

**VOLUME 26**

**THE BIBLE SERIES**

**A METAPHYSICAL  
AND SYMBOLICAL  
INTERPRETATION OF**

*The Bible*

**by**

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HOW TO FIND YOUR REAL SELF (textbook)

THIS I BELIEVE

LEARN TO LIVE

THE FAMILY OF ADAM and EVE

THE BIBLE – The Seven Days of Creation

BECOME WHAT YOU BELIEVE

WHAT IS PRAGMATIC MYSTICISM?

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## LUKE (Part Two)

The material in the next two chapters covers practically the entire range of the metaphysical field, ranging from the various healings to the understanding which the parables are designed to quicken. Since we have discussed the texts at some length in both Matthew and Mark, our comments on them will be brief. However, by now we should have a good understanding of what we have previously studied. Now we can see how it relates to what we believe. Let us first take a look at what these beliefs are.

We all believe in something. What we believe corresponds to not what we intellectually understand, but what we have subconsciously accepted, and there is a great difference. For instance, you and I are not scientists and may not know the scientific laws which enabled them to project an astronaut into space, but we can intellectually understand that it happened. The same is true in understanding the premise of metaphysics.

First of all, we have all been indoctrinated from childhood with specific religious—even atheistic—ideas and many of the ideas we individually hold are derived from the particular creed into which we were born. The Catholics have a limited religious concept of God and Heaven which is comprised of the son of God, the Virgin Mary, the saints and other theological ramifications. The Protestant sects each took what they wanted from this theology and adapted it to their own particular needs and, although they have expanded the ideas somewhat, theirs is still a limiting concept.

The Jewish religion began with a wider concept, but in time this, too, was narrowed down to a limiting conception of Deity. The strongest point of Judaism is its belief in One God; however this was carried to the point where it was impossible for them to conceive or admit to the existence of a triune aspect to that God, which is the foundation for the concept of the son of God, or the Indwelling Christ. Even though the Son is part of God the Father, and not a separate Being, Jewish thought would not allow this as part of their conception.

There was one extremely brilliant sect of Judaism with great

spiritual understanding, which we know today as the Hassidim, or the Cabalists. They conceived of One God having three modes of being. These three aspects, plus the seven points of man's involvement and evolvment were represented by a diagram called the Tree of Life, and the study of this is the real, the esoteric Cabala. The top triad of this diagram, representing Deity, is distinguished from the lower heptad representing man. These three symbolized Infinite Mind and consisted of the symbols representing the active principle, the feminine principle and the manifestation. These comprise the Trinity. The heptad beneath this signified that man was made in that image.

In Judaism the Infinite is referred to as the Unnameable because It is unknowable. When the Old Testament refers to the Infinite it speaks of El Shaddai, the Almighty, or the Seven Spirits before the Throne and, if you recall, there was very little mention of these terms. The Old Testament deals primarily with the Lord, Jahweh or Adonoi, or what we would call the Presence of God. Jehovah is a Hebrew word for the Presence within, and whether you say Jehovah or the Messiah in the Old Testament, or Christ in the New Testament, you are still speaking of the same aspect of Being.

Then we come to metaphysics, which does not deny the basic structure of any religion. The basic concept of metaphysics is that there is an Infinite Mind and that part of that Mind indwells every human being. As the human being begins to understand and contact that divinity within him, he becomes like that and he in turn becomes the manifestation. There is a simple illustration of this which I have used before that might clarify the point. Let us say that you were in the Hudson River. Let us say further that the Hudson River is a symbol for the Presence, and as it flows downstream there is a point where it touches the ocean, which represents the Infinite. You know, then, that you are in the Hudson River and you know that it flows right into the ocean, but you have access to it only from the point where you are, which is the river.

In other words, God, the Infinite Mind, is Infinite Consciousness and we only have the ability to understand this in proportion to our own consciousness, which is finite. The Infinite is completely impersonal. The Cabalists wisely realized that it was this impersonal aspect which brought into being part of Itself in humanity and so became personal. We do not have access to the Infinite Godhead. This is one of the reasons why the concept of

Jesus as God became prevalent in the church: they realized that it is impossible for man to contact the Godhead directly. If that were so, Infinite Mind, or God the Father would be finite.

The point which differentiates the human being as a species from the rest of life on this planet is that divinity is part of his life. He has access to this as he seeks it and makes himself open to it. This is the Presence of which Jesus is speaking when he says, "I of myself can do nothing, but the Father within doeth the works," and again makes the difference when he says, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me."

At this point of our evolution Jesus is the only person who has ever reached a full understanding of that Presence. Perhaps a personal experience which clarified this for me might explain it for you as well. As I was meditating one morning a picture suddenly appeared in my mind which was quite beautiful and a bit startling. There was a gigantic sky and a magnificent white pillar stretched from the ground to the sky. A pathway started from the ground and spiraled around this pillar. As I looked I saw thousands of people starting to walk on the pathway: some of them got to the first or second level, some started and then went back; a few reached the third level and still fewer reached the fourth. I seemed to hear the words: "This is the path. This is evolution." Then I decided to look up and I saw that the spiral became more and more narrow. My inclination was to continue and I thought, "My goodness, when I do that I'll soon be pressed into the pillar." Then I knew what it meant. The sky represented the Infinite God. The pillar represented the Presence, and our life, the spiral which winds around it. It means that the further you go, the more you become like That which is within you, I Am—in complete consciousness.

Now to put this on a more pragmatic level. Metaphysics does not violate any of the basic religious concepts, but it does strip them of their accumulated trappings of rituals, hierarchies and concepts such as sin. Metaphysics goes straight to the point. We believe that the only things we must overcome in order to be what we are in truth are our own stupidity, selfishness, fear and doubt. We believe that we have full responsibility for whatever happens in our lives and for ourselves.

This does certain things. In the beginning, this acknowledgement of responsibility may make us feel uncomfortable and alone. This is partly because we so rarely look at the good in our lives, and yet we are responsible for this as well. We tend to

dwell on the bad things which are our problems to the extent that we almost ignore the good, and we must overcome this, too. We must face the fact that there is no reality in the outer picture and realize that the only reality is in the inner world. But that inner world seems very weak at times because we are not trained to be sufficiently aware of it, and strengthening this is part of our work. We have to learn to overcome selfishness, of which we are all guilty to some extent, by realizing that selfishness is nothing more than a protection of our own interests. So we learn to be unselfish by learning that we do not have to protect ourselves from anything or anyone. We all know the other negative qualities which we must overcome – even though we get burned by them because we do not want to look at them. We nevertheless know what they are. When we begin in metaphysics these are simply intellectual concepts for us. As we become more and more engrossed in them, however, we find that we ourselves have inwardly changed. The ability to change naturally varies with the individual according to his degree of understanding.

To return to the part of the Bible which we are studying, I again want to point out that every time Jesus speaks of himself personally he refers to the son of Man, not the son of God. When in a few instances he uses the term "son of God," Jesus is making it very evident that he has gotten himself, the person of Jesus, out of the way and the Presence, the I Am, the Christ is expressing through him. As Jesus says, "I of myself can do nothing." We should try to realize what this means coming from a man who was so highly evolved through his own work and effort that he was almost interchangeable with the Presence within. It was almost impossible to see the difference between Jesus, the man, and the Presence who indwelt him. This is the whole aim of metaphysics: this is what we work for. When we attain that awareness there are no problems because they could not exist.

Now, I hope with a deeper and clearer understanding, let us return to CHAPTER 7 of Luke. In verses 1-10 we find the incident of the healing of the centurion's slave. Here we see a man whose faith was great enough for him to feel that Jesus' physical presence was not needed in order to heal his servant. This is faith which is the foundation of all metaphysical work, and we can realize a very important point from this description. The centurion believed in himself, in his own authority, and so he understood and also believed in the authority of Jesus and in his ability to heal. Do you realize that faith is very closely

allied to self-assurance? The more faith I have in my own ability, the more faith I will naturally extend to others. The more self-assurance you have, the more faith you have not only in your own ability to accomplish what you want, but also what you expect from the world. It is a very interesting concept to think about.

Verses 11-17 provide an interesting contrast to the previous story in that this healing was accomplished solely by the faith of Jesus and from his compassion. The mother had not requested help, evidently because she did not believe, and the boy himself was considered to be dead. As we have seen, if the silver cord which held the etheric to the body had been broken not even Jesus could have healed him, so evidently Jesus knew that this was not the case. Jesus had the perception to see this and the power to revive the boy. It is also an interesting sidelight to realize that our faith has fallen so low that if he were to do that today it would not be believed. But here the people "glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people."

A number of interesting questions arise at this point. We have also seen that it is against the Law to heal a person without the request of the person or someone close to him, and we know that Jesus would never interfere with the karma of an individual, so we might ask, what happened here? Karma also enters into this and if this were not part of the boy's karma, Jesus would not have met him at that time. If we ask ourselves why they happened to meet at that particular day in those particular circumstances, we will begin to see that behind this there is, as there always is, what we might call the infinite answer that we cannot quite understand or perceive. One thing we do know. Nothing ever happens by accident. Nothing. Nothing ever occurs out of its own time and space.

Behind all of life there is the great plan of Divine Mind. It is completely true that everything we are doing here at this moment has already taken place in Spirit. We are, so to speak, acting out a delayed action. As someone once said, "The outer event is the dying echo of what has already happened in Spirit." This is why we say there is nothing but an Eternal Now in Spirit. There is no time. You might ask, "If this is so, then what is a mistake?" A mistake is physical delay on our part. We have a dichotomy between Spirit, the Presence within us, and our human selves. None of us, no matter how close we may

be to Spirit, are one hundred percent close. Spirit lives in a timeless realm: "I was, I am, I always will be," and the individual lives in a time continuum through which he moves while this Other—the Presence—stands still and waits.

Spirit is not touched by the negative things which occur. The Presence within each of us knows if we make a mistake, but He is not affected by it. He waits. This is where our own measurement of time comes in for, as the Psalmist said, "A thousand years are as a day in thy sight." Our measurement of time is dependent upon the time it takes for us to overcome those negative things which we have created. This maintains the split between Spirit and the human being. It is this which we learn to erase as our metaphysical understanding grows. In regard to this concept, someone once asked me a rather amusing question, but one which has a good point behind it: "If these things have already taken place in Spirit, then where is my free will to 'mess things up'?" We have all the free will in the world to "mess things up" because we have all the time in the universe in which to work things out.

