

VOLUME 24

THE BIBLE SERIES

A METAPHYSICAL
AND SYMBOLICAL
INTERPRETATION OF

The Bible

by

Mildred Mann

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AND SYMBOLICAL
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*Thank you, and God bless
you.*

Mildred Mann

Author of

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?

Published by

THE SOCIETY OF PRAGMATIC MYSTICISM

101 West 57th Street

New York 19, N.Y.

The fullest account of the life and ministry of Jesus is found in the Gospel of Matthew. It also is the only one which contains the complete version of the Sermon on the Mount.

I believe it is a wonderful idea to meditate on the Sermon, and try to live according to its precepts, for one month. You will find that this will bring wonderful changes, not only in your outer life, but in your inner life, where it is even more important.

You will not only find your problems disappear, but you have opened the door "inside" not only to the touch of God, but the voice of God.

M. M.

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,

Seek And Ye Shall Find,

Knock And It Shall Be

Opened unto you"

- *JESUS*

(*The formula is ASK Mildred Mann)

[illegible][illegible]

High"—a statement which is recorded in *all* the Gospels.
For them, Jesus was the only son of God—until Pentecost.

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are angels, and we discussed the subject in the Old Testament. They do not have wings, but wings symbolize the uplifted consciousness and so have been associated with them. However, there is no historical proof that what is related here actually occurred. Is it symbolic or did it happen? I personally believe it is true, because people can get sufficiently high in consciousness to contact the angels and no one had a higher consciousness than Jesus.

In verse 9 we are told that the disciples came and held Jesus by the feet and worshipped him. It was a custom in the East for a person to prostrate himself in front of a great personage as an act of devotion. They might also have done this from a desire for assurance of Jesus' physical presence. However, as a result of his resurrection Jesus had assumed such proportions in their minds that it seems more likely that it was an act of worship. The symbolic element is also present, since the feet symbolize understanding and wisdom. This is also true of verse 18 where the disciples are told to go to a certain mountain, which symbolizes the upraised consciousness.

Jesus certainly would not have said, in verse 19, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." These are the words of ecclesiasticism, and were added by those who were formulating the early Christian ritual. If he had given such instruction at that time it would have been, in effect, "Go and spread the teaching."

In verse 9, whether you care to read it symbolically or literally, there remains for the disciples, and unfortunately for us, the element of wonder. In spite of the fact that they spent more than three years in his constant company they still did not understand what he was trying to teach them until they had their own experience at the day of Pentecost. They were so overcome by his resurrection that they had to physically touch him to determine whether he was real or a discarnate entity. It is one of the most amazing things in the New Testament. They never could understand when he said "I am the son of God," he did not refer to himself alone, even though he also says, "have ye not heard it said, ye are gods and sons of the Most

This account, as has been the case before, alternates between the symbolic and the literal statement. For instance, I am perfectly sure that there was an earthquake but, although graves could have been opened by such a quake, I believe that the last part of verses 53 and 54 was added in order to emphasize the tremendous impact of the event. It was an overwhelmingly important and cataclysmic moment of history. Certainly God did not send the earthquake, but it was caused by the intense feelings of the people who were for and against the event. The thousands who followed Jesus were emotionally torn to pieces by what occurred, and there were also those who wanted it to happen.

On the other hand, should the graves have been opened — practically speaking, the remains of the bodies would not be intact. Furthermore, there is no reference to this in the other Gospels, which is a point of corroboration. You might say it was an etheric vision, which is quite possible and was quite accepted at that time. However, I do not think that many of them in that moment of panic would have been open enough to see anything. If you are terrified and emotionally upset, there is no possibility whatsoever of etheric vision or any form of sensitivity. Panic completely closes off this ability.

We might ask ourselves, about verses 60-66, what we believe is possible. How much do you think can really happen? Is it possible for a human being, even as greatly developed as Jesus, to be so powerful that although he is out of his body, he is still able to move a boulder by the power of his thought? It is fascinating to see that despite the fact the temple priests made light of Jesus' ability to do this, there remains an element of belief. Furthermore, ironically enough, they quote him as saying "after three days I will rise again," and yet they had accused him of referring to the temple in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER 28 again alternates between the symbolic and the literal and we should remember the points which we mentioned before as we read it. We will see that the events of the Crucifixion and Resurrection differ considerably in the four Gospels. Matthew was reporting what was told to him and he did not write it down until many years after this occurred. We must remember that this is not a historically true account, and that certain texts were added years later, which we will see as we encounter them.

With this in mind, do you think this was an angel? There

MATTHEW (Part Two)

CHAPTER 12. Since we discussed both Jesus' attitude towards the sabbath and the Pharisees' reaction in the Introduction, I will only remind you here that the sabbath is also a symbol for that moment of peace which comes at the end of a meditation. Jesus was at the point where his consciousness was a continual sabbath, so to speak, not in the sense of ritual, but in the sense of remaining in a state of inner security and peace where nothing outside could disturb him. This will be true of all of us one day.

There is a great lesson about healing in this next section, beginning with the episode of the withered hand in verses 10-13. Healing is an ability we all have, if we have the desire, and so we will briefly review some of the facts about it. First of all, it is a spiritual law that we have no right to invade the inner privacy of a human being by using spiritual treatment unless we are requested by either the person himself or someone close to him. We also have the privilege of doing so without the request of the person involved if that person is related or emotionally close to us. This is because spiritual treatment can change a person's Karma, and we do not have the right to change or attempt to change Karma unless we are requested to do so. One reason for this is that we could change it before the person was ready to acknowledge or make the change, which would only make them miserable and would also add to our own Karma, as we would have taken on their responsibility. There are certain metaphysical teachers who will not even treat anyone because of this possibility. However, the wonderful thing about metaphysics is that we do not rely on our own concept of what we think should or should not happen: we treat from the point of view that the Law is now manifesting that which is right for the person. We do not attempt to dictate the way it manifests.

