568) Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Kunsthistorisches Museum



Marriage and Divorce

Religious, Practical, and Political Aspects of the Question

First published in: *Lucifer*, Vol. III, No. 18, February 1889, pp. 513-17.
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Mr. Ap Richard⁵ has furnished with a powerful weapon those numerous Solomons of society who, under the mask of religion, have brought forward in every age the authority of the Bible to justify their shameful actions. They have appealed to it in support of slavery, and they now appeal to it in support of concubinage and licentiousness. The author deals with the question of marriage from every point of view — chiefly from that of animalism. He starts with the principle that “Liberty of Conscience” (for the *male* alone, note well) should be allowed. This implies in practice liberty of free commerce, the prostitution of woman as a *thing*, and reduces a tie which is regarded by many as holy and indissoluble to a mere product of free Love and trade, which is far from being always *fair Trade*.

The work may be a scholarly one from a literary point, but it starts from a principle still lower in the code of morality than that practiced by Mormons. It answers, perhaps, the aspirations of the average Mussulman. We doubt whether those of the average Christian (unless one of the *Upper Ten*⁶) will be as easily satisfied.

Our ideas of relationship are founded upon our social system, and as other races have very different habits and ideas on that subject, it is natural to expect that their systems of relationship would also differ from ours. The ideas and customs with regard to marriage are very dissimilar in different races and we may say, as a general rule, [35] that as we descend in the scale of civilization, the family diminishes and the tribe increases in importance.

Mr. Ap Richard seems to have made a careful classification of his subject, although it is artificial in every respect. He starts with the assumption that the Bible *must* be right, and argues thence to the infallibility of the Church. In so doing he exactly reverses the view taken by St. Augustine. “*Ego vero Evangelio non crederem; nisi me catholicae Ecclesiae commoveret auctoritas.*”⁷ Both the Catholic saint and the Protestant author, however, reason within a vicious circle, each from the respective point of his preconception. It may be pointed out, however, that there was a difference between temporary and permanent laws in the Old Testament.

“The blessing of God was given to the marriage of Adam and Eve.” Indeed? The author is discreetly silent, however, about the approval of the Almighty. It is previously

⁵ [Cf. Ap Richard (*pseud.*). *Marriage and divorce: including religious, practical and political aspects of the question*. London: Trübner, 1888. — ED. PHIL.]

⁶ [“Upper Ten Thousand was a term used in the late 19th century to denote Britain’s ruling elite; those rich and landed persons and families, titled and untitled, who were thought to control the vast majority of the country’s political and financial system. This term included not only landed gentry, aristocracy, and the peerage; it also included the industrialists and financiers of the day. The invention of this term was a response to the broadening of the British elite caused by the Industrial Revolution.” — Wikipedia]

⁷ [This passage is from St. Augustine’s essay entitled: *Contra Epistolam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* (Against the Epistle of Manichaeus called Fundamental), and may be found in Chapter V thereof. The original text may be consulted in Migne, *Patr. Latina*, Vol. 42; in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*. First Series, Vol. IV, the passage is translated as: “For my part, I should not believe the gospel except as moved by the authority of the Catholic Church.” — Boris de Zirkoff.]



given to the sun, the moon and the creeping things which “were very good,” but no similar expression of approval is used about Eve. Abraham’s *liaison* with Hagar (the still worse one of Lot with his daughters is not mentioned) was “not condemned by the writer of the Book of the Beginnings.” Polygamy (and, it seems, incest also) “was recognized and allowed by the Mosaic law, but was not allowed on the woman’s side,” goes on our *authority*. We say if one *was*, the other was also, and shall prove it.

David, we are told by the author, was rebuked for his *adultery*, not for his *polygamy*(!). Solomon’s wives and concubines were allowed to him as “a thing advantageous.” The symbolism which makes all these mystic brides indicative of the forces of nature is again ignored by the very matter-of-fact author, who is a literalist *pur sang*. We then [36] are offered the N. Testament record. Christ did not forbid polygamy, nor did His Apostles. It was only in a bishop that it was disapproved. There is in fact no general prohibition of it in Scripture, and Mr. Ap Richard considers it an open question, as open as the questions of parachute descent or Stock Exchange speculation. *Utrum horum mavis accipe.*⁸

We see here what comes of *Biblical* religion, which rests on no foundation of morality and is so dangerous in its dead letter. The author then takes the question of divorce, and discusses, in detail, *Exodus* xxi, 2, *Exodus* xxi, 7, *Deuteronomy* xxi, 10, *Deuteronomy* xxiv, I, and proceeds to teach that —

There is sufficient to show that concubinage under certain conditions was permitted. Divorce as a matter of expediency was allowed. The author gives no weight nor value to the declaration of Christ, that the Mosaic law was abrogated, and that marriage with a divorced person was distinctly forbidden. In all Mr. Ap Richard’s arguments, he takes the Protestant view and regards the Church of England as an *εντελέχεια*.⁹ The Greek and Roman churches are entirely ignored, and left to be hatched, matched, or dispatched, at his own sweet will and pleasure.

Then the author considers the question of separation, though he never indicates the true distinctions between the divorce *a vinculo matrimonii*¹⁰ and the divorce *a mensa et thoro*.¹¹ Still, giving due weight to his aspirations on the importance of observing Church Discipline in the Church of England, he shows how semi-detached couples may be brought into existence upon the biological plan of “fission.” In this work there is much which brings us face to face with questions of theology, or of right and wrong, supposed to act as the prime motors in what some call a sacrament and most others a deliberate contract. To the author, however, marriage is neither.

But let us now examine the question from two other aspects. Let us look at it from the standpoint of the woman [37] and her sacred rights involved in it; and from that of truth and a dispassionate analysis.

⁸ [Take whichever you prefer; choose out of two evils. — Boris de Zirkoff.]

⁹ [*I.e.*, full, complete reality (Liddell & Scott); frequently confused with *ενδελέχεια*, *i.e.*, continuity, persistency. “πέτρην κοιλαίνει ρανίς ύδατος ενδελεχειη” Choerilus Epicus Samus, 10 — ED. PHIL.]

¹⁰ [From the bond of marriage, *i.e.*, legal dissolution of a marriage. — ED. PHIL.]

¹¹ [From bed and board, *i.e.*, legal separation rather than dissolution. — ED. PHIL.]



The bloodthirsty ancient Israelites, the sensual Jews, as in the Old Testament, followed the instinct of all savages and regarded the female as a *thing* to be captured and used, and of which a conqueror would scarcely have too much. The iniquities of their bloody wars were perpetrated under the direct command of “the Lord thy God” (see *Hosea* xiii, 16), also carried out by Christian conquerors. The woman might be the property of all the males in the tribe. The Book of Ruth, if it is taken as most Jews take it, in its literal meaning, decidedly inculcates the principle of polyandry. Of course, occultists are acquainted with its real significance; meanwhile, female believers in the dead-letter text would be fully justified in clamouring for their rights of practicing polyandry on the same *authority*.

The Jews appear, according to their own showing, at one time of their history, to have been both polygamous and polyandrous, neither social practice being forbidden by their Torah, or Law.

As this law was acceptable to the individuals, it was readily accepted as the voice of “God.” As slavery brought money into the pockets of slaveholders, in America, the whole clergy supported the iniquitous claims of the Southerners by Biblical texts. While the Jews were polygamising and polyandrising, and Baal and Astoreth elevated their fanes beside that of the Ineffable יהוה, the prophets of Israel (not Judah) preserved the Secret and Sacred Doctrine amid many vicissitudes. They were the real custodians of Truth, into which they were initiated. The Jews around them knew nothing of their doctrine, as their religious duties chiefly consisted in selling doves, changing money, and slaughtering oxen in the Temple. But the real high places of Samaria told of the worship of the God of Truth. The hut circle on the mountain side, with its divine ☉, told worshippers what to worship, and where Deity should be worshipped. Protest after protest was made by these Tannaïm, the Initiated, against the brutalising influence of the Jews; but the intruders had learnt that the Promised Land abounded in milk and honey, and that if [38] they went east they would be beaten by the Arabs. The day of Karma came, and the Jews were successively beaten by Babylonians, by Romans, and centuries later by Christians. The knowledge of the ☉ became forgotten. The Jews learned social decency for the first time, when they copied the outward bearing of Roman courtezans, who at least taught them a higher morality than they knew of in their own land. In the time of Cicero (*Oratio pro Flacco*), we see that the Jews had a different code of morals in sexual matters, and a far lower one than even the not over-pious Romans, the latter being always chary to admit such sensualists into their midst.¹² Polygamy might be tolerated by the Roman soldier, but polyandry was too strong for the Roman matron. The nation had not yet been so debased through contact with the Jews and their immoralities, the profligacy of the higher classes of the Empire notwithstanding. But early Christian asceticism placed the position of woman, and especially of married women, on a different basis. To whatever source we may refer the principles inculcated in the New Testament, they are embodied in a system of teaching which still exists, little as it may be fol-

¹² [No definite passage relating to this subject could be located in the text of Cicero’s *Oration*, although he expresses strong prejudice against both Jews and Greeks, especially with regard to their unreliability as witnesses in court (*pro Flacco*, IV, 9). In another place (XXVIII, 69), Cicero speaks of the Jewish religion and says that “the practice of their rites was at variance with the glory of our empire, the dignity of our name, the customs of our ancestors”, and also makes a passing remark to the “odium that is attached to Jewish gold” (XXVIII, 66). — Boris de Zirkoff.]



lowed, to the present day. Law, at least, enforces monogamy. The Jewish custom has been abrogated, and outwardly, at all events, man has improved in the potentialities of decent living, as compared to the life led by the Patriarchs and Kings.

It is the argument of Mr. Ap Richard that Christ did not intend positively and immediately to abrogate the Mosaic law on this subject.

Taking the Bible as the source of morality and the guide of truth, he asks his readers to disprove the assertion that [39] polygamy is not condemned by any authority, and text of "Holy Scripture." It is his argument that Christ himself did not condemn the liberty of polygamy. He admits that various questions concerning marriage, and particularly with regard to the principles of the Gospel in relation to it, were raised in the early days of the Christian Church. Some four or five years after the Apostle Paul had founded the Church in Corinth, and had made a lengthy stay there of a year and a half, the brethren wrote a letter to him requesting some further instructions and advice on several matters of doctrine and practice; and foremost amongst these, on some point touching the question of marriage. Paul, who knew that there were a large proportion of Jews who had not followed out the maxim *non cuius homini contingit adire Corinthum*,¹³ noted the one vice for which the Corinthians were notorious, that of prostitution. He dealt with the subject of mixed marriages in a manner which has since been formulated and developed by generations of theologians in spirit, if not altogether carried out in practice. Mr. Ap Richard discusses at great length the argument of St. Paul. But as he bases it on the ground of private interpretation, the opinion of Falstaff: "'Twere good for you that it should be known in counsel, you'll be laughed at," must hold good. The gravity with which the author piles text upon text, to found an argument in favour of his obnoxious doctrine, emulates the glory of the old Puritan preacher, who thundered against female high headdresses, and divided the words of a text to prove his case. "Let him that is upon the house-top *not* come down!" Wherefore I say unto you, "Top-knot, come down!" As we are unable to recognize his premises, we cannot discuss his argument, merely noting that probably any form of aberration of the human intellect, or peculiar practice, can by judicious manipulation be justified by a text of the Scriptures.

The author arguing from the instincts of man, considers marriage, not merely as honourable in all; but as a necessary consequence to human existence. But this proceeds on the argument that all processes of life must end in marriage. A novel that does not end with a wedding is voted dull [40] by the average British public. The idea of the old Hindu *Kumaras* and the Archangel Michael, who refused to generate children, has entirely disappeared from modern society. The ceaseless efforts of frail man not to fulfil his end, namely to liberate his Spiritual Ego from the thralldom of matter, but to adopt a particularly comfortable condition of life, will probably be continued so long as the present race continues to infest the surface of the earth. The occult female element, a pure ray from the Ineffable Name, is ignored by the moderns, who use marriage as a remedy for the softness of man's heart, and permit divorce for the hardness of that same heart. The higher grades of the condition of man, virginity and its consequent glory, are set aside for the objects of sensual pleasures and pecuniary

¹³ [Quoting Horace's *Epistles* I, 17, 36: It is not every man's lot to go to Corinth, *i.e.*, to a centre of decadence and debauchery. — ED. PHIL.]



advantages of marriage. The latter has become a regular traffic nowadays. The author is evidently too prosaic to contemplate glorified humanity, wherein earth should be like heaven, where there should be no marrying, or giving in marriage, and the population of the world should diminish, till the last survivor is merged in Ain-Soph. Rather should he look for marriage to be made pleasant and accessible to all, like a six-penny telegram. The restrictions which even the wildest missionary places in the way of polygamy may be cast aside. All persons are recommended to marry early *and often*, and all may be entitled to share (unless the Malthusians¹⁴ stop them) in the task of “Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.”

There is not evidently sufficient over-population yet in the sight of the author; not half enough starvation, and misery and resulting crime!

The old Jews did not care for their own individual sanctification. So long as they had a lot of children and their neighbours had something to be plundered by them, the highest aspirations of the Hebrew race were satisfied. We see this in the ceaseless and constant phallicism of the Jews, which culminates now in the hedonism and luxury which form the highest summum *bonum* amongst the Hebrew race, and its Christian imitators. Take up a novel by Auerbach or Beaconsfield. Gold lamps glitter everywhere; rich carpets lie under foot; sweet scents perfume the ambient [41] air; luxurious food tempts the jaded appetite; costly drink stimulates the feeble brain; beautiful females attract the eye; and everything is according to the heart of man. There is no moral shame in mere good living. But the philosophy of the old Egyptians, who produced the skeleton at their festival tables, ought to be oftener followed. The solemn lesson contained in the allegory of the Hand which wrote on the wall the words: *mene, mene, tekel, upharsin*¹⁵ is forgotten. The pleasures of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, tempt many, and the increase of any custom which makes man more subject to the influences of the traditional devil is strongly to be disproven by those who aim at a higher power, and a theosophical mode of existence. To those, who think that the present generation is worthy of being the recipients of thought, the words of St. Polycarp may be cited: *Illos vero indignos puto, quibus rationem reddam*,¹⁶ or as Goethe says:

*Das Beste, was du wissen kannst,
Darffst du den Buben doch nicht sagen.*¹⁷

There is a hundred times more dangerous immorality contained in this one volume crammed with Biblical quotations than in all the library of Zola's works. A deadly, sickening, atmosphere of sensual bestiality emanates from this work; yet one does

¹⁴ [Believer in Malthusian theory. Cf. Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834). British economist who wrote *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (1798), arguing that population tends to increase faster than food supply, with inevitably disastrous results, unless the increase in population is checked by moral restraints or by war, famine, and disease. — ED. PHIL.]

¹⁵ [“It has been counted and counted, weighed and divided.” Prophecy inscribed by a mysterious hand on a wall during Belshazzar's feast, the very night his kingdom fell (13th October 539 BC) — ED. PHIL.]

¹⁶ [The source of this statement is not definitely known. St. Polycarp (ca. 69 – 155 A.D.), Bishop of Smyrna and one of the Apostolic Fathers, wrote in Greek, and the only extant writing of his is his *Epistle to the Philippians*. The Latin sentence may be a translation from some Greek writing now not any longer extant. Its English rendering is: “I consider those, however, unworthy of my rendering them an account,” or “not deserving of my taking the trouble to explain to them.” — Boris de Zirkoff.]

¹⁷ [“After all, the best of what you know may not be told to boys.” Goethe's *Faust* Pt. I, scene iv, 142; (Mephistopheles to Faust) — ED. PHIL.]



not hear that *Marriage and Divorce* has been censured by any archbishop or even a stray bishop, let alone a Judge.

Those who have ever appreciated even the idea of another existence; who have seen, perchance, through the exercise of an hitherto undeveloped faculty of man, not merely the exterior world, but themselves, are not likely to [42] accept arguments in favour of polygamy, even though they may be supported by texts from the Old or even the New Testament. The thoughts of men are various and manifold; and we can only regret the appearance of such a volume. To bring forward arguments to show that it is by polygamy, and turning oneself into a beast, by the mere exercise of the human (or animal) faculties and passions, that the highest aim of man can be attained, is the culmination of this century's immorality, and of the influence of the *dead-letter* Bible.

The Hebrew race is avenged. It was robbed by the fanatics of the early Christian centuries of its heirloom, the Mosaic Books, and as thanks, was hooted, persecuted and murdered in the name of One supposed to have been foretold by the old prophets. And now, like the golden fruit in the fairy tale, the Bible, while the healthy juice contained in it evaporates unsensed and unperceived by the greedy eater, is made to gradually distil the lethal venom of its dead letter, and to poison the last clear waters which, however dormant, were still preserved to the present day in the hearts of Christendom. All that Protestant Christianity seems to have assimilated from the "Holy Bible" is the sleek, subtle and subservient advocacy of selfish and bestial passions, such as polygamy, and the *legal* spoliation by wars — as commanded by the Hebrew "Lord of Hosts"!

Celibacy

The Future Occultist

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Responding to "a correspondent of the *Indian Mirror*, an influential daily paper at Calcutta, writing under the heading of 'Proper Education for our Ladies.'" Full text *ibid.*, pp. 257-60.

The above letter raises certain important questions. Some enquire how the world is to go on if all were to become occultists, one of the vital conditions of that order being celibacy. Others say that the ancient Rishis married, quoting some of the names mentioned in the Hindu religious books; and argue therefrom that celibacy is not an essential condition for progress in *practical* occultism. Generally, they put a literal interpretation upon what is beautifully conveyed by means of an allegory and insist upon the dead-letter sense being correct, whenever such a course is profitable in their narrow interests. They find it difficult to control the lower animal desires; and, in order to justify their conduct of persistence in hankering after sensual pleasures, they resort to these books as their authority, interpreting them in a manner most convenient to themselves. Of course, when any passages, even in their exoteric sense, conflict with the dictates of their "lower self," then others are quoted, which *esoterically* convey the same sense, although *exoterically* supporting their peculiar views. The question of the marriage of the *Rishis* is one of such disputed points. The



readers of *The Theosophist* may recall here, with advantage, a passage occurring in the article under the heading of “Magicon,” where one of the occultists is said to have rejected the hand of a beautiful young lady, on the ground of his having taken the vow of celibacy, although he himself confesses further on to be courting a virgin whose name was “Sophia.” Now, it is explained there that “Sophia” is wisdom or the *Buddhi* — the spiritual soul (our sixth principle). This principle is everywhere represented as a “female,” because it is passive inasmuch as it is merely the vehicle of the seventh principle. This latter — which is called *Atma* when spoken of in connection with an individual and *Purush* when applied in its relation to the Universe — is the active male, for it is the CENTRE OF ENERGY acting through and upon its female vehicle, the sixth principle.

The occultist, when he has identified himself thoroughly with his *Atma*, acts upon the *Buddhi*, for, according to the [262] laws of Cosmic Evolution, the *Purusha* — the universal seventh principle—is perpetually acting upon and manifesting itself through *Prakriti* — the universal sixth principle. Thus the MAHATMA, who has become one with his seventh principle — which is identical with *Purusha*, since there is no isolation in the spiritual monad — is practically a creator, for he has identified himself with the evolving and the manifesting energy of nature. It was in this sense that the Rishis are said to have married. And the union of *Śiva* and *Śakti* represents the same allegory. *Śiva* is the *Logos*, the *Vach*, manifested through the *Śakti*; and the union of the two produces the phenomenal creation, for until the Son is born, the Father and the Mother are non-existent. Now *Śakti* being a female principle, it is *fully* manifested through a woman, although, properly speaking, the *inner* man is neither male, nor female. It is only the preponderance of either of the two principles (positive and negative) which determines the sex. Now, this preponderance is determined by the Law of Affinity; and hence in a woman is manifested abnormally the occult power represented by *Śakti*. She is moreover gifted with a wonderfully vivid imagination — stronger than man’s. And as the phenomenal is the realization or rather the manifestation of the IDEAL, which can be properly and strongly conceived only by a *powerful* IMAGINATION — A WOMAN-ADEPT can produce high occultists — a race of “Buddhas and Christs,” born “without sin.” The more and the sooner the animal sexual affinities are given up, the stronger and the sooner will be the manifestation of the higher occult powers which alone can produce the “immaculate conception.” And this art is practically taught to the occultists at a very high stage of initiation. The “Adept,” whether the *Sthula Sarira* be male or female, is then able to bring a new being into existence by the manipulation of cosmic forces. *Anasūyā*, a female adept of the ancient times, is thus said to have conceived immaculately *Durvasas*, *Dattatreya* and *Chandra* — the three distinct types of Adeptship. Thus it will be seen that the marriage of the occultist (who is, as already explained, neither male nor female) is a “holy union,” [263] devoid of sin, in the same manner as Krishna’s union with thousands of *Gopīs*. Sensual-minded men have taken this fact up too literally; and, out of a wrong interpretation of the text, has arisen a sect which indulges in the most degrading practices. But, in fact, *Krishna* represents the seventh principle, while the *Gopīs* indicate the innumerable powers of that principle manifested through its “vehicle.” Its union “without sin,” or rather the action or manifestation of each of these powers through the “female principle” gives rise to the phenomenal appearances. In such a



union the occultist is happy and “without sin” for the “conception” of his other-half — the female principle — is “immaculate.” The very fact, that this stage pertains to one of the very highest initiations, shows that the time — when ordinary humanity, during the course of cosmic evolution, will, in this manner, be able to produce a race of “Buddhas,” etc., born “without sin” — is yet very, very far off — perhaps attainable in the sixth or the seventh “round.” But when once this possibility and the actuality of this fact is recognized, the course of living and education may be so moulded as to hasten the approach of that eventful day when on this earth will descend “the Kingdom of Heaven.”



PS. The *Phaedrus* of Plato displays all that man once was, and that which he may yet become again.

“Before man’s spirit sank into sensuality and was embodied with it through the loss of his wings, he lived among the gods in the airy [spiritual] world where everything is true and pure.”

In the *Timaeus* he says that

“there was a time when mankind did not perpetuate itself, but lived as pure spirits.”

In the future world, says Jesus,

“[For in the resurrection] they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but [live] as the angels of God in heaven.”¹⁸

¹⁸ [Cf. *Isis Unveiled*, II p. 345; & quoting *Matthew* xxii, 30, KJV — ED. PHIL.]