Now, let us bring it down to this minute. If you believe that everything which happens in your everyday life is the result of the perfect idea in your subconscious mind, then does it not follow that nothing can transpire here on the physical, mental and emotional levels of our being which is not first an idea in Spirit? This is the origin of the Egyptian statement: "As above, so below: as within, so without." But what we do with that perfect idea is another thing—this is where free will comes in.

Remember when we began the Old Testament we discussed involution and evolution. We saw that the form of man was created to fit the environment of this planet, and that Infinite Spirit decided to put something of Itself into this form. Then, in Genesis 6 we are told that the sons of God married the daughters of men. What do you think this means? Who are the sons of God? The son of God is the Presence within, and this tells us that the Presence, the Indwelling Christ, became enmeshed in the subconscious mind, and this was the beginning of the physical organism. "The sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose."

Then, shortly after this, in chapter 11, we find the story of the tower of Babel. This tells us that the Presence was, so to speak, drowned in the sensations of the flesh that the physical



body suddenly found it possessed, and this caused us to lose contact with that Presence. This is involution. This descent continued until the climax of the Flood (although the Biblical sequence differs from this). From that point on humanity began very slowly to evolve. It has a very long way to go before we are all one with the Presence as we once were.

As I have said, it is possible for each of us *at any time* to raise our consciousness to the point where this contact becomes a reality. We are the ones who determine how long this will take. The physical plane is measured by time. Emotional time is completely different, as we can see if we compare a heartache with a heart attack: the physical pain is measured by the length of time it takes to recover from the attack. On the other hand, mentally wherever your thought takes you, there you are. The mind travels like lightning, and Spirit is completely above time. So we see that we have within ourselves the capacity to function on different levels of time, and "As above, so below. . ."

The negative qualities, the things we do wrong and the fears we develop as a consequence only have the reality that we give them by believing in them. Anything that is negative is in a constant state of change. Emmet Fox used to say, "withdraw your thought from evil and it will return to its native nothingness." Its *native nothingness*. Good, Love, Power have a reality that is untouchable: nothing can ever change them. This is why this is a real science, because these facts never change. All the other sciences are constantly exploring and changing their theories and laws to fit the new facts they meet, but metaphysics never changes its basic laws. This is the way we are made: this is the way we function, and there is nothing you or I can do to change it.

Let us go back to the texts from the Bible: "the sons of God"—that means you and I. Then Job 22:28 says "Thou shalt decree a thing and it shall be established unto thee . . ." Who shall decree? YOU shall. We have the power of the Word. And, in Psalm 82:6, "I have said, Ye are gods and all of you are children of the most High:" but we have not manifested this yet. This is the teaching. This is why it is our responsibility—no matter how hopefully we search outside—and no one else's. We achieve our goal purely by our own desire and our own efforts.

To return to the chapter, when John the Baptist sends his

disciples to ask Jesus if he is the one that "should come" Jesus replies by saying in effect, "I am not going to tell you who I am. See for yourself." And, as it says in verse 21 "in that same hour he cured many"—he gives John the evidence that he fulfills all the requirements of the person who has contact with God. It is true that at any stage of development we should feel that we can heal, not only ourselves, but certainly help and heal others, for this is a growing ability.

The statement, in verse 28, that "he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" is interesting esoterically. You can read it symbolically to mean that the mentality, represented by John, is "least" to the person who has conscious contact with Spirit. Jesus is also saying that John did not have that contact himself, which is the first stage of the kingdom of God. Therefore, as great a person as John was, he still is least in comparison with one who had that contact. Orthodox religions have interpreted this quite differently in the sense of an almost abject humility. But in the sense in which the Gospels were written and in metaphysics you are not the least—you are a son of God. You are, therefore, not an infinitesimal bit of humanity but an important human being, because, as Dr. Fox used to say, "You are a perfect expression of the idea of God. You are His ambassador, for He is in you."

Then we come to a condensation of Jesus' "generation of vipers" speech. He makes a comparison between what we should be and what we are. We do not know if the example in verse 32 was inserted or part of the original speech, but it does follow in meaning. In those days, and in the Psalms, the pipe was used as a summons to the Lord, and he says no one paid any attention to it. "We have mourned to you" means we have given ourselves for you and you have not "wept," heard or paid attention.

Again we meet the episode of the woman who anointed his feet. Jesus points out that she offered all that she had and came to him in her need and in faith and he sarcastically contrasts her attitude with that of the Pharisees who did not realize their need and felt that they were doing him an honor by inviting him to be their guest.

CHAPTER 8. Verses 1-18 are a clear climax to the general discussion we have just had: "take heed therefore how ye hear; for whosoever hath, to him shall be given." Let me give an example in general terms of what Jesus is saying here and in

the parable which follows. We should all be very well grounded in meditation and, again, it depends on the *individual level of evolution* how often we reach that inner state of quiet, calm, peace and cleanliness which is the result of contact with the Presence of God. Some people have only reached it a few times, others have reached it fairly frequently, and a few live in it almost all the time. However, if you were to try to describe this to a man or woman who is not particularly interested in meditation, metaphysics or even God, they would hear the words, but they would not understand. Another way of saying it is that you can only understand what you have the consciousness for. And you can use any terminology you wish, psychological, philosophical or metaphysical, to describe the fact that meditation is a particular effort which is made with one purpose and one purpose only – to increase and enlarge your consciousness. Jesus is saying very simply that if you listen intelligently, if you follow directions intelligently, you can have only one result. Another way of saying “take heed how you hear” is “straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it,” and the reason why this is so is that we do not listen.

The remaining verses of this chapter are a repetition of incidents which we have previously discussed: that of his mother and brethren in 19-21; stilling the waters in 22-25; casting out the devils in 26-40; and Jairus’ daughter and the woman with a hemorrhage in verses 41-56.

CHAPTER 9. In verses 1-6 we have Jesus’ instructions to his disciples before sending them out to teach and heal. In verse 3 he sends them out without any provisions in order to strengthen their faith in what he had taught them: that if they did God’s work, God would provide. In verse 5, when he tells them to shake off the dust from their feet, he is stressing the fact that you cannot heal unless the person accepts the healing. There is one important idea here which I would like to discuss more thoroughly at this point. Verse 1 tells us that “he gave them power and authority.” Now we know that not even Jesus is capable of *giving* that power to another person, so what do you think this means? The disciples only had to recognize the power within them in order to heal, and the very fact that Jesus told them “Now you go out and do it” gave them confidence in the fact that they could do so. This is just as true for us as it was for the disciples. There is not one human being who has ever lived, is living or will

live who does not have as much power as Jesus: the difference is that we do not have the faith. Nor is there a special formula which allows you to heal. There is nothing needed but (a) the desire to do it, (b) the belief in the Presence of God within you that enables you to do it and (c) to do it. It would not matter if you said "abracadabra" with the belief that it would work or "I know the Presence of God within you is healing you now" – whichever words you give faith to will work for you. We need only the desire, the faith and the action. Here we see that after this series of healings Jesus says "Come on. You've watched me, now get out and do it." So even though the disciples were a bit reluctant to "try their own wings," Jesus gave them the confidence to do so, and the faith which came from their experience increased their own power.

There is one thing that keeps us from realizing this for ourselves, and that is the point I am constantly stressing: *There is nothing supernatural about God.* GOD IS A NORMAL EXPERIENCE. GOD IS A NATURAL EXPERIENCE. We should not put Him "up there." He is within you and within me and therefore the ground on which you and I stand is holy ground. Whether it is in the most wonderful temple in the world, on the most beautiful spot in the world or in your own bedroom – GOD IS THERE. God is Life, every phase of Life, and He is not to be lifted up above that Life in worship which is so reverent that you feel you cannot get near Him. We do not need a special gift in order to heal. Some of the most wonderful healings have been made by people who had never encountered this teaching, yet because a crisis was so drastic they were healed. The healing was made regardless of how much conscious contact with God was involved. The healing also could have come through an atheist or an agnostic or anyone else.

Certainly we live on different levels because we are complex individuals: we have physical bodies, we have emotional natures, mentalities and Spirit. Let us say a person with the stamina and ability trains to become the greatest athlete in the world. This is his desire and he takes the time and energy to devote himself to it in order to accomplish this. If you or I want to develop on another level of our being – emotional, mental or spiritual – it is still the same impetus which is diversified on the level of our desire. For that reason, whether it is a physical healing, an emotional healing or illumination, it still must originate with the individual on the level that he is most involved with at this particular moment.

I have always visualized this principle in the realm of metaphysical growth as the Infinite symbolized by a circle in the center of which is a dot, I Am. From this dot extends a million and one different radii of interests which are parts of the spiritual, emotional, mental and physical levels of being, and the goal of all life is to have every radius touch the inner rim of the circle in perfect order. Where there is an unevenness—where one line falls short of the goal—then that has to be lengthened. If that is the radius of Spirit, or spiritual understanding, then the drive of the individual is to lengthen that so that it becomes a complete perfect circle. This brings us back to the original idea that you and your Father are one, and in this oneness you have the power and the authority to do that which has been ordained from the beginning.

Jesus exemplified this, and now we see him sending his disciples out to do the same thing, which, after a while, they did very beautifully. I want us to realize that no matter who or what you are, God is in you and you are in God, and you will manifest that for yourself and those around you to the degree that you believe it. In one sense, this has nothing to do with evolution or with initiation: it only pertains to the simplest of aspects—your acceptance of your role as a son of God. Even though we may not have emotionally or mentally experienced it, we at least have some intellectual idea of what this means, and the lack of experience cannot deter us from going ahead AS IF we have achieved it. If you start to live in this way and someone comes to you for help, you will be able to give that help. If you find it is not working, you know that something is wrong, either with the other person's understanding or your own, because there should be no difficulty in healing. You will find that every healing you make gives you more confidence. In the beginning it is like "walking on the Word" with nothing but words to hold you up: nothing to see or hold onto except your idea and your Word and for us, who are reared in a physical universe, this *is* walking on the water. But, although you might believe that the first or second demonstrations are coincidental, by the third time you are quite sure it is not. I think our tendency today is to theorize too much instead of just plunging in and using what we know. Let us not worry about whether or not we are sufficiently evolved, or are initiates, because we are not: let's just do it.

We have covered the important aspects of verses 7-17, so let us go on to the question Jesus asks concerning his identity. The

very much misunderstood verse 23 appears in all four Gospels, so it therefore has great importance. However, it appears in a slightly different version here, and one which points out the meaning which was originally intended. As we have seen, the cross is the symbol of the earth, and to lift a burden or "take up your cross" means that you have the power to change this. To "deny yourself" means to deny the negative things that we all have to some degree, by refusing to give them power, and to try to the best of your ability to follow what we are taught.

We know that the misinterpretation of this text has resulted in an appalling number of martyrs and the belief in afflicting the body with all kinds of tortures, yet Jesus certainly never taught this. Jesus states that he has come that we might have life more abundantly. How can you have life more abundantly if you are going to be nailed to a cross every day? What has this to do with God?

Even today, when we see what is being taught, it is hard to realize that there can be such a wide misunderstanding of the very simple words that are printed here. I am certain that if we had no religious training or any knowledge of religion, we would immediately interpret what is said at least seventy-five percent correctly, because we would not be influenced by the idea of suffering in the life of Jesus. I think one of the greatest difficulties with orthodox religion is that it seems to think that everything which pertains to God can never be logical: it is supernatural and therefore has nothing to do with logic. Actually there is nothing supernatural. You know, there was a time when humanity thought that the universe was filled with horrible things because it was unknown, and now as we are beginning to explore it, we slowly realize that this is not a supernatural universe and that it is governed by laws which, as we understand them, enable us to know more, to travel into outer space and return safely. In a similar way, religion has been wrapped up in the mystery of the strange and unknown.

As we examine the Bible, certainly we know that it also has a symbolic meaning, but we take the words and what they symbolize in a logical way. As a simple example of what I am saying, a student of mine is a globe-trotting photographer who has been flying for several years. Suddenly, after returning from Africa she developed a fear of flying, although nothing had happened to cause it. She was soon to fly to South America. She began to have a dream that really frightened her. In the dream she was standing

on the bank of a river and she saw a plane falling from the sky. She had dreamed this several times when she asked me what it meant. I said, "One thing is perfectly sure, you are not going to be in a plane crash. Your subconscious is saying that no matter what happens up there, you are going to be on the ground." She overcame both her fear of the dream and the fear of flying when she knew what the subconscious was trying to show her. Even in a dream as simple and obvious as that, she was not sure what it was saying. She thought it meant "be careful of a plane crash," even though she was safely on the ground in each dream and was shown that she would be perfectly safe. This is our own symbolism, and when we color an idea with fear, we overlook the obvious, whether in dreams or religion.

As we read Luke's account of the Transfiguration in verses 28-36, we should keep in mind that it is written from hearsay and, although Luke intended to give a reportorial account, he got carried away and brought in much legend and superstition such as the "supernatural" touch in verses 34 and 35.

We should pay particular attention to verse 44 because I think this passage most clearly makes the distinction Jesus drew between the son of Man and the son of God. You notice he does not say the son of God is going to be delivered into the hands of men; he says the son of Man, and he is speaking of the person of Jesus. This text makes it quite clear that he is referring to his own physical being, which he is going to allow to be captured. He is also aware that his disciples do not understand what he is talking about or what he is trying to do.

On the basis of what we have already seen in Matthew and Mark, we find that many incidents and speeches are jumbled together in Luke. However, we should note a few interesting points in this section. For instance, in verse 49 we are shown that the disciples did not understand that anyone should, or could, heal who was not a disciple of Jesus, and yet Jesus' reply shows that he knew very well that healing went on in other religions, as it always has. We also see the disciples' lack of understanding in verse 54, in response to the unfriendliness of the Samaritans. This is similar to Peter cutting off the ear of the Roman soldier when Jesus was arrested in showing that they had a long way to go before they really learned the nature of Jesus' teaching.

We might say that the section comprising verses 57-60 says that excuses do not count, and we are given three examples of this. However, verse 58 is a rather gnostic statement. Why did he

answer a sincere request so abruptly and cryptically? First of all, this is an example of the editorial liberties we have so frequently discovered, but there is also a connection between this incident and that of the wealthy young man who was told to give up his fortune. However, unless you have a "Bible nose," so to speak, you would not necessarily associate this with the text that it is "easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Jesus is wryly pointing out that the young man should first become a bit more charitable with his money before he follows Jesus. We are shown that the young man is relying on his money for security, and in order to follow Jesus he must place his security in God. As we have seen, "The son of Man hath not where to lay his head" does not refer to deprivation and suffering, as it is usually interpreted. But it is also true that the only security Jesus ever offers is when he says "come to me . . . for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." He cannot solve our problems for us, but he shows us the way to do it through our own effort and work.

CHAPTER 10 begins with Jesus' instructions to his emissaries which we have discussed, but the final line of verse 7 is interesting. It could be the phrasing of the editor, but I have always felt that it meant that they were to remain in one place until people were so trained that they would be a nucleus which could spread the Truth in turn. In other words, it was not to be a question of the quantity of followers, but of the quality of absorption.

Verse 7 is also interesting in that they are told to eat and drink "such things as they give," for when we come to the book of Acts we will find that even then, after the Resurrection, Peter refuses to eat anything that is not kosher. Yet the instruction here is very definite that they are to eat anything that is served.

Then the disciples are told to give as much instruction as possible to those who were open to the teaching, but they should not remain where they were not understood. It was up to them to judge. This is why we are told not to thrust metaphysics on other people for, as the Hindus say, "when the student is ready, the teacher appears." Jesus had another purpose as well, for he knew he would not be with them for too long a time, and he wanted them to be trained to be able to judge. Part of the work of any good metaphysical teacher is to know how much time to give to a student, and that depends on their desire and ability to work. This is determined by using the faculty of discrimination. Cer-



tainly the ability comes from the development of the intuitive faculty and in sensing what people are like, but experience with people also enables you to discern whether a person is going to be willing to work or will be a "metaphysical dilettante."

We have previously discussed the denunciations that follow and seen that many factors contributed to this bitter tone. Since Jesus was the most forceful personality the world has ever known, we have a fair idea of why this is expressed so strongly.

Verse 17 to the end of the chapter deals with black magic and the difference between mysticism and occultism. In verse 18 Jesus is not talking about *the* Serpent, which is the symbol of Wisdom, but of serpents and scorpions which are symbols of black magicians. The disciples were thrilled that they had power over this, and Jesus tells them that this is not what they should be happy about, but they should be thankful to God that they had divine protection to come through it.

In his prayer, the Son, in verse 22, refers to the Presence within. When you and I have conscious contact with that Presence we are able to know of the Infinite God, not by direct contact, but by the knowledge, the illumination, of that Presence within us. This prayer and his answer to the lawyer which follows again stress the great difference between mysticism and occultism. An occultist will worship the power of the Law until he feels he is the Law, whereas a mystic approaches the use of the Law, and all things, from the point of view of his love of God. He is not interested in acquiring power, but in contacting God. He believes "having the Giver I have all gifts" and this is what Jesus is saying here. He says that because they sought that contact, even though their understanding was very limited, they were able to combat occultism through their very innocence and sincerity of approach. The simple example of the good Samaritan which he gives the lawyer who is tempting him provides another contrast, in addition to its own meaning, of there being no barriers in God.

The story of Mary and Martha in verses 38-42 brings up a point on which we should periodically check ourselves. We might ask ourselves what we are in metaphysics for. Granted most of us came into it because of an insoluble problem, but when the demonstration was made, for reasons best known to each of us, we remained. If you stayed in metaphysics at that point, you did so because you had found something you had not found anywhere else. Furthermore, you were told one thing that is quite true: you do not study metaphysics to see how much it will give you: you

are in it to see how much you can give, and you start by giving to God.

For instance, if we find that we cannot take fifteen minutes a day for meditation, then we should get out of metaphysics because it will not give us anything. We may fool ourselves and float along in a beautiful dream, and we may reap some good karmic dividends for a while, but it will not last. If you have chosen metaphysics as your way of life, then you must put that first, not only for your own sake but for the privilege of being able to contact God. This is what is brought out here. It is perfectly true that we all have duties to do, but if we make that fifteen minute period in the morning a must in our lives we will see a complete change in our lives. We will not be thrown, no matter what happens during the day, and before long the things that upset us will not happen any longer. I am stating the Law and not inventing it. This is the way it works, and if we are in metaphysics and we want to unlock the potential that is within us, this is the only way to do it.

CHAPTER 11 begins with a slightly different version of the more familiar Lord's Prayer in Matthew. Remember that when you find things repeated in each of the Gospels it is because they are important. Why do you think Jesus uses the order, in verse 4, of first, "forgive us" and then "we forgive"? The most perfect form of meditation begins with a reminder of what you know about God. The second part deals with your relationship to God and His relationship to you. Then, since you have already set the pattern of what you know of the Presence and His characteristics, and your aim is to bring yourself into alignment with this, you think of the truth behind your shortcomings, and finally state your needs.

Actually the same principle applies in treatment. Take an example of a person who has a violent physical pain and cannot get high enough in consciousness to heal himself. A wise metaphysical teacher will tell him to use any means to alleviate that pain first, since at this particular level of his development he cannot overcome the cause by his mind. Now, we are told in metaphysics that if we have a physical problem we are to speak the Word to change it. Let us say that you do, and although you consciously believe, nothing happens. This is because you do not have the ability to absorb the power of the Word until you have trained yourself and to some degree been able to impress the subconscious to respond. So, following the order of the Lord's Prayer we are first to become aware that we have our "daily

bread." That daily bread is not only our physical sustenance, but our spiritual substance. Then, after we realize this, our attention is directed to the things we wish to be rid of, and we realize that we have the substance to work with in order to fulfill our every need.

The use of the word evil in verse 13 is the work of the editors. It is true that none of us is perfect, but according to some of the writers and editors of the Bible, man was evil because of his so-called sin. Certainly we do not call ourselves evil, but none of us has reached that stage of perfection where we are kindness itself, tolerance itself, courage itself – we still need a little polishing. The term evil is very harsh for what is meant here. Incidentally, you know if you reverse the spelling of the word evil you have the word live. In other words, evil is a shadow, a bad picture of what life actually is, which we create and we pay for when we create it.

I have always wondered how the Bible can be taught without a certain amount of esotericism as, for example, in verses 24-26, where it would seem that Jesus was speaking in terms of superstition unless you understand the symbolism. Symbolically it is referring very specifically to the great objection metaphysics has against psychiatry. Psychiatry will pull out all the dregs of the subconscious and put nothing in its place with the result that other "plagues" have free access. For example, if you get a person to accept the fact that he resents his parents, it also opens the way for him to resent everyone else as well. This text tells us that unless something replaces that which is removed the person can fall back into the old pattern.

Jesus points out this difference when he says "You say that I heal through the power of Beelzebub. How can you say this when the person I heal emerges completely whole, not only healed of his ailments but beginning to live a wholesome life? This is the sign of God." On the other hand, the magicians of his day, or those bearing the scientific titles of today, will stir up the emotions and once in a while remove a problem but replace it with nothing else, which is a cure, not a healing. One of the first laws of science is "nature abhors a vacuum," and, actually, this is because there never can be a vacuum since *something* will always replace what is removed. What happens when you heal a person? You can cure a person without metaphysics by various psychological means – there is no doubt of that. But unless you are able to bring forth, at least to some degree, a touch of the divinity

within the human being which occurs in a healing, that cure will revert back to either some phase of the former ailment or a whole new series. This is the difference which is emphasized here.

We have discussed the signs and parables in verses 27-36 in prior accounts. However, there is an important point connected with the queen of the south. Literally this refers to the Queen of Sheba, but symbolically the queen of the south represents the subconscious mind. In this sense it says that the subconscious came to be guided by the mentality, instead of which the mentality "fell in love" with the subconscious and the queen of the south went home laden with many gifts. Jesus is once again, by this example, pointing out the necessity of training through developing and controlling yourself, and that the simplest way to do this is to put God first. He also stressed this in part of the Sermon on the Mount. He says, no matter what has gone before, once we have some realization of what the Presence of God is like and of the possibility of contacting Him, all these negative things pass away and can no longer influence us, since we are no longer under their control. Of course, as shown by the queen of the south, we are only controlled by those things to which we have, voluntarily or involuntarily, submitted ourselves. No one, or no thing, can get control over us unless we allow this to happen.

As we have seen before, Jesus holds back nothing in pointing out the hypocrisy in putting attention upon the outer act of washing and paying no attention to inward cleanliness. It seems fairly sure that deletions were made in the Gospels to strengthen the theological and organizational structure of the early church since statements such as this which Jesus makes against ritual and organization are so abrupt and strongly worded that they seem to be the climax of a discussion, rather than isolated accusations as they appear to be here. He constantly repeats that he is teaching the Law and no matter how they dress it up or interpret it, this is the way the Law functions: "Whatsoever you do unto the least of these you do unto me." This is very clearly stated here in his denunciation of the lawyers.

We live under this Law until we reach the point of development where we are capable of using the Law. When he says, in verse 57 "it shall be required of this generation" he is saying that the Law is in effect in their lives now because they are being made aware of it. It may be that "ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise" but once you have heard something you know it, whether or not you consciously accept it, and it does no good

to say that you do not. For instance, we have heard that we will be fined for jaywalking. You may say "that will not happen to me" and you jaywalk, and you are fined because you did not obey the law. The truer statement that "ignorance of the law excuses no man" not only pertains to a lack of conscious knowledge in a particular incarnation, but the deeper meanings as well. If a child sticks his finger in a flame he will be burned.

CHAPTER 12. To clarify what is being said in this section let us begin with verse 9. First of all, the angels of God are the Seven Main Aspects of God. We are told that if we deny this teaching we deny ourselves the possibility of achieving union and the integration of the mind and the emotions which cannot be achieved without these aspects. Now, what about verse 5? Do you think it is possible to be cast into hell? We have discussed hell in two ways: the hell which we create in our own lives, and the hell which Thomas Troward terms the "etheric ice-box," which is also our creation in that by our abuse we invoke the only power, the Law, which can put us there. We do make our own hell, but there is more to be realized about this particular interpretation, as seen in verse 10. Do you think there is any crime, no matter how heinous, that the individual cannot overcome in time if he develops a high enough consciousness to do so? I am making a point of this because there is so much tampering with the texts in order to establish the theological concept of heaven and hell that states if you do such and such a thing you will be cast into outer darkness forever. This concept was taught in the Old Testament, but it is not part of the teaching of Jesus. It is true that we may go through an incarnation of utter misery for something we have done before, but that does not mean that God has condemned us eternally to that misery and that we do not have the possibility of rising above it. If that were true it would be a sorry state for the human race. For instance, there will come a time when Hitler will return as a human being, and since God is in him as much as He is in us, he too has the possibility of rising above his past, when and if he wishes.

From this example we can also see how we can determine what is interpolated and what is not. For instance, if verse 5 had been worded "I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear—yourself," there would be some connection with what Jesus taught. When you read what he says in verses 6 and 7 you realize that his emphasis is constantly placed on the fact that God is within you. If God is within you then there is no power or being that can say

"God, You cannot do anything here, I am going to send this man to hell." It just does not follow logically.

In verses 13-30 Jesus gives us the law of substance and even though it is clothed in the Biblical idiom, it is still the Law. None of us have absorbed this to the point where we are really free in the sense of a child of God who has everything that he needs for his life at his fingertips. It makes no difference if we have nothing or millions in the bank, until we have that sense of complete inner freedom in every situation we have not absorbed what is meant here.

The first question we should ask ourselves is "do we believe it?" And the answer must be not because you hear me or someone else say it, or because it is in the Bible, but because YOU believe it is true. Eight people out of ten have money problems. They may be able to eke through because in our century we are very adept in making ends meet and putting up a "good front." But do you believe, for instance, that if you were in a financial jam and every door had been closed to you, you could demonstrate "just" by treating? Our trouble is that we fall into the trap of saying "Now where can it come from?" The moment we try to decide the possible source of our demonstration we close the door on it.

We intellectually know that there is one Source of supply and that Source chooses the particular outlet It wishes to use; and so we leave the ways and means up to that Intelligence. When you live in that assurance you will never be fearful of whether it is a full purse or an empty one because you know it will always be replenished. But you must let *It* work and rest in the realization that it is being done.

Another point we should consider about substance is that many of us have some very strange ideas about money. We will treat for health, for inspiration, for harmony in relationships, but many people are very hesitant about treating for money. Money is nothing but a different rate of exchange, so to speak, for it is nothing but a different rate of vibration of Life. We need air to breathe and the oxygen in which we live and which we breathe is part of the substance of God. As we come down the line into physical manifestation, that rate of vibration changes with the various forms that substance takes. We have no qualms about claiming the food we need in order to live, and this too is part of substance.

So, if you find you have the idea that it is not nice to think

about money, remember that you are a child of God and you should be able to demonstrate supply. Emmet Fox used to say something which points this out very clearly. If you have a besetting problem, it is much easier to reach a higher state of consciousness when the problem is solved than while you are laboring with it. I am sure we have all experienced the fact that we can progress much further in meditation when we do not have a pressing need. If you were in the water with a heavy stone attached to you, you would find it difficult to rise to the top, and the same is true in meditation. Since the main aim of metaphysics is conscious contact with God, we are to overcome those things which hold us back from greater growth.

It is equally true that it is wrong to use treatment for, let us say, a mink coat, or a specific luxury if you do not need it. On the other hand, as you improve your life and consciousness you also have a change in needs. Remember that Jesus was not poor, as he is portrayed by the orthodox creeds. All he had to do was speak the Word for anything he needed, and even the Bible tells us that his raiment was of the finest. If he believed this was wrong then he would have lived like John the Baptist. There is nothing wrong with enjoying nice things if you can pay for them. It would be a terrible thing if we felt that we had to be stripped to bare necessities. We are not meant to live that way. One of the loveliest and truest expressions of the idea of substance is in the verse from the Sufis which we quoted in Volume 24. We should realize that the hyacinths are necessary too.

We know by now what the kingdom is of which Jesus speaks in verse 31, and at other times he has said "I have come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly." These are the words we should think about, not with the idea of becoming multi-millionaires, but with the idea that substance pertains to everything that involves living: it includes your health, your work, your personal relationships – the way you live.

Then in verse 33 Jesus brings in the idea of tithing. As we have seen, Moses taught this in the Old Testament. The purpose of tithing is the recognition that whatever we have in our lives ranging from our bodies and mentalities to health and wealth is only by virtue of the one Source from whence it comes. Our tithe is merely an expression of appreciation to that Source and a constant reminder to ourselves that we are nothing more than custodians for all these things, even for our lives.

What do you think he meant by that section beginning with

verse 36? Firstly, it refers to that point when we have become so imbued with the realization that God is in us that we are as aware of that as we are of our own names. There is not a moment when we do not know who we are, but this is something we forget quite a bit. Remember that whenever you find yourself brooding over something, it is primarily because you have forgotten who is with you and in you. There is still another deeper meaning connected with this in verse 40. Although the use of the son of Man in this context is an editorial error, the statement refers to that time when we, as the son of Man, become aware of the son of God who is always with us.

We see that once again the disciples did not understand. In Jesus' answer to Peter's inquiry he tells the disciples that he is speaking to them because they were very close to the first great experience of the soul. He tells them they must be vigilant if they really want to have the experience which he has referred to as the coming of the "Comforter." What Jesus says is absolutely true, for no one knows exactly when the experience will happen: God does not send any advance notice. This is not a matter of saying "Well, by January first I will have this experience." You do not live the life because you expect the experience, but only because you want to live the life.

In the same way as when you treat for money, you do not treat simply for the sake of money but because it is a necessity in life, so you treat and train for this experience because it is THE great necessity. We do not realize how necessary it is as yet because so few people have had the experience. The wedding mentioned in verse 36 referred to the union of the conscious and subconscious minds, and this is the underlying meaning in this section. Jesus is telling us that this is the only way it can be achieved. Richard Bucke's "Cosmic Consciousness" can give you some idea of how unexpectedly and seemingly "out of the blue" this experience occurs. However, we know that nothing happens "out of the blue" and this is the result of a constant build-up in consciousness until you reach that point where it does occur, but no man can say when it will take place.

In verse 49 we know that fire represents Spirit. This tells us that Jesus had come to rekindle the Spirit of God in man: to make them aware of who they were and of what their relationship to God really was. Jesus also says that he would not be here if it had already been kindled: if the Spirit was already functioning. This was the great need of mankind and the greatest problem,



because man's idea of God was so completely distorted.

The section from verse 51 through the end of the chapter is in one sense symbolical, but it is also a recognition of the fact that a prophet is very often without honor in his own household, as well as the fact that those who follow his teaching may find themselves in the midst of major family upsets. I have seen quite a number of people who want to study metaphysics and do not dare to tell their own husbands or wives. I would imagine that this could be a very difficult situation, and Jesus was well aware of it.

CHAPTER 13. Verses 1-10 bring up the question of psychological time for which no one has the complete answer. But there is a psychological time in which events and death occur. Psychological time is the subconscious knowledge that we will live for a specified period of time on earth and then pass on to the next plane. Only through definite metaphysical work on one's self can this be changed. To help us understand it a bit more we might take an example from our own era. You may remember that a number of years ago a group of Italian soldiers serving the United Nations were attacked and very brutally mutilated and killed by the Congolese. One cannot help but ask why, in the service of their country and the United Nations, these poor men were brought to a situation like this. I think that all of us find it hard to grasp intellectually and, certainly, to have any sympathy with the fact, but nevertheless there is a karmic pattern that brought these particular men to this particular situation at this particular time.

If psychological time is involved and their time was up, we might ask if the United Nations forces had rescued them, would that have enabled them to have more time to work out their karmic pattern? This is a question which is completely problematical. We can discuss it and speculate, but no one can give the exact answer. It is only when you are able to know people, not as we know them socially, but by knowing their hearts that you are able to some degree to see the pattern which is pushing them along a specific path. We are not given to know the psychological time of other people and we are only able to know our own when we have reached a specific level of development by doing a great deal of work on ourselves. However, the subconscious always knows the direction of the psychological time under which we live. Somebody might ask if we can change this, and certainly we can: when we get sufficient control of ourselves. When we have commanded the forces of the subconscious and worked out those problems

which bring us under the direction of psychological law, we are then the masters of that law rather than its slaves.

As you may recall, we have seen that until you are past the Third Initiation you are still subject to a certain amount of karma and influences within yourself and some that are without. The Third Initiation is the turning point on the homeward path, and until we reach that level there is always some danger. Take Peter as an example. Although he had experienced the First Initiation, he chose to die a martyr. He did not have sufficient inner knowledge to realize that his martyrdom was not in accordance with the teachings of Jesus and so he inflicted it upon himself. In realizing this, you begin to see that because a person has reached a certain degree of spiritual achievement it does not mean that they are free from karma, or have all the answers within themselves, or are constantly capable of making decisions in the right way. I am not sure that we are able to achieve complete perfection even after the Fifth Initiation, because it is this imperfection which keeps us here. I believe that as long as we are in the physical body there is a slight residue which literally keeps our feet on the ground.

In verses 11-17 we are reminded that time is made by man, not by God, and unfortunately too many religious groups say that God has decreed certain times to be set aside for His worship. But, as Jesus says time and again, it is not a specific time or place which is important, but what is in your heart. People who wish to go to church or temple should by all means do so, but this does not mean we are closer to God by doing so, for God is where *you* are. I think by now we can see the very definite editorial work in this section which was done to create the impression of Jesus as God, without the necessity of pointing it out in detail.

In verses 18-30 Jesus gives a very beautiful definition and two illustrations of the kingdom of God. We could say that the kingdom of God in each human being is synonymous with the amount of faith he has. We should realize that, as Jesus says here, it is like a leaven which, when it is put into a loaf of bread, will grow and make the bread to grow. What kind of a kingdom you will have for yourself is dependent on what kind of faith you have, for the words are practically interchangeable. If your faith or belief is that the Presence of God who is altogether lovely and altogether perfect is in you, then you begin to know the truth of that concept as you use that faith to demonstrate it.

The editors have assumed that Jesus was speaking of his own era, and through the use of a few pronouns here and there they give the impression that it is Jesus who says you shall come into heaven and you shall stay out, which of course is not true. However, the most important thing for us to realize from this section is that the kingdom of God is another word for faith. When I ask "what kind of a God do you have?" it is because each and every one of us has a different concept of God. We all have a similar overall concept in that we believe in God and we believe that the Presence of God is within us, but what you believe your God can do differs from what your neighbor believes his God can do and these are our limitations regarding the kingdom within us.

To put this in another way, we might say that each one of us has a basically identical concept but with varying limitations and these limitations are the result of a lack of faith. You, by your own desire and effort have the power to contact *your* God, and you endow *your* God with the power according to *your* faith. It is a bit on the esoteric side, but I think it should be clear. The kingdom of God is available to us by what we are intellectually able to understand. We are opening ourselves to the spiritual concept which we have forgotten for many lifetimes. The first thing we have to do is to intellectually accept it and then have faith in it, and according to that faith do we have a kingdom of God which accords with what we intellectually believe. On the physical level, you can see the limitations of your kingdom by the present problems in your life.

The words in verses 31-35 indicate that Jesus was approaching the time of the Passover and he was well aware of what lay ahead of him. We see that Jesus was not upset by Herod because he knew that he could handle Herod very simply. We should remember in verse 33 that Jerusalem symbolizes the city of peace, but other than that I think it is quite clear.

CHAPTER 14. In verses 1-12, the parable actually refers to the spiritual pride of the Jews and their belief that they were the chosen of God which, as we know, is a fallacy. They actually chose God when they accepted the concepts given them by Moses. From then on, they became a nation which was tremendously proud of its heritage without doing much about it, and as a result they have had many ups and downs.

We again see it returns to the question of faith and the need which creates a situation: it was only when the peoples' need

was so great that it produced those leaders which were necessary, and this is just as true of us today. Moses was there as a result of the sheer desperation of the nation. We know Moses has his own story and had a role to play which was part of the fulfillment of his own development BUT he could have lived at any other time in history. It was only because of the driving need of a people that they met each other at that moment in history. The need was also great at the time of the Isaiahs. However, not too many of the prophets were successful in holding the Jews in line with their religious belief. As the people began to develop their pride as a nation they lost the most beautiful concept of mysticism the world has ever seen, which is stated in the ancient esoteric Hebrew concept "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God; the Lord is One." This concept descended to the time of Jesus where it was a completely outer ritual or worship: you pay your tithes, you obey the laws, you do not have contact with a Gentile, etc., and then you are a good Jew no matter what you do otherwise or feel in your heart.

Today it has reached the point where I would no longer call Judaism a religion, but an ethical teaching. With the exception of the writings of Martin Buber, there is very little real mysticism or intensity of religious feeling in Jewish belief, ideas and writings. It is a great tragedy, because it was one of their great gifts. We would never have had a Christianity, ritualistic as it too has become, if it had not been for the magnificent concept of the Jews. Every religion of today has lost sight of that one concept which can be said in many different ways: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God: the Lord is One." The underlying idea in this section is that the only way God can ever be found is within the individual and Jesus constantly emphasizes this throughout the Gospels. I often wonder what people think when they read this, or is it a dogma of all religions that when you read the Bible you stop thinking?

The chapter ends on a note that no matter what you do, what you think or what you feel your responsibilities may be, your first responsibility is to God. Put God first and all the rest will fall in line. I sometimes think this is the most difficult thing to do for all of us. We can do it in certain directions, but it is very difficult when we get ourselves emotionally involved and entangled as we so often do in everyday living. If we remember to stop and draw a breath and realize that God is peace and God is never in a hurry, we find that then, suddenly, things begin to fall

into their rightful order.

CHAPTER 15 is particularly interesting because it entirely deals with the idea of inner healing and a change of consciousness. The point of each parable is that it does not matter what we have done, the moment we decide to change and we maintain that decision, and then turn to the Presence within, the past is wiped out. The instruction behind this is that we should not look back, but look forward. I think the first two parables are quite clear and their meaning is reiterated in the parable of the prodigal son.

The oldest son looks to his past when he says "why should he have a feast? I have been here doing everything I should do, and he gets all the glory." Too, the eldest son stayed at home – and in this sense he is likened to the Pharisees – not because he was so keen to do so, but because it was "the right thing to do." If he had really wanted to stay at home he would have welcomed his brother upon his return. However, he was jealous when he found that he, "who had done all the work," was a guest at a feast for a brother who had erred and wasted his portion of the inheritance, besides being, perhaps, a little envious of his brother's experiences in the outer world.

I think one of the greatest lessons of metaphysics is in this parable. What is so important about this section, and wherever else we encounter the same idea, is that it says no matter what we have done in the past, no matter how guilty we feel, the moment we recognize it and want to change, the gates of heaven are open to us. This eliminates, completely and immediately, the need for the confessions of the church or the psychoanalyst's couch. The only thing we need do to make amends is to change and from that point on to go forward, not backward. The moment the son starts his return journey, everything begins to be his. This is the most important lesson of metaphysics, and we could all learn it more thoroughly, because we all have, from time to time, the tendency to look back. I have never known what makes the past – particularly an unhappy past – so attractive that we want to live in it. Nothing is more deadly than "the good old days." If we could be transplanted as far back as 1900 A.D. we would be most unhappy if only with physical conditions. No refrigerators, no automobiles, air conditioning, planes, radio and most of all, no television!

Of course the realization of what this concept actually means also brings an end to all guilt complexes – a term that is so

popular today. Emmet Fox used to say "Love is the Lord of Karma" and it is completely true. If you can develop a high enough consciousness, then in that realization the past is eliminated, and that is the real meaning of the story of the prodigal son.

Again I want to stress that if you have an instantaneous healing, whether it is a bodily healing or an emotional healing, the past is wiped out and you do not have to face that situation again. We know that cancer is the result of a deep sex frustration accompanied by resentment and hatred (usually subconscious), and when you heal the disease the resentment and hatred also go and the person never has to meet the other person again. That is healing. In the same way, when you and I reach the point where we have gotten so high in consciousness that we are really for a short time completely at one with the Presence the past is wiped out and we no longer have to meet the karma involved in our present situation. There is only one person we are dealing with in a healing and that is our own individual selves, and if we are in right relationship to the Presence, our relationships are right with everyone else.

Our trouble is that we always want to put finishing touches on everything and we never learn to mind our own business. I Am is perfectly capable of finishing a thing and if we are supposed to do something about it we will know what to do and we will be able to do it. We all make mistakes because we are afraid, foolish or what-have-you, but the moment we recognize it and do something about it, that moment the past is wiped out and we go forward. Remember the story of Lot's wife. If we can train ourselves to look at the present and the future instead of living in the past we make that demonstration we have not worked for. For some reason the past has a tremendous fascination for us and we love to revel in it. This never helps, any more than it helps to go to confession or the psychiatrist and constantly re-infect ourselves by going over all the things that have happened to us when what we are trying to do is clear out the subconscious.

Neither confession nor analysis eradicate the past. They do not remove guilt or the fear of punishment. Furthermore, even if a person really believed in the effectiveness of these things they still would not absolve him subconsciously. We should never forget that the action of healing which takes place is from the Presence of God in the individual's consciousness and not from any outer act.

As an example take the prodigal son who suddenly comes to

the realization that he must find God. This does not come as a result of someone prompting him: it is something that happens interiorly. The important point to realize here is that when this does happen it is always an interior action. Then, "when the student is ready, the teacher appears." In other words, the outer reaction to this may be in the form of a person who says something, a book which is read or any other incident that will suddenly touch this chord within you and make you aware of the inner action. Then a change takes place.

The oldest son in this parable is doing what practically everyone else does: he is judging by the outer appearance. He does not know what has happened to his brother inwardly. Furthermore, point one, he had not asked for anything for himself, which he would have received had he asked. And, point two, he is criticizing the younger son. The older brother is Everyman. We are constantly appraising other people and yet how can you know what is inside them or what they have gone through? Who are you to judge? It gets back again to one of the great faults of mankind: envy. When we live according to the Law and really study metaphysics we do not resort to comparisons with others, and we grow much faster.

I have often thought that the conclusion of the parable of the prodigal son is found in the very last verses of the Gospel of John. There Jesus tells Peter how he will die and Peter asks what will happen to John: Jesus answers "what is that to thee? follow thou me." I think we all forget this most of the time. The only thing that need concern us is what happens to us. The oldest son represents the critical faculty, or how the average person thinks, appraises and judges. We have been told time and again "Judge not, lest ye be judged" and "judge with righteous judgment." Yet we are all prone to judge by the outer conditions and there is nothing more superficial than that. So the lesson to be derived from this is that when you do reach this point; when you decide to seriously do something about your life, that is when you begin to erase negative karma, to wipe out the difficulties from the past. It is then you begin to come into your own. The aftermath is: do not be concerned with what the other fellow thinks or seems to be. "What is that to thee?"

CHAPTER 16, verses 1-9. We have been told to "render unto Caesar, etc." and yet here we are told that the steward very deliberately cheated his lord and yet was commended. This is an example of one of the most interesting points in metaphysics,

and I have a strong suspicion that the Bible editors did not know what they were doing when they left this in. The parable tells us that (1) God never does anything until He is asked, and (2) we all have free will to do as we please. The statement "for the children of this world are *in their generation* wiser than the children of light" is in recognition of the problem of evolution — people do have to make mistakes in order to grow.

The Gospels are fascinating because if you read and analyze them you get a completely different picture than what is taught in churches although even they admit that when you pray to God very often it seems that He does not listen. Here we are told that when you are on a specific level of evolution you are going to act and receive in that specific way, because you are not able to understand more. It is equally true that we reap everything we have done, both good and evil, despite our lack of understanding, for we have not always been in metaphysics and we have not always known the Law. Sometimes we have been pagans or atheists and sometimes we have been extremely religious. The point is that we are all at different stages of evolution and Jesus is saying "to each his own, according to his understanding." The steward had done wisely according to his generation. As far as he could understand and because of his background this was the action expected of him. And this is true of our own generation in the sense that shrewdness is admired. If you manage to stay "within the law" so that you will not get caught and then make good as a result, you are considered to be a very smart fellow.

Verse 18 was inserted from the Old Testament by later writers. We saw what Jesus actually taught in the example of the woman taken in adultery. He said "Who is there to accuse you? Go and sin no more." But the early Christian fathers did not think this was quite moral. In his own time Jesus was criticized for his ideas regarding the sabbath, for eating with publicans and sinners, as well as his ideas of marriage, among other things. He was what we would call an extreme liberal, and this was not the picture the church wished to convey. It is quite evident that someone felt this particular text should be put in for the good of the people: to save them from sin, so to speak.

The impassable gulf spoken of in verse 26 is the rich man's pride. He did not have enough openness of heart to hear even the truth of Moses, so he certainly could not hear the Spirit. Furthermore, he did not want to give up what was necessary in order to understand. This should have been added to the earlier parable



of the rich young man, for it is out of context here, and there is no reason for introducing it at this point.

However, it is interesting from another viewpoint. It is not the type of symbolism which Jesus used and I wonder whether this was inserted at a later date or was actually an original parable. The other Gospels do not include this. Also there is an old Egyptian tale which is quite similar, and there is a modern version which is absolutely delightful in the stories of Sholem Aleichim which had its origin in Jewish folklore. Also, I am sure that if this had been one of the parables given by Jesus there would have been some incident or point connected with it. I do not think this was even inserted by Luke, but by one of the innumerable hands through which the Bible has passed. It is continually astonishing that with all of the editing, you cannot destroy its beauty and truth, and it is these qualities which help you to tune in on the soul of the subject and so be able to tell what has been inserted. This parable is not written in the type of language used by Jesus and the ideas are almost foreign to his teaching. Jesus said everyone was included in the kingdom of heaven, which is not what is said here. Furthermore, he said that the shepherd searches for the one sheep which is lost to bring it home, and here we find quite the opposite idea.

CHAPTER 17. In verses 1-10, you could interpret the statement about forgiveness from the cabalistic pattern of the number 7, which means mystical integration and say that with the act of complete forgiveness you are made whole. But since this section is a composite of many verses having little to do with each other, there really is not much reason to search for underlying symbolism. The first three verses are found in Matthew 24 and 25 and have nothing to do with the rest of the section. We have discussed a number of these parables previously. I personally prefer the other statement regarding faith found in Mark: "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief," which I think is far more beautiful than verse 5.

Basically, verses 7-10 deal with "man's inhumanity to man which makes countless thousands mourn" and the fact that we want all we can get from people and have little consideration for those who work for us. This certainly has more to do with the need to develop the quality of love than it does with our degree of faith.

In verses 11-19 we find a very famous episode which I do not think requires explanation. This version indicates the difference

I drew between a cure and a healing. A cure means that there is a possibility for the sickness to return. The quality of faith which heightened the feeling of gratitude in this one man out of nine was also responsible for the fact that he was made whole: he was healed.

Verses 20-37 have a familiar ring, since this section is similar to Matthew 24 although not as clear. Probably the worst editorial job of all is found in the Gospel of Luke. I wonder how theologians reconcile this version with Matthew's, which offers quite a different interpretation. Too, this is written in a rather strangely difficult Biblical idiom. For example, verse 22 means that there will come a time when they will wish to see Jesus and be unable to do so. Again, if you will recall, Matthew's version speaks of the days of Noah and Lot as pertaining to the attitude of the people of that time, whereas Luke is speaking of the crucifixion. His interpretation is quite arbitrary and, I believe, untrue, since the physical destruction which did occur in the days of Noah and Lot did not occur at the time of the crucifixion. Even the symbolism is much clearer and more accurate in Matthew.

Between the confusing order and the repetitions and the questionable additions, it becomes quite an effort to find the truth in Luke's version. The interpretation of the Bible requires a combination of intuition and intelligence and we should have a real union between them when we read it. Many people who have been reared in literal interpretation are rudely shocked when they realize that there are parts of the Bible that are not quite what they should be, and that repetitions are not necessarily meaningful but more often the result of bad editorial work. They think there is a religious reason for all of the repetitions, but they are merely due to the old Hebraic form of writing and a deliberate editorial emphasis. Consequently you find that people with this concept are extremely concerned when they are faced with the idea that every single word in the Bible is not a spiritual nugget.

As metaphysical students of the Bible we are supposed to understand the research that has come to light to date and we are supposed to use our intelligence. But over and above intelligence, as we continue our study we develop a certain rapport which enables us to "know" to a degree what is behind a particular text. As a rather superficial example, let us say that you are in a group of people and on the surface all seems calm and socially correct, but you become aware that there is an underlying emotional situation. We have all had that experience. And, in a different frame

of reference, the same thing is true of Bible interpretation. Also, you will find that a text may mean one thing to one person and something quite different to another because of a different level of intuition. It is quite possible that my interpretation may conflict with yours. I would not say that yours is wrong, any more than I would expect you to say that mine is wrong. Mine is right for me and I give it to you as I see it and understand it; if yours does not agree with this, fine. The thing that is most important for all of us is what we get from our study and what it *does to us*, not what we do to it.

CHAPTER 18. As we have seen, there is little coordination in Luke's material and the first parable in verses 1-8 is not found in the other Gospels, so there is some doubt as to its origin. Referring to verses 9-14, I think the most abused word in religious parlance is the word humility. Too many people have the idea that to be spiritual means to be something like a little worm of the earth which is afraid to lift its head and lets anyone step on it who wants to do so. They believe that the more they are stepped on the greater their humility, and so the more suffering they endure for the sake of humility. Nothing could be further from the truth. The word humble in the Biblical sense means that you recognize there is, not only for yourself, but for every human being that lives, a greater wisdom than any human mind can possibly conceive of, so you are humble before God.

But, because you are a child of God you have self-respect—not pride. There is a great difference between the two. If you have self-respect, no man will take liberties with you. This does not mean that you are unbearably cocksure and egotistical, but that you are beginning to know your own identity, which is the real meaning of humility. Call it a paradox if you will, but your humility stems from your own sense of marvel in the realization of your own divinity, and this reflects itself towards your fellowman as a self-respect and dignity which he will not trespass. When someone "steps out of line" in our lives, no matter how right the other person may be, the basic reason is that we have, for the moment, lost sight of who we are. And, needless to say, it gives you respect for your fellowman, because he too is a child of God.

For instance, when you have a high realization you are completely thrilled that you are able to communicate with the Presence and that the Presence has seen fit at that particular moment to give you, by His own grace, His touch and His companionship.

You do not tell this to the whole world – that would be the worst thing you could do – but it makes you aware of your own identity, of your own *Self*-consciousness, and the people you meet somehow sense this.

You cannot work on this. You cannot sit back and say “Now I am going to develop this.” It is a question of Personality, with a capital P, and it is something that we almost unconsciously exude. You cannot develop self-respect. You can only develop intelligence, and it is through intelligence that you understand the principle that is working within you and this results in self-respect, which includes humility towards God. You can try to be humble but more often than not the effort is so noticeable that it has the opposite effect. These are qualities which must be felt and realized before they can manifest. If you have a negative thought you can change it. We know if we are going to change a condition in our lives we must keep our thoughts positive, which we can consciously do. But if we *feel* anything but positive while we do this other people will sense that it is only lip service. It is only when we have really built it into ourselves that we exude that characteristic, that strength, and the same thing is true of humility.

To return to the parable, while the widow was constantly petitioning the judge, Jesus was not saying that we should constantly plead with God; he was referring to an inner quality of prayer. Paul speaks of it when he says we should pray without ceasing. This does not mean that we should, or can, spend twenty-four hours a day in prayer, but to be so firmly convinced that the Presence lives within us that we are always aware of that divinity no matter what is happening in the outer world. If you put God first you are praying without ceasing in all that you do.

In connection with verse 8, if we have this inner quality of prayer, which is faith, why then is there the qualification of “nevertheless”? For the simple reason that we all have the tendency, once we have made our demonstration, to forget and then we find ourselves in another situation from which we must extricate ourselves.

We have discussed the need of a childlike faith, which arises in verses 15-17, quite thoroughly, as well as the episode of the rich man in verses 18-27. Someone once asked me why the rich were singled out for disparagement, but they are not. Probably the most misquoted text in the Bible is the saying “money is the root of all evil,” as it actually is “the *love* of money.” There

is certainly nothing wrong with having money. People forget Jesus lived very well. He believed that as a son of God he was entitled to the good of the earth and he had been given dominion over his earth. I cannot picture anyone who has been given dominion then saying "I will take the least of it for myself; I will starve and go with few clothes and live in a hovel because I want to be a better man." This is false and ridiculous thinking. It is this misconception which is one of the reasons for the church's very wrong idea that poverty is a sign of holiness. It is ludicrous since we live in the kind of a world that can supply us with everything we need. We are discovering more and more elements which can provide a better living and enable us to live on a higher level of good. This was put there for us to use. *But* if you make money, or anything else, your god then you have trouble. You can substitute any word and say "Power is the root of all evil" or "Love is the root of all evil" – for even love, if it is extremely possessive, can make a hell on earth for people. When we make a fetish of anything we are creating evil for ourselves.

In this instance the man wanted to follow Jesus but he could not put God first. If he had said that he would give up everything to follow Jesus, I am sure Jesus would have said that this was not necessary, but the point was that he could not let go of his wealth. We see the same principle in other areas of life. If we cling to something or are possessive of it, there comes a time when it is taken away from us. Then, when we get past this, if we have a growing intelligence, we will look back and see where we were wrong, and realize that it is a good thing we lost it. This specifically deals with, not just the rich young man, but with the idea of all substance. It is another aspect of the statement that "to him that hath shall be given . . ." It is also the story of Job.

I do not think verses 31-34 require additional comment. Verses 35-43 give an example of instantaneous healing which brings up the question of time. The higher you get in consciousness, the less time matters. It is difficult to describe the locations of planes of being and since we are three-dimensional beings we usually say first, second, third and fourth plane, which is not an exact description, but for the purpose of discussion we will use those terms. Similarly the phrase "the higher you get in consciousness" should be "the more our consciousness expands" or "the wider our consciousness becomes," because we are the center of our own universe and we live in a circle. But – the higher we get in consciousness the more we transcend time, and

the more power we have to make the planes below that consciousness immediately fall into line. If we work out a situation on the physical plane we know it takes a certain time-space element, whereas if we have a spiritual consciousness the physical plane, being the closest and densest, will immediately conform to the emotional and mental. This is one of the most important concepts to realize, not only from the point of demonstration but from the point of your own development.

I have often said that we could reach the highest development and understanding in the twinkling of an eye, even though I do not think we will because we are too firmly embedded in the idea that it must take time. Even those of us who have to some degree overcome time do not believe that we could reach that pitch of consciousness in a moment. Usually we only transcend time when we have a great need and in the urgency of that moment we have an instantaneous healing. Judge Troward's statement is a guide in understanding this: "Principle is never limited by precedent." Just because it has never happened before does not mean it cannot happen now.

When we meditate, we are trying to align ourselves with God on the plane of spiritual consciousness. You cannot do this by force. The emotional force of desperation which creates the instantaneous healing cannot bring the individual into alignment with the Presence within him. The only way to achieve this is by meditation, and this is its sole purpose, which raises an interesting point. We know there are no big or little problems with God and yet we say "this is a very important thing to overcome or to realize." Why are not all our ideas important? Why do we reserve the sense of importance for an emergency? If we train ourselves to live on the spiritual level of consciousness we will not say "This is important, so I must work hard"; our work will be uniformly good. Once again, "effortless effort" is the secret of all work. If you say a thing is terribly important you are making a law for yourself by saying that the rest of your life is not important, and this is not true. We should want to achieve the fullness of good now, and if we do not, we get an uneven development and growth.

We must reduce these ideas to their lowest common denominator and strip them of the intellectual wrappings and the various decrees we have made for ourselves. In another sense you might say that effortless effort is complete detachment. Detachment does not mean disinterest or cold disdain towards anything that happens, but it means being detached from any negative concept.

You are so strongly convinced of the Presence of God in you and and that you are a child of God who has the power of the Word, that it does not matter whether a problem seems big or little. We usually make small demonstrations because we do not attach much significance to them: when we consider a thing to be terribly important we make it that much more difficult to overcome. We do this in our own minds and by our judgment of a situation.

I am trying to bring home a point which none of us sufficiently realizes, and that is the tremendous power of the Word which we all have. We are constantly demonstrating that power, but more often negatively than positively. We never stop demonstrating. When our words are clothed in the belief that they are going to demonstrate then nothing can stop it, but we constantly limit ourselves. "Thou shalt not limit the Holy One of Israel": we should not limit the Presence of God within us. We read this, think it is beautiful and then go right on doing the opposite because we are not sufficiently aware of the degree of negation which we all have.

CHAPTER 19. In verses 1-10, Zaccheus was an unpopular usurer who apparently demanded each pound of flesh in return. He was engaged in commercial matters, which are not supposed to be spiritual, yet this was the man with whom Jesus decided to spend time. This caused a great protest against Jesus, for people were horrified that he would visit such a man. Jesus, however, saw qualities in him which the others were unable to see. Furthermore, Zaccheus felt that he should make amends wherever he could, and undoubtedly was very generous to the poor. Jesus then uses the parable in 11-27 to point out that it is unimportant what we do as long as we are a good and faithful custodian in every sense of the word.

The purpose of the triumphal entry in verses 28-42 was as the crowning symbol of the fact that he was the son of Man and the manifested son of God. Jesus had come to the culmination of his career: he allows himself to be crucified so that he can prove there is no death, but he does it in the full recognition that he is the son of God. The remaining material in this chapter is a repetition of the accounts given in Mark and Matthew which I believe we covered in sufficient detail for us to continue with the next chapter.

CHAPTER 20. We certainly get a vivid picture of a precise and brilliant mentality from the trap Jesus sets for the scribes in verses 1-8. We have already discussed this together with the parable of the vineyard. In verse 18 we have another variation of

the concept that "he who would find his life must lose it" put in the form that whoever works against the spiritual life will encounter all sorts of difficulty. It of course does not mean that the person will be literally ground to powder, but that he will not fare too well. Karmic law is nothing to take lightly: whoever is touched by it is broken in the sense that their life changes. Broken is a bad word, but there is no one who has not experienced a point in his life where it seemed that everything worthwhile was gone. Then they begin to rebuild their life or, so to speak, resurrect. However, once you are in metaphysics your life also begins to change, but in the sense that "old things are passed away, behold, I make all things new."

We have discussed verse 25 in Matthew and Mark, but there is another aspect to the subject as it applies to people who think it is wrong to get physical help. What do you think Jesus meant by "render unto Caesar" from that point of view? You are a spiritual being but you have not been able to totally manifest that physically and emotionally as yet. If you find you are unable to accomplish a healing from the spiritual plane, what is wrong with using the planes below it? I prefer to have a spiritual healing, but if I find I cannot do so I do not think that I am committing a sin by using other means. This is another meaning of the phrase because Caesar represents the physical plane.

Now, as we are physical human beings as well as divine human beings we are going to have to conform to the laws of the plane on which we live. There will never come a time when we can do without physical food, for instance. On the other hand, when you make an instantaneous physical healing it occurs because, to the degree that your consciousness was raised above the level of the physical plane, the physical organism was changed. It must then follow that we can extend this power to the degree that we can take this body and dissolve it immediately instead of waiting for the process to take time: this is known as transcending. This is an extreme example which takes a high degree of consciousness, but it is possible and a few people have done it. In a lesser way, suppose you find yourself extremely terrified about a situation and your body begins to shake. You begin to treat and tell that body to be still and suddenly you find that it is still and the uneasiness is gone. This is a very simple example of the same law which functions on each plane of being in accordance with our belief. This is why, if we learn the laws and apply them rightly we can do, as Jesus said, all of the things which he did and even greater.



It depends entirely on ourselves.

As we have seen in the other Gospels, the resurrection in verses 27-38 is not a physical one. Jesus tells them that marriage does not exist on the etheric plane: it is only a property of the physical plane. Here, we are three-dimensional beings and must function as such and according to the laws of physical reproduction. These laws were behind the original family concept and marriage evolved from that to protect the members of the family.

In verses 39-47 Jesus could have gone into a discussion of occult principles but avoided it because of their limited understanding. His answer to the scribes is that love (David) brings forth the conscious contact with God, or the New Birth. He apparently did not want to discuss this with them, and tells them why in verses 46-47. He was infuriated by their spiritual pride and the way they dominated the Jews and did nothing for those in need. So he says, in effect, how dare they try to question him on the inner teaching when they were so unclean in their attitude.

CHAPTER 21. The story of the widow's mite in verses 1-4 belongs with the material in the previous chapter. It obviously has no connection with the rest of the chapter (5-38) which is, again, a recapitulation of Matthew 24-25.

CHAPTER 22. We are familiar with the material in verses 1-13 but there is a variation in verse 10 which is interesting. As we know, water is the symbol of the emotions, and Jesus is telling them what is going to happen, so this is an indication of the beginning of emotional development for the coming events.

Compared with the other Gospels, there are a number of inclusions in verses 14-38. Matthew and Mark treated the Last Supper and the other material in this section separately. There has also been a bit of tampering with the text itself to promote the idea that Jesus was the sacrificial lamb.

I do not personally care for ritual, but I believe that a certain amount and quality is "in character" for all of us. For instance, attendance should be as steady as possible in our lecture group. The fact that we are occupied with one subject and one goal begins to build an ability to handle the power within ourselves as well as in the group as a whole. This is a very minute part of ritual. There is a certain "etheric fellowship" in which we partake. And what is specifically meant here by the symbol of the bread and wine is this communion in a common cause or bond. But, incredibly, in orthodox Christian teaching this has descended to the point where it is supposed to represent the actual physical body

of Jesus.

From another point of view, as you travel through cities you find that each has a unique "flavor" because the people who live there have certain things in common. People say they can always spot a New Yorker, not because he differs in appearance, but because he radiates something that is a part of the atmosphere in which he lives. In the same way, when metaphysicians meet we contribute to each other and build our own group atmosphere. And the symbolism behind the Last Supper is the communion between spirit and desire.

There is another aspect to this ritual. Jesus had his own plan which he had come to put into effect: to teach. The strange part of the orthodox interpretation is that his teaching is the one aspect of the Gospels that is stressed the least. He is conceived of as a saviour, as he is in the sense that he taught us what we could do for ourselves, but he did not say he was going to do it for us. If he *could* be the atonement for our sins, why did he teach that we would reap what we sow? He knew what he was going to do and why, and if this was his conception he could have said "I am going to die for you so you need not worry any more because all of your sins are forgiven." He did not say that. Instead, the entire Sermon on the Mount is based on the Law of Cause and Effect. Somehow the churches feel that logic does not enter into this; yet if there is no logical conclusion to a statement it cannot be true. Always remember, the definition of truth is that which is true on every plane of being—"As above, so below; as within, so without."

Notice that this account of Jesus praying on the Mount of Olives is slightly different than the other accounts of the garden at Gethsemane. There were only the three disciples with him when he prayed, and Jesus returned to them three times. Furthermore, he did not speak in terms of their temptation, as in verse 46; his feeling was rather that they should have been able to keep awake even though they were physically exhausted. But as we also find in this version, I have no doubt that at that moment, and for the first time, he was sorry he had chosen this course. I cannot picture Jesus relishing the idea of being crucified even though he had the power to control pain. Also, when the priest's ear was cut off, Jesus healed him. If he could do that, he could have saved himself. This is another incongruity in the portrayal of the churches.

We have covered the account of the arrest and trial (47-65) before. However, it is interesting that no matter how familiar we

may be with the story of Peter's denial, it is still startling each time it is read. It shows that terror can affect us to the extent that we can momentarily forget the most important things in our lives.

There is also a significant difference in this version of the trial. It clearly brings out the fact that when Jesus refers to himself it is as the son of Man (verse 67) and when he refers to the Presence of God within him he speaks of the son of God. In this light his reply in verse 70 "Ye say that I am" gives a different picture.

CHAPTER 23. There are some interesting ideas for speculation in verses 1-25. I would say that Pilate's role in that particular lifetime was to come to the point where he had the courage to stand up for what he believed. On the other hand, if Pilate had the courage of his convictions at that moment, would the events have occurred? They no doubt would have taken place in a larger framework, for this was part of a larger plan. In the New Testament we find two outlines; one is what man did to man and the other is the Divine Plan. In all the commentaries on the Bible I have read, nothing deals with that Divine Plan. The writers' focus is on how Jesus descended from being the saviour of the people to being their scapegoat when they rose up against him. The incongruity in this is that he had the power to have stopped the events on the human level at any time. However, the plan for humanity was that this particular event would raise human understanding to a peak it had never before reached, so Jesus allowed it to happen.

Unfortunately for our understanding our focus is always on the small part of life. I think the more deeply involved in metaphysics we become the more we realize that there really is no death. But the majority of people, particularly those of the orthodox creeds, see only that Jesus suffered for us and died—even though this is contrary to what he says in the Gospels. It is strange that even those people who believe in the miracles still think that all of a sudden his power stopped and he was helpless. This is theology. It is man-made thought and has nothing to do with what actually happened.

You can see that verses 27-31 are the work of editors. This does not sound like Jesus and you can almost tell by the rhythm of the words what has been inserted. Once again, this is similar in tone to Matthew 24-25. Some people think that the conversation with the criminal is an editorial interpolation, but I have always felt that this is true, although there is little to verify it. It has a true ring, for one thing, and certainly the second criminal's experience of a sudden awakening has occurred to many people.

I do not think the remainder of the chapter needs further explanation since there are only slight variations from the other Gospels.

CHAPTER 24. The variations in verses 1-12 are slight and need no comment, and we have covered the essentials of the story.

Once again, verse 26 does not sound like Jesus, and I do not think that "suffered" was the word originally used. On the other hand, the use of the word "suffer" at that time was quite different from ours, as we find in "suffer little children" where it means permit or allow. Also, as we begin John, which has more of the actual teaching of Jesus than the other Gospels, we will find a completely different tone. There is no idea of suffering or pity. On the contrary, we find an almost triumphal tone which differs from the Synoptic Gospels.

Another aspect to this section is brought out in a different way in the Gospel of John when Jesus felt for the moment as he looked at the faces in the jeering crowd, "why did I bother?" We also found a touch of this in the other Gospels as he approached this experience knowing that the disciples still did not understand. Here, even though there was a witness to the fact that he had resurrected they did not want to believe it. I would think that the entire period after the resurrection was a very annoying experience, and he may well have wondered, "What did I do it for? How long will it take them to understand?" They heard him speak of this again and again, yet we see here their astonishment and almost obdurate disbelief even after he takes food to prove it to them.

It is not as if these men were hearing something new to them. First, they had an expectation of a messiah and they consciously or unconsciously pinned this title on Jesus. Secondly, Jesus' power was so strong that, without knowing a thing about him, when he said "come" they immediately left everything and followed him. So there was a certain subconscious knowledge that completely responded to him, and that is a powerful influence. It would stand to reason that with this kind of response, even though they might not intellectually grasp what was meant, after hearing it day after day for three years, they would begin to realize that he must mean what he said. Yet John was the only one who believed this.

This was not a completely new concept because it was part of the Old Testament where Moses, for one, translated his body. Our concept of death was completely foreign to them since it was a frequent occurrence in their day for people to have contact with those who had passed on. So they even had that experience. We say that one of the purposes of Jesus going through this experi-

ence was to teach us there is no death, and if this belief in the continuity of life was so widespread and the prophets themselves translated, then what did Jesus death accomplish in addition to this? Jesus made a prediction of what would happen, he gave himself a time limit in which it would take place and he produced the events, which no one else has ever done.

The question might arise that since Jesus knew the pattern of his life, would he not also know how long it would take them to grasp it? Our pattern of life is not concerned with the results on other people: it is concerned with the thing to be done. I am sure he expected a wider acceptance than he received. Anyone who makes a healing infinitesimally affects others in a positive way, but how much will be accepted we are unable to gauge. There will come a time when everyone will know and live by these concepts, but no man can say when that will happen in the physical realm and God is not telling us. It all depends on how much effort you and I put in on working on ourselves.

I do not believe that Jesus ascended as it is described in verse 51. This is a report by Luke who was not an eyewitness. Luke was a brilliant, well-educated physician, and a bit of a romanticist. He must have been a mystic to some degree to understand even a little of what Jesus had come to do, but he was also the type of man who had to surround Jesus with an aura of the supernatural. It does not detract from the figure of Jesus to say that one of the things which has held the human race back is this necessity to clothe him in a supernatural aura. Let me repeat, if Jesus was God there would be no sense in trying to emulate him, for we cannot compete with God. People do not want to realize this for two main reasons. First, we would like to have an excuse for not entering into the "competition" and that concept supplies us with an excuse; and second, we do not fully realize what Jesus meant and continually stressed when he spoke of himself as both the son of God and the son of Man.

For instance, when I say in meditation "I am divine spirit, I am the child of God" I am speaking for the Godlike part of me which is the divine within each human being. But that Godlike part is clothed in a physical body living a physical life on a physical plane. This was just as true of Jesus. And when, in verses 38-43, he eats with the disciples it is to prove to them that he is a physical being and he is not God. If Jesus said "all these things shall ye do and even greater ones" and Jesus was God, how can you or I do greater things than God? It is impossible. He says

"Not I, but the father within doeth the works." Then who is his father? Is his father my father? These are questions that must arise, yet the most brilliant minds stop thinking when it comes to religious ideas.

The further away from the actual figure of Jesus these writers were, the less was understood. There are still people who argue whether or not there was an actual figure of Jesus. It is possible that the records were lost in the destruction of Jerusalem, or that his followers were so few that he was not recorded historically at that time. Either may be true, and we have no way of knowing until some archaeologist finds something to testify to it. But the Bible is the greatest testimony: if you follow what Jesus said, you find it works. He is known by his fruits, and I think that is far greater than any historical or political record. It is a greater testimony of his being here than whether someone finds a scroll with his name on it. I might add that there is historic reference to the disciples, if not to Jesus, mainly because they traveled widely and he remained in the vicinity of Galilee.

It has also been argued that since the basis of his teaching is the same as the basis of other religions, it may have been put together from the other sources. It is possible except that this is an account of a living figure who not only taught in the midst of people, but who demonstrated everything he taught. Moreover, the teaching is highly personal. It is not clothed in the impersonal terminology of the Rig Veda or Upanishads, but in a form that is applicable to anyone who wants to try it. And anyone who tries it will find that the fruits are good, which is the one unfailing test.

This teaching has altered the course of the world much more than we realize. I often say that Christianity, like real capitalism, has never been tried. There have always been a handful of people throughout the world who have carried it forth, and they are the ones who keep humanity on a fairly steady course, but we have finally reached the point where most people are at least seeking the truth. Furthermore, the tendency of those who were teachable was to lean on the teacher. Now humanity has evolved to the point where it can begin to see the Pattern in the Mount for it, and if it wants to work for it, it can. It is about time we stood on our own feet.

With Luke, we come to the end of the Synoptic Gospels. We now have a comprehensive idea of the life of Jesus during the three years of his ministry. We also have learned something of his method of teaching and healing. In other words, we now should be able to apply our understanding in our daily lives. This would include helping others, wherever and whenever the occasion arises.

So far, we have been concerned with the historical and physical aspects. Now we come to what some might call the philosophy, and others, the mystical part of the teaching. Strangely enough, it is John, the youngest of the disciples, who understood what Jesus was teaching, and then gives us the real meaning.

"Him that hath an ear, let him hear."

A. B.

Thank you, and God bless  
you.

Mildred Haun



## Seven Steps in Demonstration

**Desire:** Get a strong enthusiasm for that which you want in your life, a real longing for something which is not there now.

**Decision:** Know definitely what it is that you want, what it is that you want to do, or have, and be willing to pay in spiritual values.

**Ask:** [When sure and enthusiastic] ask for it in simple, concise language...

**Believe:** in the accomplishment with strong faith, consciously and subconsciously].

**Work at it** ... a few minutes daily in seeing yourself in the finished picture. Never outline details, but rather see yourself enjoying the particular thing ...

**Feel gratitude.** Always remember to say, "Thank you God," and begin to feel the gratitude in your heart. The most powerful prayer we can ever make are those three words, provided we really feel it.

**Feel expectancy.** Train yourself to live in a state of happy expectancy ... Act it until it becomes part of you, as it must and will.

These are the seven steps. Follow them and they will bring you whatever it is that you need.

## \*FORMULA FOR DEMONSTRATION

( A demonstration is answered prayer..  
the manifestation of the Presence,  
Power and Love of God. )

" **A**sk And Ye Shall Receive,

**S**eek And Ye Shall Find,

**K**nock And It Shall Be

Opened unto you"

- *JESUS*

(\*The formula is ASK .... Mildred Mann )

VOLUME 26

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