How do we heal? We do not heal, actually. The Presence of God in us contacts the Presence of God in the person who is treated and a healing results. It has nothing whatsoever to do with the healer, in the real sense. All healing works on a

telepathic principle. A physical healing results from healing which takes place in the subconscious mind of the person. Whatever the subconscious cause of the difficulty may be, it does not have to be consciously known or worked on in order to have a healing. In verse 13 we are told "Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched it forth: and it was restored whole, like as the other." The man did not go through a process of conscious reasoning about the cause of his paralysis, nor did he even know what it was—nor did Jesus comment on it. The power of God in Jesus contacted the power of God in the man, and the cause and its effects were immediately wiped out.

The first requirement for healing is desire. Anyone can heal, but if you are a healer you have this ability because the love of humanity is strong in you. It would not matter whether the greatest or the most horrible human being were in trouble: when you hear about it, the impulse, the desire, is to do something to help. Then—if you are asked for that help—you are given the facts about the person and you treat him. For example, suppose I were asked to heal someone I had never met or had conscious contact with, what would I do? I would sit down very quietly and call their name—let us say it was Joan—and I would say something to this effect: "Joan, you are Divine Spirit. You are a child of God. You are created by God as I am created by God, and in Spirit you are perfect as I and every other human being are perfect. I give thanks that that perfection is manifesting now through your mentality, your emotions, your physical body. I give thanks for a healing now." That is the treatment.

Now, what happens to that treatment? 1) It goes out to the person. 2) It is empowered by my own desire to help another human being. 3) Since I am trained as a healer, I have a certain amount of concentration and I send this thought until it hits the subconscious mind of the person I am trying to reach. It then eradicates the wrong until there is hardly any memory of the event that caused the illness, and the healing takes place. My thought is a thought of perfect good and, as we have heard time and again, the power of good wipes out the power of evil.

As far as we are concerned in healing ourselves the same thing applies. When we raise our consciousness to the level where we contact the Presence of God within us we wipe out whatever is causing the trouble in the subconscious and we have a healing. We have to do nothing more than that.

acceptance and yet willingly give his life for them. Isaiah's understanding was not that great that he could picture a man as consciously, willingly accepting this and allowing it to take place. There are only two moments in Jesus' life of which we have any knowledge, where he is momentarily sunk by the weight of the realization that his tremendous sacrifice would not be fulfilled in its purpose for a very long time to come: in Gethsemane and on the cross. Other than that his was a life of vibrant joy.

Actually it was a tragedy for people of a kind which Isaiah and people to this day have not understood. Jesus came knowing what could be achieved. People were given, as usual, two choices. One, the choice of following and, at least to the degree of which they were individually capable, reaching that level of understanding where the fear of death would have gone—without the anguish and the crucifixion. Or, the choice of growing the hard way. Since Jesus evidently felt that their progress and his success were not sufficient, he realized the other way, the way of the cross, was the only way to show them and leave a lasting impression. But there is always the other way. Always.

With verses 38-60 we find a variation of accounts in the Gospels. For instance, in the episode of the two thieves, in Luke's account one thief says to Jesus that he believes in him and Jesus replies that he will be with Jesus that day in paradise. Matthew's account differs decidedly from this. However, here we once more find the total misunderstanding of his prediction concerning the temple. The people waited for the miracle which they thought, or rather dreaded, might happen: that he would come down from the cross and destroy the temple of Jerusalem. They half-believed that this might happen because they had seen or heard of the many things he had done. And, in verse 47, they even thought he was calling upon Elijah for help.

Verse 51 says that "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." Again, the temple is the physical body and this statement tells us, in other words, that the etheric body was liberated and the moment of physical death took place. It has been assumed that this referred to the rending of the veil which covers the Holy of Holies in the temple in Jerusalem, which could certainly occur in an earthquake, but I do not think this refers to it. Throughout, Jesus has spoken of his body as the temple, and this symbolizes the breaking of the etheric cord.

further because he realizes that events are fulfilling themselves.

Then in verses 19-26 we come to that section which raises the question of responsibility and has been the cause of much anti-Semitism. Actually there is no question here of the Jews being the cause of his death, for it was mainly the result of politics. Firstly, his followers, who were the foundation of Christianity, were Jews as he himself was a Jew. There was a small but politically important circle in the temple which regarded Jesus as a powerful rival to be eliminated. In one sense, these religious politicians and the Romans were instruments. In that sense it could have been a different story: there was always the possibility of a turning point. Actually it was no more the fault of the Jews than of Jesus himself.

If Jesus had been received openly; if the people had understood what he said; if there had been more honesty in the land, then the episode of Gethsemane, when even Jesus wondered if it was possible to avoid this, would not have had the same result. The possibility of a choice always existed. If, in other words, the people had lifted themselves to a higher state of consciousness, this would not have been necessary. There are always two ways of growth: the way of suffering or the way of intelligence. At this point there simply was not enough intelligence for his teaching to be absorbed. So he decided he would give up his life in order to prove to people that what he taught was true. He would remove the last fear, the fear of death. There was never any reason for the Jews and Christians to make war upon each other.

Verses 26-37 relate the story of the Crucifixion very simply and I would suggest that you re-read Isaiah 53, an extremely beautiful chapter, in the light of this and give it some thought. It is a very clear portrait of the Messiah to come, written five hundred years before Jesus. However, even Isaiah, with his understanding at that time, could not see how anyone could cheerfully go through oppression and affliction and give up his life, and so he calls him the "man of sorrows." It is interesting because Isaiah was a very remarkable man who was in exile at the time he wrote that chapter and, even though he experienced some very hard times, he kept his own spirits high and so was able to lift the spirits of his people. Yet it was beyond him to envision an innocent man—he does not make the distinction between a human being or a divine representative—who is able to bear the brunt of peoples' wrongdoing and wrong

One other point. What do we do if the problem repeats itself or has been with us for a long time, as in the case of a chronic problem? If the problem repeats itself it means that we have effected a cure, not a healing, and the subconscious problem has not been eradicated. In that case we do not probe to see what is wrong but we repeat our treatment. We should be so high in consciousness that we have only to speak the Word to change an outer condition, but more often we are not. What happens in the case of a problem which has continued for a long time, something which we call a chronic problem? We treat it and think we are giving that treatment our full belief, but when we see the situation has not changed, we know this is not the case. It then behooves us to look inside ourselves and see why we are blocking ourselves. If you speak the Word to overcome a problem in the morning, and it is solved by tonight, for heaven's sake, do not look for the reasons why it was there. But when that healing is delayed for a week or two or when, through our own growth, we become aware of the existence of negative qualities that have been dormant, then it is well to see what is behind them. Unless we do, they can create trouble for us in time. For example, if you see that you are jealous of someone, you should find out why. You would probably find out that there is a fear of competition in some area of your life. Then you treat that. The main reason why we deal with the subconscious and the way it functions is because we are all, unfortunately, at that grade of metaphysical development where we need to know these things: we have not yet reached the point where we can say to another person or to ourselves, "Stretch forth thy hand" and heal. That is our goal.

To return to Matthew, in verse 14 we are told that "great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all." I think we should be able to understand how it was possible after this review. In verse 16 we are told that Jesus again said that they should tell no one. *The Interpreter's Bible* says that Matthew attributed this to Jesus' sense of humility, and so he introduced the quotation from Isaiah in verses 17-21. We have already mentioned that the real reason for this is to allow the subconscious to absorb the healing.

In verse 22 we are told that a man was brought to Jesus who was believed to be possessed because he was blind and dumb. It seems fairly certain that rather than being a case of

possession, this was a person who was blind and dumb since birth, which in those days was considered to be the work of Satan. Those who were incapacitated from birth were thought to have been cursed by the devil in punishment for—and this was a horrible idea—something their parents had done. This dates back to the Second Commandment.

Jesus knew that this belief was held by the people and he speaks to them, as well as to the Pharisees, in verses 25-37. He points out that if he performed the work of the devil he would have no joy in healing a man: if he were a black magician he would not heal or undo the work of evil. It is a startlingly clear logic, and Jesus never violates logic.

Since God is the One Presence and the One Power, what are the forces of Evil that are waging the battle to which Jesus refers? There have always been those who have been in advance of the race. One of these was a being whom we speak of today in allegorical terms. His was a mind which had gone astray: a great mind on the level of Jesus', so highly developed that he could conceive of Evil and find people to execute that evil. He is beautifully described in Isaiah 14 as Lucifer, the morning star, who fell from heaven.

The impulse that drove this mind was a lust for power, and there have always been people who have been driven by this same impulse throughout the ages. Jesus says "he that is not with me is against me" and we might say, in other words, that humanity is divided into two camps: those of us who are the followers of the way of Jesus and those who follow the other. Where you find people who can be bestial and enjoy seeing their fellowman tortured and inflict those tortures, you know they have the "mark of Cain," which is another term for this. There have always been people who followed the left path and those who follow the right path. The strange thing is that those on the right path have always been far more numerous than the others, but those on the left were far more decisive in what they wanted and far more ruthless in their means of achieving it. Whether or not they consciously believed they were worshipping evil, they certainly performed the works of evil. On the other hand, the "good people" were for the most part without mentality or imagination, and they just plodded along, getting thrown off the life belt to come back and do the same thing all over again. For the first time in the evolution of the race we have reached the point where the people on the

Jesus as much as anyone, had reached such a point of terror that he denied knowing him. When he saw that Jesus actually was arrested and realized what might happen to him as well, this big, brave man who would have laid down his life for Jesus, in this moment of weakness denied him not once, but three times. This is very typical of human nature, and can happen to many people under stress. I do not think we can criticize them for it; we can only feel sorry for them. You can imagine what Peter felt like when he heard the cock crow and remembered what Jesus had said. It is described very simply here: "He went out, and wept bitterly," because he realized his own weakness.

CHAPTER 27. We should note one thing in verses 1-5. We have already discussed the idea that there had to be a Judas and that we do not know his motivation. But we can tell one thing from this—that it could only be the action of a man who did not realize fully what he was doing, because Judas was so appalled at his own realization of what the truth, to some degree, was, that he took his own life. This is obviously not the act of a man who perpetrated a crude betrayal.

In verse 6 it is interesting to see that even the temple treasurers would not take this money back: they had that much respect for traditional ideas, if nothing more. The idea of blood money stems from this incident. It was considered to be unlawful to take money which was obtained by the death of a person. There is no indication in the text as to why Judas was buried in the potter's field, which was reserved for strangers, in other words, non-Jews. If you had been a Babylonian Jew and died in Jerusalem, you would be buried in a Jewish cemetery, and this was a burial ground for strangers. It is probable that the fact that he took his own life put him outside the pale of Judaism, because suicide was regarded as an act of murder. This form of burial was their form of excommunication. Matthew relates the incident to a prophecy in the Old Testament, but actually the quotation is closer to Zechariah 11:13 than to Jeremiah.

Verses 11-17 are quite clear, I think, and require no comment. However, we should note that when the governor asked him if he was the King of the Jews, Jesus' answer was "thou sayest." Yet afterwards he is reported as having said that he was. It is another example of how quickly we condemn on the basis of mere rumor. Once again he answers them no

wilt." He says, in other words, "Is there another way to accomplish this purpose? If not, then I will go ahead and do it." So he receives and understands his answer.

We know that Jesus' next step, the Crucifixion, is the fourth great experience of the soul. Prior to this the soul goes through three other major initiations and is given increased power through each one. The emphasis on the three times Jesus prays and returns to his disciples is to symbolize the fact that this power is being stripped from him. Cabalistically the number 3 also tells us that with the death of one idea another idea is being born.

In verses 47-56 we see a picture of the disciples which most people do not realize. Here, at the moment of betrayal, the disciples forgot all of his teaching and became a group of terrified men who, when they saw their leader arrested, fled for their lives. Here we see the human side of the disciples which theology chooses to overlook in the desire to make the disciples superhuman men. They were not. They were a group of simple men and we see this most clearly here. Incidentally, as we shall see later, not all of them fled, for both Peter and John followed Jesus to the high priest's temple.

The testimony of the witness in verse 61 shows the way rumors grow from the misinterpretation of what someone is thought to have said. Time and again Jesus referred to the temple of his body, as we have seen. It may be that the witness was actually giving false testimony concerning Jesus, but it is more likely that he was one who, having heard Jesus speak of destroying the temple, thought he meant the temple in Jerusalem. He may have thought Jesus was an anarchist and that he must prevent the destruction of the temple. If we realize that the disciples themselves did not understand what he meant until it took place, it is not hard to conceive of his followers as having little understanding. Jesus said nothing in reply for that reason, as well as because he knew what the outcome would inevitably be and so let things run their appointed course.

When he was asked if he was the Christ, the son of God, he answered, "Thou hast said." In other words, he did not make this claim for himself. On the other hand, what would you say if you were asked, "Are you the Christ, the son of God?" In its real meaning we, too, would answer that we were, because Christ is God and is also present within each of us.

In verses 69-75 we find that Peter, who certainly adored

right side have won their first big victory, and they will keep on winning. It may not be a straight uphill path, which is why I have said time and time again "we may have minor outbreaks, but there will never be another world war," because for the first time those of us who believe rightly are using our heads and using our power. This is one of the reasons why the renaissance of metaphysical thought has occurred at this time.

God is the only Presence and Power to each and every one of us who really believes it. This is why I give a lecture every so often on "What Kind of A God Do You Have?" What I believe about God is not exactly what you believe about Him: you may have certain limitations and I, others. God is only an actuality to us in terms of our own realization. This is the meaning of the beautiful text "Thou shalt not limit the Holy One of Israel." But each of us does limit Him in our own way. We know by now that whatever we believe in, this is what we encounter in our lives, be it good or evil. The only way we can rid this world of evil, and I mean this, is by having absolutely no fear of it. We have nothing to fear from it. Certainly there is evil in the world which is, thank God, diminishing, and each of us has the responsibility and the ability to decrease it further and faster by strengthening our beliefs, and by the power of our thought, and this is what Jesus speaks of in verses 36 and 37.

Matthew 38-45 has been read countless times in churches, and I wonder how many have understood what he was saying, or even understood it when it was said. Throughout the Gospels we find many instances where Jesus tells his disciples about his purpose and how he is going to accomplish it. He speaks of it directly or, as in this case, indirectly, and yet they did not understand. He speaks of his body as a temple, and they think he is referring to the temple in Jerusalem. He repeatedly refers to himself as the son of Man and here, in verse 40, he says that the son of Man shall be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, yet I am certain they did not think he spoke of himself. For when we get to John 14:5 we will find that when Jesus says "whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," Thomas says, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" It is true that in this case many of the symbols are used in such a way that they did not understand, and probably they did not listen too closely. But,

as we know, this is the language of the soul, and the symbolism that is used here is not too dissimilar from what we frequently find in dreams. He concludes his symbolic description with a clear statement of the law "nature abhors a vacuum." For when we have rid ourselves of a negative quality, we must put something positive in its place.

Verses 46-50 seem to refute what Jesus teaches and we believe, that the Presence of God is in every human being, making us all spiritual brothers, for here he seems to cut off his entire family. But it refers to the statement expressed in his early childhood, "I must be about my Father's business." He is not disowning his family, for certainly he had a great love for them, and almost his last words on the cross were in concern for his mother. This is another way of saying God comes first, which is also the meaning of his advice to the young man who wanted to bury his parent. We are supposed to put God first in everything we do, think or say.

CHAPTER 13 begins with the famous parable of the sower. It is a story which Jesus uses to describe the reception of his teaching, and it applies to our own reception as well. Since it is so familiar, and an explanation is given in verses 18-23, I do not think it is necessary to discuss it in detail, other than to point out its application to ourselves. For example, we might say that the "stony places" refer to us when we have intellectually, but not subconsciously absorbed a concept. He is saying, in effect, that the "good soil" is the conscious and subconscious acceptance of the Truth which produces, in turn, fruitful effects in the individual's life.

When he is asked why he speaks in parables, Jesus says very clearly in verse 12 that those people who have understanding will comprehend what is said and will grow in that knowledge, while those who do not, cannot be made to understand, and to them the words will be meaningless. Matthew connects Jesus' words with the prophecy of Isaiah, and *The Interpreter's Bible* has an interesting comment about this: "Isaiah does not necessarily think it is God's will that the people should be unreceptive. His bitterly ironical words are for the purpose of shocking his hearers into understanding." This, very often, is Jesus' purpose as well, and may have been in this instance, although it is true that these words have been tampered with by Matthew and later editors in their attempts to make them conform to what they believed was meant.

of any number of reasons, but whatever the reason he did so as a result of conscious thought.

Then, in verses 26-30 we find that Jesus is trying to impress his disciples in a symbolic manner with the reality of inner communion. He wanted them to understand this, not only in relation to the meaning behind the Passover meal, but in the sense that there is a radiating force that emanates from one to the other in any act of communion. He symbolized this for them so that they would always remember it. He was showing them the way of communion. In verse 20 he tells them that although he will not be with them physically, he will be with them in Spirit, and he speaks of their reunion on the next plane.

He is also showing them the way of growth. The bread symbolizes the new body and the wine, the new blood in the transformation that takes place within us when we find the Presence within ourselves. He is saying that then we will have the same union within ourselves, as he had within himself. This is what the section really means. You can see quite clearly, I think, that verse 28 was interpolated for the purpose of translating this into the ritual of the church. Furthermore, *The Interpreter's Bible* says that Matthew himself added the phrase "for the remission of sins" because of the early Christian belief that Jesus shed his blood for the forgiveness of sins. Certainly it is very unlike anything Jesus himself taught. He spoke very little of sin and he said forget the past and live today—"sufficient unto the day"—so we can be fairly certain this is not an original saying.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, verses 36-46, we see that regardless of his tremendous development and understanding, this was not a happy period for Jesus, nor did he look forward to what lay ahead. We know that Jesus knew what he was going to do and had arranged for each event in this plan, and yet at the psychological moment he asks if this could be avoided. We all know that no one, and certainly not Jesus, has to do anything they do not want to do, so we might ask ourselves why he asked this question. Further, how would he know the answer? This was the anticipated climax of his life and he asks if it is possible for it not to occur. Certainly it was a great moment of human misgiving, but then why did he not walk away from it? There was nothing to prevent him from disappearing as he had done on a number of prior occasions. We are told that his prayer was "nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou

are many levels of meanings, as psychology also tells us. There are some people who wash compulsively: as soon as they touch something they must wash. It is not primarily caused by their fear of germs; it is because there is something in the subconscious that drives them to do it: they feel filthy, not physically, but subconsciously, and they want to wash it away. Another instance—what is the symbolism of eating together? The idea of oneness, of communion. We will find this is the meaning behind the ritual of the Last Supper. All of our actions have very deep-rooted meanings, and Jesus explains the meaning behind the woman's gratuitous act of appreciation.

With verses 14-30 we come to the betrayal of Jesus by Judas, who is considered to be the most infamous figure in the history of western man. There are two points we should bear in mind as we discuss this section. Firstly, as is born out by verse 2, Jesus is timing these events connected with his death to coincide with the feast of the Passover, which commemorates the death of the firstborn. Secondly, there had to be a Judas in order for Jesus to fulfill his plan. I have always felt that Judas was the most tragic figure in the whole world. On the other hand, there could never have been a crucifixion if there had not been a Judas. Jesus could not go to the officials and say "I want to be crucified to prove there is no death": someone had to betray him. This was to be Judas' unfortunate role, which is why Jesus says, in verse 24, that it would be better "for that man if he had not been born." He pitied Judas for the role he had to play and for the literal hell he would go through as a result of it.

There is an old saying which is very true that "Ignorance of the law excuses no man." Each of us has the ability to discover the truth at any given moment of our lives, if we so desire, just as we each have the ability to discipline ourselves into a completely new and different pattern of life. Certainly Judas was driven into this position by a subconscious impulse which was based on his own past Karma. But he had the ability and the opportunity to choose what he was going to do. He did not have to go to Caiaphas. No one forced him to do so: this was what he decided to do. Why, then, did he do it? There are many reasons we can attribute to him. It could have been that his concept of Jesus was a messiah who would liberate the Jews and he did this to force Jesus into a position of showing his power. It could have been jealousy. It could have been as a result

The parable of the tares in verses 24-30 is another way of saying "as ye sow, so shall ye reap," or "by their fruits ye shall know them." The parables of the mustard seed, in verse 31, and the leaven, in verse 33, are similar in meaning and have both an individual and an overall interpretation. Generally he may have presented them as a form of encouragement to his disciples to tell them that although the reception may seem discouraging, the kingdom of heaven must inevitably grow and increase.

The parables of the treasure and the pearls are again similar in meaning, which is emphasized by the parable of the net in verse 47. Each of them says in slightly different words that we must place God before anything else in our lives. Even if this means that we must forego everything that we consider part of our physical and emotional living, it is well worth it because it is the only way to reach full understanding and contact with God, as well as overcome our problems.

You and I know, because we are all guilty of this in varying degrees, that a good part of human fear stems from the possibility of being stripped of one's possessions. It is a tragic thing in our world that we very often equate the power of possessions with the power to control our lives. He brings this out here in a similar way to the story of Job. If you set your value on the things of this world, you are headed for trouble. As Paul says, "the love of money is the root of all evil." For instance, I have a great appreciation of living in a nice, pleasant manner, but I never want to forget that there is One Source for all things. Whatever we feel we are rich in, we should always remember that nothing belongs to us outright: it is *loaned* to us by One Power and One Presence, even to our own life. And, unless we are "good stewards," we will lose it in some way or other. We know that nothing happens in this outer world that does not first have a cause within. If we suddenly find, for example, that we have come into a vast inheritance, behind it is the One Presence Who is saying, "You have earned this, and it is yours for a while." This does not mean that it will be yours permanently unless you learn how to take care of it: and this refers to everything in our lives from the smallest book to life itself.

In verses 53-58 Jesus is speaking of an experience that occurs to each of us in different ways. We have all had the experience where members of our family or close friends express disbelief that we could change or suddenly develop in a different

direction. They feel that we are still the same person they raised, went to school with or worked with, and they very often refuse to accept the fact that we have greatly changed. Although Jesus knew this to be true of human nature, he nevertheless was a little bitter that he was not accepted in his own town. People who knew him could not believe that the man whom they had known from boyhood could be a great messiah: for them, this was impossible. They questioned whether his works were those of God or the devil, and then probably recounted all the anecdotes they remembered of his childhood and said, "For heaven's sake, you don't think this man has the power of God to heal blindness or restore the dead—this is ridiculous, impossible." And so, when he tried to heal there, he could not do so.

We have talked quite a bit about power in healing, and you know that you can never heal a person against his will. There is a level within the individual which is completely inviolate. It is a level of being where healing takes place and, unless you allow another person the privilege of entering, so to speak—and this is a completely conscious process—healing cannot take place. In another way, time and again people have come to me for healing to whom I have said, "We will know that you are healed now," and their reply has been "I hope so." The very fact that they "hope" means that they doubt that it can be accomplished, and unless that belief is changed the healing will take a very long time. This is one reason why absent treatment is often easier than it is to heal a person with whom you have conscious contact, for there is no conscious opposition in a person who is unaware that he is being healed.

CHAPTER 14. The story of John the Baptist in verses 1-12 is probably one of the most familiar in the Bible. Since it is quite clear I do not think we need discuss it. However, there is one thing that has always fascinated me. We have seen that John and Jesus were as opposite as day to night in their teaching and way of life. Too, there is one thing true of John: his sincerity and great love of God did not prevent him from being quite critical of others. Further, John, knowing that Jesus was the one to come, so to speak, must have been terribly upset when he saw Jesus did not live the kind of life he lived. I wonder what he really thought, or what relationship existed between them, if any—for after the Baptism we have no record

It often happens that a person will rush up to a great figure in a burst of emotion and offer them flowers or a gift. This woman offered what she held dear and—the act of anointing is a symbol for blessing—she performed a ritual of blessing. To some of the disciples, who regarded her action from a worldly point of view, this seemed to be a waste of very precious and expensive oil which, if sold, would provide money to carry on their work, and so they objected. Jesus, however, recognized the spirit of the action and also, knowing that he would not be with them much longer, realized that the act was also a commemoration of what he was about to do. He points this out to prepare them for the fact that he was going to be crucified and to strengthen their understanding of what he was doing and why.

Jesus did not regard this as an act of personal glorification or extravagance. He also knew the law which is expressed so beautifully in that lovely verse from the Sufis:

"If of thy wealth, thou hast been bereft
And of thy goods thou hast but two sous left,
Take one for bread from thy slender dole
And with the other
Buy thee a hyacinth to feed thy soul."

I sometimes think the hardest lesson we ever have to learn is the lesson of physical possessions. I have watched people struggle with all sorts of problems and have come to the conclusion that the struggle with the question of money and possessions takes a far greater toll of a human being than even the most dread disease. When it comes to money they feel "This is mine and I haven't got enough of it. I am going to hang on to it because I don't know when I am going to get any more." It even happens among metaphysicians. We just cannot see beyond the immediate physical amount. This is what the disciples are saying, in effect, and Jesus tells them to look at the overall picture.

There is another point with regard to the symbolism of the act which I would like to mention. Everything we do actually has a meaning behind it—some form of symbolism. Take the act of washing our hands: we wash them to get them clean, and think only in physical terms. However, behind the idea of cleanliness is the general symbolic reference to cleaning out the emotions. There is not one action we take that does not have a meaning in this sense. We are not always aware of it because for the most part we go through life very automatically. There

in his terror he denied ever having known him. Jesus realized the frailty of humanity very clearly and so he emphasizes the need to be vigilant.

The parables also stress that unless we stand on our own feet and take responsibility for all the things that have happened to us in the past, both good and bad, and the responsibility of recreating our lives by using the power of the Word, we will get nowhere. In the parable of the bridegroom, the wise virgins are those who followed the teaching so that they came to the point of fulfillment. Oil is the symbol of blessing and plenty as well as complete fulfillment, as in the 23rd Psalm: "My head is anointed with oil, my cup runneth over." The wise virgins are those who have lived according to the Law and come into conscious union with the Presence of God. The foolish virgins are those who may have belonged to the same group but did not do as well and when they suddenly saw this happen they said "Wait for me." And they were told, no.

The same ideas are repeated in the parable of the talents. Whereas in the preceding chapter Jesus was speaking to his generation, in this chapter he speaks to the generations to come. In the case of the talents it specifically applies to those who know the Law.

Then, from verse 31 to the end, Jesus stresses that there is no difference between human beings, regardless of race or creed. He did not recognize creeds, for he knew that we are all created by the one God.

Jesus says that when we do anything to another human being we are not only doing it against Jesus, but against ourselves and every other human being. In metaphysics we say that when anyone makes a demonstration they make it that much easier for the next person to do the same thing. We are all one although we have not recognized it too well as yet. Furthermore, if you do not, for instance, give your fellowman a "cup of water" you are insulting your own divinity because spiritually you are refusing the Presence.

In CHAPTER 26 we find the story of the anointing of Jesus by an unknown woman. Some people think she was Mary Magdalene; in the account given in John she is Mary, the sister of Martha, or she may have been just a poor woman who had been treasuring some ointment and felt impelled to anoint Jesus in tribute. However, who it was is not as important as the act itself. The woman was overcome with gratitude and appreciation.

of a meeting, so we can only speculate. Nevertheless, Jesus felt a very close love and deep respect for John and what he stood for, as well as the kind of life he lived, even though Jesus did not approve of it.

I wonder how many people believe the feeding of the multitude, in verses 13-21, actually occurred. I may not have the power to take, for example, a handkerchief and convert it into a Lincoln Continental—if I wanted one—but I do believe that if I treated for it I would receive it through some channel which God would choose. The higher you rise in consciousness, the less human intervention you need. I think our difficulty in treating is because we do not believe we can reach that consciousness where we can materialize what we need.

This is one of the prime difficulties with people who find they cannot demonstrate. They believe it cannot happen, therefore it cannot happen. Or, if they accept the fact that it can happen, they believe it must take time, and so, of course, it does. There is one thing I know for myself, as it applies to me personally or to someone who comes to me for help, and that is that I expect my Word to demonstrate instantaneously, because I know it should and must. How it happens is completely immaterial. The only thing I am interested in is that I know it can, because there is one Law.

We are learning more and more about what governs this planet, as well as our universe and the cosmos, and we are finding that there are many variations of that Law. For example, in outer space the law of gravity does not apply. We should realize that as we, figuratively, expand in the universe of thought, we also approach higher laws which are capable, at any given moment when you or I are capable of handling them, of transforming anything on the face of this planet. The reason I am stressing this is not only to get us over our intellectual and subconscious limitations, but because we should get to the point which Jesus spoke of when he said "Ye must become as a child again." If each of us works with the object of achieving demonstrations instantaneously in any or all departments of our lives, we will begin to believe more firmly in the fact that it is possible to demonstrate without the obvious human agency. This is the first step in becoming as a child again. Once you begin to demonstrate in this way, you also begin to realize that while this is a tremendous universe, there is only One Source for everything we need in our lives and we have

but to appropriate what we need by claiming it and giving thanks for it.

In verses 22-33 we find a very famous example of both the working of the law and, in Peter's case, of faith. I am sure we are all aware by now that Matthew is giving us every conceivable example of faith—the kind of faith that we talk about rather glibly and which we do not have to any great degree. Again, ask yourselves, do you believe that Jesus walked on the water? First of all, do you know that you can lighten the physical body almost to the point of weightlessness by breath control? This is the basis of many of the real feats of both yogis and Hindu fakirs. However, there is nothing occult about this, except that it comes under the heading of Yoga, which, by the way, I do not believe to be a good practice for Westerners. This is a perfectly normal bodily function. You may have had the experience of going to an osteopath who asked you to exhale the air from your body so that he could work with greater ease, and this is the same principle. I am perfectly sure that Jesus knew this and taught his disciples about it. It is probable that Peter was doing very well in applying this until he suddenly became startled by the thought of what was happening and he gasped, and that gasp could certainly create a sudden heaviness in the body which would cause him to sink.

I do think this happened. However, I do not think any of us are going to be called upon to physically walk on the water. We are called upon to do so in other departments of life where, for example, we cannot see what is ahead and are seemingly cut off from aid. When we go ahead in complete faith despite there being nothing under our feet, we suddenly find there is land.

In verses 34-36 we are given the other extreme of Peter's example in the previous incident. The diseased people of Genesareth had such faith that, we are told, they only had to "touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole." So we have the contrast between one of the group who was closest to Jesus, who had the constant benefit of his teaching and companionship and some understanding of his mission, and these people who had only heard of him. Yet they had only to touch his garment to be healed. You might say that there is a difference between walking on the water and being healed, but is there, really? If you or I had to make a choice between walking on water—faith—or having a serious

have the dawn of understanding. We speak of the birth of the Christ consciousness as the child within which, as we have seen, is the real meaning of the Virgin Birth and is what Isaiah refers to when he says "For unto us a son is born." Jesus is speaking of those people who have reached the point where that realization is almost upon them.

In verse 37 he makes a comparison between life in the days of Noah—"eat, drink and be merry"—and life in his time and the comparison between what occurred in Noah's time and what will occur with the coming of the son of Man is also implied. Furthermore, Noah and his family were the remnant who were saved and he is connecting them with the elect—those who were his followers—whom he speaks of in verse 22 when he says that for the elect's sake the days of tribulation shall be shortened.

At the beginning of this chapter, a number of times throughout, and in this concluding parable, Jesus speaks of the people who will rise up and claim that they have his powers. We will come across the story of Simeon, a black magician who crosses Paul's path, whom Paul deals with quite quickly, and there were many more. It is a little difficult for us to realize that occult development is not as unknown as we would like to believe. There have always been people who have known and used these laws. We have heard time and again: the Law is completely impersonal and can be used for good or for evil. The psychic or occult cults were far more numerous and open in those days than they are today. These people watched Jesus doing the things he did and tried to do them as well, and many of them could to a certain degree. This is true even in our day. In a similar way, healing is not limited just to good metaphysicians. Anyone can heal who has the power of concentration and belief, and many use this power in negative ways, which is what Jesus is warning against.

CHAPTER 25 is based entirely upon one theme: "To him that hath shall be given, and to him that hath not shall be taken away." This was given not only from the point of teaching them more, but to stress the meaning of what had already been taught. Certainly no one has been more privileged than those who were around him and able to hear what he taught directly, yet at the crucial point Peter denied him in fear. It was not that Peter did not love him, not that Peter would not have laid down his life for him, but that when he was taken by surprise,

was farsighted enough to know that within a few years after his death and resurrection Jerusalem would be sacked, as it was in 70 A.D. There was a very horrible series of wars which ended with the destruction of the temple and everything the Jews held dear. However, he has repeatedly said "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up," and in John 2:21 we are told that he referred to the temple of his body.

We speak of the spiritual path, and it is true—whether you are a metaphysician, Hinduist, Taoist, Jew, Catholic or anything else—at some time or other in our evolution we all will reach the point where we will go through, not the physical experiences of Jesus, but the psychological experiences these symbolize, which will bring us to our real integration.

Jesus is giving a very detailed account of what would transpire. For example, in the section we spoke of before, in verses 27-30 he refers to himself as the son of Man. We know that he always used this term, as the Bible itself does, when he refers to the human element, as the son of God is the manifestation of the Christ within. If he were using this term in a generic sense it would not be pertinent to that generation alone. He is speaking of the death and resurrection of the physical Jesus. The eagle, as we know, is the symbol of Spirit. The carcass refers to the idea that the eagle will destroy what is without worth. We know the eagle is also the symbol of metaphysical thought in the sense that it is the only bird which flies above the storm. When he speaks of the sign of the son of Man in the sky he is referring to his resurrection.

In verses 9-15 Jesus is speaking of characteristics of humanity which have existed through the ages, but he also knew that what he was going to do would bring this particular segment of time to a climax and that many people would be sorely affected by it. He knew that there were many who were trying to live life according to his teaching, but there were also many who only paid lip service. He says very simply that they are hypocrites and tells them very graphically that they will reap what they have sown. His reference to the abomination of desolation in verse 15 applies to his personal experience as well as that of his followers who were terrified. We should notice that the phrase "whoso readeth, let him understand" is added to indicate a deeper meaning.

In verse 19 he says "woe unto them that are with child" and he is speaking symbolically of those who are beginning to

operation, which would you choose? This is the kind of decision we very often have to make in our lives.

CHAPTER 15. The meaning of verses 1-20 is, I believe, quite obvious. We have discussed the fact that Jesus was a complete non-conformist when it came to the matter of old traditions. It was not that he had no use for the real purpose and meaning behind these traditions, but as he said, it is the Spirit which gives life and he objected to the lip service paid the law and its physical observance. Too—if you recall the numerous rituals and laws in Leviticus—if an orthodox Jew were to perform all the daily rituals that were supposedly necessary in the worship of God, they would have had no time for anything else, not even for prayer. Jesus said that they did not have to do these things. It was not important, for example, from the point of view of serving God, for you to wash your hands before having dinner. We know it is necessary because it is good to be clean, but certainly not because God is going to think you are a better or worse person. Jesus emphasizes what is said in Proverbs, that as a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he."

In verse 16 Jesus expresses annoyance with Peter for not understanding this. He explains that one's motivations are most important. It is not what you say, but what you do that is the important thing, and if you are going to say one thing and do another, you are going to be in trouble. Jesus also knew that teachings such as those of the Pharisees are not of lasting value and so they eventually pass away. It is true in our day that little by little we are seeing the orthodox teachings adopt a wider point of view regarding their concept of God and man's relationship to Him, and we will see more and more radical changes as we go on.

The incident of the woman from Canaan in verses 21-28 is very interesting in several ways. Firstly, one of the most important things which Jesus tried to instil in his disciples was that *every* human being is a child of God. You will no doubt recall in the Old Testament the Canaanites were not well regarded by the Jews and she, of course, knew this—yet she would not be turned away. In answering her, Jesus uses the term the "house of Israel," and certainly if anyone knew the real meaning of Israel, he did: anyone who puts God first in his life is an Israelite. He does not say "I have come to the Jews," but to "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Then, despite the fact that Jesus criticizes her for a

characteristic which he sees in her, she persists in her request for help. Jesus points out that, apparently, she was wasteful, and also had not been as kind as she should have been. But the esoteric point of the story is that she did not recognize her geographical origin as a barrier to healing. This is particularly important because when she approached Jesus the disciples were annoyed with her for doing so because she was "not of their kind." Why do you think he did not answer her at first? He was aware that his disciples felt that they were a bit superior to the Canaanites and, although he had every intention of answering her, he wanted to see what they would do. He wanted to bring out very clearly that he and his teaching were not just for them, but for everyone. Furthermore, her reply and persistence showed great courage and faith, which Jesus comments on, and so her child is instantaneously healed.

Although the incident described in verses 32-39 no doubt occurred, it is primarily a symbolic account. First of all, this is the second account in Matthew, and there are also two in Mark (6:30 and 8:1-10). In both Gospels, in the first account there are five thousand people, and in the second there are four thousand: in the first account there are five loaves and two fishes, whereas in the second there are seven loaves and a few fishes. The second versions are symbolically describing the specific development of Jesus' supernatural power. We know we have five physical senses, and that as we develop they begin to function on the inner plane of our being: the two that are added here refer to clairvoyance and clairaudience, making a 7 which also symbolizes mystic integration. The fact that there are 4,000 people here—4 being the number of physical manifestation—tells us that this was physically apparent to all who saw him. The healings listed here indicate that these were the physical manifestations of Jesus' inner growth. It is interesting to see that in Matthew the multitudes are healed, whereas in Mark's versions Jesus teaches them.

CHAPTER 16. In verses 1-12 Jesus speaks against a characteristic not only of people in his time, but ours as well. He tells them that the only sign they will be given is that of the prophet Jonas. Now you remember that Jcnah, or Jonas, was in the whale for three days—3 being the number for the manifestation of an idea—because he had very little faith. He wanted to run away from facing his own responsibilities and was not at all happy about the thing he was to do. This is a very telling

when he was less than polite about it. He certainly was outspoken here. He says, in effect, "Do not lie." Many people perform religious rituals because they want to make an impression on others, but they fool no one but themselves. Jesus believed that all worship was of the heart, not of the hand. He did not believe in ritualistic forms. There is nothing needed except the sincerity of your heart, yet for many people this does not seem to be enough. Actually, if one were to look for an easier way, and there was a choice between performing rituals and keeping your mind and heart as clean as possible, the performance of rituals is by far the easier of the two. This is a point which underlies this chapter.

CHAPTERS 24 and 25 are, for most people, probably the two most puzzling chapters in the Bible with the exception of the book of Revelation. They have caused more discussion and argument than anything else I know. People will not argue very much about the book of Revelation because they are not quite sure what is being said, but since this section seems to deal with prediction they feel that they can discuss it at great length. For example, in 24:30 there is the sentence "they shall see the son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." A certain occult school believes that Jesus is still living on the etheric plane somewhere over the Gobi Desert and this means to them that Jesus is going to return in a jet plane—the Bible, of course, could not be that explicit!

Certainly chapter 24 is in the nature of prophecy, but ask yourself if you think it is intended to extend over the span of human life or through the ages. Then read verse 34 and notice that he says "*this generation shall not pass* until all these things be fulfilled." It is very easy to understand why people regard this as a prophecy pertaining to ensuing centuries since there are individual texts which could pertain to, let us say, the World Wars, or the Inquisition, or to practically every period of war and tribulation the race has known. It does have an overall Karmic relation to these occurrences, but Jesus is talking very specifically about his own time.

This is one of the most magnificent chapters of pure symbolism we have. Jesus is speaking mainly of the episode of his own Crucifixion and Resurrection which he is embarking upon. For example, take the first two verses where he speaks of the temple and says "there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down." Certainly Jesus

the son of David. So he then asks them how it is that David calls him Lord: certainly if one had a son one would not refer to him as "my Lord." His interpretation was so far beyond them that from that time on they never asked another question.

CHAPTER 23 is quite a vehement denunciation. Since it covers the whole chapter I think we should discuss it in its entirety, rather than verse by verse. First of all, this was prompted by the fact that the Pharisees and scribes had been baiting and quizzing Jesus to such an extent that he, as we say, "let them have it." However, in doing that he also points out practically every error and misuse of which we are all guilty at some stage or other. He begins with spiritual pride and says that these men hold themselves above their fellowman and let others do their work and then take the honor for themselves. He blames them strongly for misguiding the people. He says they closed the kingdom of heaven to others by giving a completely false teaching. He accuses them quite rightly of taking all the money they can and having no pity for those with financial problems. In verse 16 he calls them blind guides and asks them how they think they can evade paying for these misdeeds. They swear by the temple and what it symbolizes, but they are only interested in the money they can obtain from it. He says, furthermore, their oath is worthless because they swear by outer forms and not by inner spiritual truth. They seek physical tithes when the real tithing is of the spirit which is something of which they know nothing. He says that to others who do not know these things they give the impression of being sanctimonious, the "chosen of God," but they are filthy within.

It is really a miracle that they allowed him to continue speaking because they were certainly guilty of these accusations. Yet, if the people had been happy with their leadership they would not be looking for the Messiah. They knew that because of the people they could not interfere at this point and certainly not openly. The temple was completely corrupt and the elders lived off the poor people for the most part. These people in turn were desperately hoping for someone who would lead them out of their misery. They were ardently impressed by Jesus and what he had done for them, so the elders realized they must seek more subtle means of quieting him.

This chapter certainly gives a clear and definite picture of Jesus as a man who feared no one. He spoke out against anyone whom he felt was doing wrong, and there were times

example for all of us. