

# THE MYSTERY OF THE ESSENES

H. Spencer Lewis, F.R.C.  
From *The Mystical Life of Jesus*

**H** Spencer Lewis, first Emperor of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, wrote this remarkable description of the Essenes in 1929 as part of his book, *The Mystical Life of Jesus*, some eighteen years before the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Lewis's work was one of the foundational inspirations for the modern Essene movement.<sup>1</sup>

Before one can properly understand and appreciate the history and real story of the birth and life work of the Master Jesus, one must have an understanding of the ancient organizations and schools that contributed to the preparation for his coming.

Within the last 100 years, a great many notations in sacred literature have been discovered relating to the Essenian community and the activities of this organization in Palestine just prior to and during the lifetime of the Master Jesus. Many of these notations have verified the references to the Essenes by such eminent historians as Philo and Josephus, and have explained many of the mysterious references found in the sacred writings of the Hebrews as translated in the Judeo-Christian Bible.

The possible relationship of the Essenes to the early Christian activities has not only aroused the interest of hundreds of eminent theologians and biblical authorities, but it has caused one question to be asked by thousands of students of mystical literature: "Why has the history or story of the Essenes been withheld from general knowledge?"

The answer is: Those who knew the story desired to keep

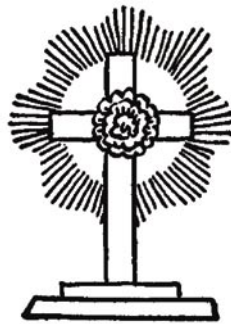
the Essenian community shrouded in mystery to protect its work and teachings from being publicly discussed.... The Rosicrucian records have always had extensive details of the activities of the Essenian organization, and no initiate of the Rosicrucian Order, or no profound student of the ancient mysteries who became worthy of contact with the ancient records, was ever left in ignorance regarding the Essenes.

Today the veil can be drawn aside and some of the facts regarding the Essenes be revealed to the world because of the advancement that has been made in the study of occult literature and the broad-minded view that is taken by the average educated student of spiritual and mystical subjects. For this reason I feel justified in giving the following facts in regard to the Essenes.

## A Manifestation of the Work of the Primordial Tradition

In the first place, it probably will be sufficient in this brief outline of their organization to say that the Essenes were a branch of the illuminated Great White Lodge,<sup>2</sup> which had its birth in the country of Egypt during the years preceding Akhnaton, Egyptian pharaoh and founder of the first monotheistic religion, who supported and encouraged the existence of a secret organization to teach the mystic truths of life.

The several mystic schools of Egypt, which were united under one head constituting the G.W.B., assumed different names in different parts of the world, in accordance with the language of



The Rose Cross became the official symbol of the Rosicrucians, but was used by the various branches of the Essenes and the G.W.B. before its official adoption as a universal emblem. The emblem of the early Templars was a red rose on a cross, adopted by them because of its use by the Essenes.

each country and the peculiarities of the general religious or spiritual thought of the people. We find that at Alexandria, the members of the organization there assumed the name of *Essenes*. Scientists have speculated considerably in regard to the origin of this word and its real meaning. So many unsatisfactory speculations upon its root have been offered in the past that there is still considerable doubt, in the minds of most authorities, regarding it.

### Origins of the Word “Essene”

The word truly comes from the Egyptian word *kashai*, which means “secret.” And there is a Jewish word of similar sound, *chsabi*, meaning “secret” or “silent”; and this word would naturally be translated into *essaios* or “Essene,” denoting “secret” or “mystic.” Even Josephus found that the Egyptian symbols of light and truth are represented by the word *choshen*, which transliterates into the Greek as *essen*. Historical references have been found also wherein the priests of the ancient temples of Ephesus bore the name of *Essene*. A branch of the organization established by the Greeks translated the word *Essene* as being derived from the Syrian word *asaya*, meaning “physician,” into the Greek word *therapeutes*, having the same meaning.

The Rosicrucian records clearly state that the original word was meant to imply a secret organization, and while most of the members became physicians and healers, the organization was devoted to many other humanitarian practices besides the art of healing, and not all of its members were physicians in any sense.

The spread of the organization into the many lands near Egypt was slow and natural, in accordance with the awakening consciousness of the people; and we find that the Essenes became a very definite branch of the G.W.B. representing the outer activities of that organization, which was primarily a school of learning and instruction. Thus, for several centuries before the dawn of the Christian era, the Essenes, as an active band

of workers, maintained two principal centers. One was in Egypt on the banks of Lake Moeris, where the great Master Moria-El the Illustrious was born in his first known incarnation, educated, prepared for his great mission, and established the principle and law of *baptism* as a spiritual step in the process of initiation. The other principal Essenic center was first established in Palestine, at Engaddi, near the Dead Sea.

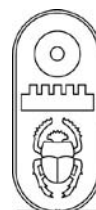
Going through the Rosicrucian records pertaining to the Essenes, I find thousands of notations regarding these two branches, and from them I have selected the following statements as being the most interesting and most definite in their connection with the mystical life of Jesus.



Lake Moeris in the Fayum Region of Egypt. (Photograph from the archives of the Rosicrucian Order, AMORC)

The branch in Palestine had to contend with the despotism of the rulers of that country and the jealousy of the priesthood. These conditions forced the Essenes in Palestine to hold themselves in greater silence and solitude than they had been accustomed to in Egypt. Before they moved from their small buildings and sacred enclosure at Engaddi, to the ancient buildings on Mount Carmel, their principal activity seemed to be the translation of ancient manuscripts and the preservation of such traditions and records as constituted the foundation of their teachings.

It is recorded that when the time came for them to move from Engaddi to Mount Carmel, their greatest problem was the secret movement of these manuscripts and records.



Fortunately for us, they succeeded in preserving the rarest of the manuscripts that came out of Egypt, and in other ways preserved the ancient, traditional stories and teachings. It is from these that we derive most of our knowledge regarding both the Essenes and the G.W.B. A picture of how they lived, and what they believed and taught, undoubtedly constitutes a story of intense interest to all modern students of mysticism and sacred literature.

### **How They Lived and What They Believed**

Every member of the Essenes in Egypt or Palestine, or of the *Therapeutae*, as they were called in other lands . . . were students of the Avestan writings and adhered to the principles taught therein, which laid great stress upon a healthy body and a powerful mind. Before anyone could become an adept in the organization, he or she had to be prepared in childhood under certain teachers and instructors, raised with a healthy body, and needed to exercise certain mental powers under test.

Every adult applicant who was allowed to partake of the daily meal in the communal building was assigned at the time of initiation to a definite mission in life, and this mission had to be adhered to regardless of all obstacles and all temptations, even to the sacrifice of one's life. Some chose to be physicians or healers, others artisans, teachers, missionaries, translators, scribes, and so forth. Whatever worldly things they possessed at the time of their initiation had to be donated to the common fund, from which all drew only as was needed. The simple life they led, free from any indulgence in the pleasures common to the public, made it unnecessary for them to draw upon these funds except in rare instances.

Immediately upon initiation, each member adopted a robe of white composed of one piece of material, and wore sandals only in such weather or at such times as was absolutely necessary. Their attire was so distinct or unique that among the populace they were known as the *Brothers and Sisters in White Clothing*. The term *Essene* was not

popularly known, and only the learned knew of it. This accounts for the lack of references to the Essenes in most of the popular histories or writings of the time.

They lived in well-kept buildings, usually within a sacred or well-protected enclosure, in community fashion. All of their affairs were regulated by a committee or council of judges or councilors, 100 in number, who met once a week to regulate the activities of the organization and to hear the reports of the workers in the field. All disagreements, all complaints, all tests and trials were heard by this council, and one of the regulations indicates that they were always cautious in expressing opinions of one another or of those outside of the organization, and they were not critical of the lives or affairs of the people they were trying to reform or assist. They also adhered strictly to one of their laws: "Judge not—lest ye be judged also."

### **The Ancient Essene Articles of Faith**

It is possible to set forth here their definite articles of faith as recorded in ancient, secret writings. While these articles of faith appear in slightly different words in the various branches of the Essenian organization, they are undoubtedly based upon the articles of faith adopted by the G.W.B. at the time of the establishment of the Essenian organization.

1. God is principle; God's attributes manifest only through matter to the outer being. God is not a person, nor does God appear to the outer person in any form of cloud or glory. (Note the similarity of this article to the statement of John 4:24: "God is spirit, and those who worship [God] must worship in spirit and in truth.")

2. The power and glory of God's dominion neither increases nor diminishes by human belief or disbelief; and God does not set aside God's laws to please human beings.

3. The human ego is of God, and at one with God, and is consequently immortal and everlasting.

4. The forms of man and woman are manifestations of the truth of God, but God is not manifest in the form of man or woman as a being.

5. The human body is the temple in which the soul resides, and from the windows of which we view God's creations and evolutions.

6. At the transition or separation of the soul and body, the soul enters that secret state where none of the conditions of the earth have any charms, but the soft breezes and great power of the Holy Ghost bring comfort and solace to the weary or the anxious who are awaiting future action. Those who fail, however, to exercise the blessings and gifts of God, and who follow the dictates of the tempter and of the false prophets and the ensnaring doctrines of the wicked, remain in the bosom of the earth until they are freed from the binding powers of materialism, purified, and assigned to the secret kingdom. (This explains the ancient, mystical term of *earthbound*, referring to those who are still enslaved to material temptations for a time after transition.)

7. To keep holy the one sacred day of the week that the soul may commune in spirit and ascend to contact with God, resting from all labors, and discriminating in all actions.

8. To keep silent in disputes, to close the eyes before evil, and to stop the ears before blasphemers. (This is the original of the ancient law, "to speak no evil, to see no evil, and to hear no evil.")

9. To preserve the sacred doctrines from the profane, never speak of them to those who are not ready or qualified to understand, and be prepared always to reveal to the world that knowledge which will enable humans to rise to greater heights.



Long a symbol of healing, with symbolic linkages to the Greek Caduceus, the Serpent on the Tau Cross recalls Moses's healing of the people in Numbers 21:9, inspiring the Serpent image in the Temple of Jerusalem (2 Kings 18:4), and the later analogy with the Master Jesus in John 3:14. It would have been natural for the Essenes to have felt these resonances.

10. To remain steadfast in all friendships and all communal relations, even unto death; in all positions of trust never to abuse the power or privilege granted; and in all human relationships to be kind and forgiving, even to the enemies of the faith.

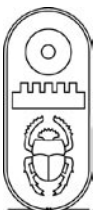
### Many Forms of Service

Every department of the organization was supervised by stewards, who were in charge of the material things turned into the general fund by every member. This general fund was called the *poor fund* and was used to relieve the sufferings of the poor in every

land. This point reminds us of the statement in Matthew 19:21: "Sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor . . . then come, follow me."

Hospices were established by the Essenes in various communities for the care of the sick and the poor, especially during epidemics of famine or disease. These places were called *Bethsaida*. We find in this feature of their work the origin of the hospices and hospitals that became well known some centuries later. A special staff of workers who were connected with these places came to be called Hospitalers. Herein we find the origin of another branch of the community that later became a more or less separate organization. The Essenes also established rescue homes in various communities and at the entrance to most cities had a place called a *gate*, where strangers or those in need of something to eat or guidance would be cared for temporarily. Recent discoveries in Jerusalem have revealed the existence of a gate known as the Essene Gate.

The Essenes disliked life in cities, and established themselves in communities of small villages outside of the walls or limits of practically every city where they existed. In



such communities members had their own little houses and gardens, and those who did not marry lived in a community house. Marriage was not forbidden among the Essenes, as is commonly believed, but their ideals regarding marriage were very high, and only those who were well mated and whose mating was approved by the higher officials were permitted to marry.

Women were permitted to become associate members of the organization, and in only a few cases were they allowed to enter even the early grades of study of the work. This was not because there was any belief among the Essenes that women were inferior to men in either spiritual or mental capacity, but because the Essenian branch of the G.W.B. was strictly an organization of men, to carry on the work throughout each community. But sisters, mothers, and daughters of the men in each Essenian community were permitted to be a part of the community and become associate members. Those of the women who were not married, and who did not care to marry, often adopted orphan children as their own, and in this way carried on a form of humanitarian work for the organization.

In considering their more private affairs, we find that there were no servants, for servitude was considered unlawful, and each household had to be cared for by the members of the household. Some of the rules and regulations recorded in the Rosicrucian records would indicate that their ideas regarding servants and servitude were quite fanatical according to our modern point of view. We must remember that in the days when these rules were adopted, most servants in every wealthy household, or the servants of a king or potentate of any kind, were like slaves, and, of course, among the Essenes every man and woman was a free being, and slavery or serfdom of any kind was absolutely prohibited. In each community everyone took part in any work that pertained to the entire community, and all had a certain

amount of menial work to do. The new initiates had to work in the fields and at certain times serve at the community tables or in the kitchen and at the tables of the rescue houses.

### **Their Word Was Their Promise**

As with many other branches of the G.W.B., the Essenes never entered into contracts or agreements that required oaths or any form of writing. It became well known about them that their word was equal to any agreement or contract in writing. They had a definite set of rules and regulations for their lives, which were well known by all those with whom they had any dealing, and the highest potentates of the land knew that the Essenes could not be bound by any oaths, but were highly responsible when they gave their word in any promise.

Even Josephus, in writing about the Essenes of 146 BCE, stated that the Essenes were exempted from the necessity of taking the oath of allegiance to Herod. Most certainly they would make no promise in the name of God, nor swear to anything in the name of God, for to them ... the name of God was to be mentioned only in a sacred manner in their temples, and at all other times the name of God was unpronounceable. In disagreements with strangers, the Essenes would pay any price demanded of them or make sacrifices as requested rather than to enter into arguments or have any strained relationships. It was for this reason that the Essenes were thought well of by the Pharisees and other sects in Palestine, although these other sects severely criticized the religious practices of the Essenes.

Speaking of oaths, however, I am permitted to give herewith the official oath which was taken by male initiates and which was the only oath they ever admitted. It was given upon their own honor, at the time of entering the final degree of initiation, or what we would call the fourth degree of their advancement into the organization. The oath is as follows:

I promise herewith, in the presence of my elders, and the Brothers of the Order, ever to exercise true humbleness before God and manifest justice toward all; to do no harm, either of my own volition or at the command of others, to any living creature; always to abhor wickedness, and assist in righteousness and justice; to show fidelity to all, particularly to those who may be my superiors in counsel; and when placed in authority, I shall never abuse the privileges or power temporarily given unto me, nor attempt to belittle others by a worldly display of my mental or physical prowess; truth shall ever have my adoration and I shall shun those who find pleasure in falsehood; I will keep my hands clean from theft, and keep my soul free from the contamination of worldly gain; my passions I will restrain, and never indulge in anger nor any outward display of unkind emotions; I shall never reveal the secret doctrines of our brotherhood, even at the hazard of life, except to those who are worthy of them; I shall never communicate the doctrines in any form, but the one form in which received; I shall not add to nor subtract from the teachings, but shall ever attempt to preserve them in their pristine purity, and will defend the integrity of the books and records of our order, the names of the masters, legislators, and my elders.

### **Essene Customs**

After the initiate had reached what we might call the fourth degree and had taken the foregoing obligation, he was admitted to the common table to partake of the one great symbolical meal of the day, at which time meditation and contemplation, as well as discussion of the problems of the work, formed part of the period.

It is interesting to note that all the food used by the Essenes was prepared according to the rules and regulations stated in the old documents, in a scientific but simple

manner, and while vegetables and especially many forms of raw foods were used, it is not true that all flesh foods were forbidden. There was never any form of over-eating or banqueting, and certainly the rules of moderation in all things pertained to eating and drinking as well; hence there was neither gluttony nor intoxication.

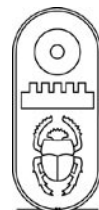
The Essenes seldom took part in public discussions and never participated in discussions of religion or politics. They were most often silent when others spoke, and silence seemed to be their motto. They were well trained in the use of the voice and in making incantations, and knew the value of vowel sounds to such a degree that by training they became very soft spoken, even in ordinary conversation. Because of this they were often known as the *soft-spoken* ones.

It is but natural that the Essenes would have developed not only magnetic personalities, accompanied by clean bodies, clean raiment, and clean habits, but they developed such beautiful auras that on many occasions these auras became visible to the profane....

It was customary for all Essenes to wash their hands and feet upon entering their own homes or the homes of anyone else, and to cleanse their hands and feet before any ceremony, and before each daily prayer. In their individual homes the Essenes spent much time before the altar in their sanctums, or in the study of the rare manuscripts and books that were circulated among them according to their degree of advancement. They were particularly well versed in astrology, elementary astronomy, natural history, geometry, elementary chemistry and alchemy, comparative religions, mysticism, and natural law.

### **Service in Health, Education, and Constructive Guidance**

Those who were the physicians in the organization were evidently a curiosity to the peoples of Palestine who were accustomed to the healing methods of that land, which



included the exercising of charms, incantations in high-pitched voices, the reciting of weird formulas, the striking of crude musical instruments, and the use of strong drugs. The Essenes spoke softly to their patients and used certain vowel sounds without any evidence of a formula. They often performed the greatest cures by the simple laying on of hands or by instructing the patient to retire to the silence of his home and sleep while the cure was conducted in a psychic manner.

All Essenes promised to educate their children in the teachings and principles that constituted the foundation of the Essenian belief. They raised each child within the scope of the organization until the child's twelfth year, when he or she was accepted on probation, which lasted until the twenty-first year, at which time the males were admitted to the first degree, and generally reached the fourth degree about the thirtieth year. The females were admitted on their twenty-first birthday to associate membership, and remained in that the rest of their lives if they proved worthy by the manner of their living.

Only an occasional Essene was permitted to preach to the public or perform public miracles, and then never as a matter of demonstration, but solely as a matter of service. Those in the organization who had lived the greatest number of incarnations, and were therefore the most highly evolved, were selected as their leaders, and, from among these, one was selected during each cycle to go out into the world and organize the work in a new land.

The Essenes looked forward to the coming of a great Savior who would be born within the fold of their organization and who would be a reincarnation of

the greatest of their past leaders. Through their highly evolved knowledge and intimate psychic contact with the Cosmic, they were well informed of coming events, and the Essenian literature and the literature of many countries contain references to the prophets among the Essenes. Manahem was one of their prophets who became famous through the prophecy that Herod would reign.

There seemed to be a regulation or an unwritten law among the Essenes that none of their members should be engaged in a daily task that was destructive, but always constructive. Therefore we find that the list of prominent Essenes included weavers, carpenters, vine planters, gardeners, merchants, and those contributing to the good and welfare of the public. There never were any in the organization who were armorers, slaughterers of cattle, nor engaged in any practice or business that destroyed the least living thing.

### **Conditions in Palestine Just Prior to the Birth of Jesus**

We have, first of all, a large number of men and women, even children, who were either Jewish by birth, Gentile by birth, or of various races and bloods.... They were prepared by some school or some system that made them ready to accept the higher mystical teachings as they were revealed from time to time by the progressive minds or by the teachings of avatars.

On the other hand, there was the one definite organization of mystics known as the Essenes, which conducted many forms of humanitarian activities, including hospices, rescue homes, and places for the care of the poor and needy. The Essenes had their northern center in



The serpent was used as a mystical symbol in the early sacred writings of various schools of religion. It was very often used as an emblem of the Word or Logos. The serpent was also the emblem of the Holy Spirit or the power that impregnated the life in the Virgin. In this sense it was the incarnation of the "Logos."

Galilee...because they had been directed to this locality by the center of their organization in Egypt, known as the G.W.B.

The Essenes were not popularly known, were quiet and unostentatious in their activities, and were distinguished by the populace only by their white raiment. The Nazarites, the Nazarenes, and the Essenes mingled freely and undoubtedly sought to carry on their independent activities without interference one with the other, although they unquestionably had many ideals and purposes in common....

In and around the shores of the Sea of Galilee lived these people...Nazarenes, Nazarites, and Essenes. They, too, were looking for the coming of the great Master, the great Avatar, the great Messiah, who would not only redeem Palestine but the whole world, and who would bring contentment to Israel and all peoples. These mystics contemplated, with true understanding, the reincarnation of one of their own great masters.

We must bear in mind that the belief in reincarnation was not only an established belief among these mystics, who were classified as heretics...but also among the most orthodox of the Jewish people at that time. This accounts for the many references in sacred literature, and even in the Judeo-Christian Bible, to a great leader, a great teacher, as having been *someone else at some other time*; for they believed that the greatest among them were great because of previous preparation, previous existence, and previous attainments. Naturally they looked for the new great master, the new redeemer of the world, to come out of the past in a new body and as a well-prepared individual of high attainments....

Not only did each of the homes of these Essenes and Nazarenes and Nazarites have a sanctum, in which daily prayers and solemn meditations were held, but many hours of each day and evening were given to mystical practices and the development of a

spiritual power within their beings. This made possible the many miracles they performed and the great work that they did among the poor and needy.

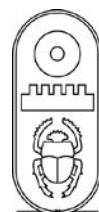
They were well advanced in the understanding of most of the mystical laws which the Rosicrucians and other mystics of the world today study and practice, and they knew the potentialities of certain spiritual laws when applied specifically for any definite purpose. To them, such miracles as incarnations of a highly divine nature, and the coming of a great leader into their midst, through *uncontaminated material laws*, were not impossible, nor improbable, and they lived a life typical of that which the mystics of today believe is lived by the masters in Tibet and in parts of India and Egypt.

Joseph was not only a devout Essene, and a carpenter by trade, in keeping with the rules of the organization, but Mary, his wife, was an associate member of the organization....

### Essenian Education of Jesus

In the first place, I have already shown that Jesus was born in the family of two devout Essenes and in a community of Essenes. This in itself was sufficient to guarantee the young child the very highest education obtainable in any land at that time. Not only were the preparatory schools conducted by the Essenes sufficient to give every child an excellent education at the hands of teachers and masters who had been trained in many lands and raised to the highest degree of ethical and literary attainments, but the associations and connections which the Essenes maintained with their other branches in foreign lands guaranteed a very liberal education to this special Son of God and this special charge of the Essenian community....

I have said that at the time of the birth of Jesus, the Essenes constituted a large community in Galilee, and that they had hospices and refuge houses in various parts of Palestine for the care of the poor and needy.





They also maintained the Supreme Temple in distant Egypt and minor temples in Palestine and other places. I must point out now one other fact that has been held in secrecy for many centuries, and that will probably explain many strange references in the sacred literature of the Christians and other sects.

The Nazarenes, the Nazarites, and the Essenes had united their interests in regard to one essential work—a work that is referred to by many authorities in religious and sacred histories and encyclopedias as being one of the common interests which bound the Nazarenes, the Nazarites, and the Essenes. This work was the maintenance of a great school, college, and monastery on Mount Carmel. The introduction of this historical place into the life of Jesus may seem surprising to a great many of my readers. For this reason a brief résumé of the history of Mount Carmel may be not only appropriate, but of value to those who wish to make further research in this regard.

### **Mount Carmel, the “Holy Headland”**

Just when Mount Carmel became the secret, sacred place for the maintenance of an isolated, protected school of mystics and of the G.W.B. is not definitely known. The earliest historical incidents of a religious nature connected with Mount Carmel are those associated with the lives of Elijah and his son. The ancient Jewish documents, as well as many of the writings preserved by the Roman Catholic Church, which in later years became greatly interested in the Mount of Carmel, show that from the earliest known period of the history of this mount, a tabernacle, monastery, or temple of some kind was located there, and that when Elijah went to this mountain to carry out the many marvelous things recorded of him, he found a temple and an altar there. We also know, from references in various records, that many of the great masters of the G.W.B. spent part of their lives on this mountain in the temple or monastery.

Even Pythagoras spent part of his life there, and in the history of his life this retreat of Mount Carmel is referred to as “sacred above all mountains and forbidden of access to the vulgar.” We find even in the Roman Catholic records, which have traced the history of Mount Carmel very carefully, references to the fact that “in ancient times the sacredness of Carmel seems to have been known to other nations besides Israel; thus in the list of places conquered by the Egyptian King, Thutmose III, there is a probable reference at Number 48 to the ‘Holy Headland’ of Carmel.”

Those who are students of Rosicrucian history know that Thutmose III was one of the great founders of the early mystery schools of Egypt and a leader in the movement that became the G.W.B. The Rosicrucian records also point out that Thutmose III conquered Carmel in the year 1449 BCE and released it to those who sought to maintain in this out-of-the-way place a school and monastery for the mystery teachings.

### **Elijah and Mount Carmel**

Now it is well known that Elijah was a Nazarite and an Essene, and that both the Jewish and Roman Catholic records refer to him as such. This one fact alone would be sufficient to indicate the nature of the demonstrations that Elijah performed on Mount Carmel and the nature of the monastery and temple maintained on the summit of the mountain.

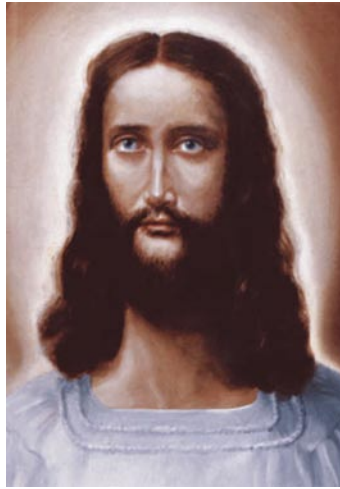
In many of the old stichometrical lists and writings and papers of the ancient ecclesiastical writers, mention appeared of an apocryphal Apocalypse of Elias, from which some citations are said to be found in I Corinthians 2:9, and elsewhere in the Bible. This old book or Apocalypse of Elias was known to the mystics of the G.W.B. and is known to all of the Eastern Rosicrucians as a very sacred record of the early history and teachings of the Essenes and the Nazarenes. In the early Christian centuries and during the lifetime of the Master Jesus, the

Apocalypse of Elias was well known and used in the sacred classes of the most advanced members of the organization. But like many other very valuable and illuminating records of early periods dealing with the more secret teachings, it was withdrawn from public use and became “lost.”

However, in 1893, Maspero, the famous historical writer, connected with the Rosicrucian Order of Egypt, found a Coptic translation of it in one of the Order’s monasteries in Upper Egypt. Since then several other translations in other languages have been discovered in the archives of the G.W.B., and parts of these have been used in the recently issued higher teachings of the Rosicrucians. From this Apocalypse of Elias and from the other Rosicrucian records, we learn much about the establishment of the monasteries and schools at Carmel, which were known as “the school of the prophets” or “the school of the Essenes.”

### The Great School at Carmel

As years passed by, the attendance at the school and monastery at Carmel became so



*The Master Jesus*, by H. Spencer Lewis

large that a community was established there, composed of those who were students. They adopted a distinct form of dress and remained within the monastery grounds throughout their entire lives except for the periods when they went forth to other lands as missionaries.

It was here that many of the most ancient manuscripts were translated and illuminated on parchment and sent to the various

archives of the G.W.B. throughout the world. A wonderful library was also maintained at Carmel for many centuries. Members of this community were present at Saint Peter’s first sermon on Pentecost, and they built a chapel in honor of this occasion. Many other historical structures existed there, such as El-Khadr, the school of the prophets; El-Muhraka, the traditional spot of Elias’s sacrifice; Elias’s Grotto; and the monastery itself...

According to the Rosicrucian records, we find that in the sixth year of his life, the youthful Jesus was placed in the school at Carmel and began his preparation and training as a Son of God and an avatar.

### Endnotes:

<sup>1</sup> J. Gordon Melton, *Encyclopedia of American Religions* (Wilmington, NC: McGrath Publishing Co., 1978).

<sup>2</sup> In Rosicrucian terminology the *Great White Brotherhood* consists of all the enlightened soul personalities who, independent of religions and traditions, are commissioned to work in one of the twelve paths of the ancient mystical tradition. It is that invisible body of mystics composed of the most exalted and advanced spiritual leaders in various lands throughout the world. The word

*White* in this phrase alludes to *Light*, the illumination of understanding, wisdom, and spirituality as expressed by enlightened soul personalities, and has nothing to do with race. Rosicrucians realize that these cosmic masters work in the service of humanity. The Rosicrucian Order, AMORC, is only one of the channels that has been used and is still being used by the G.W.B. for the development and progress of humanity’s own spiritual and esoteric unfoldment and for the improvement of civilization.

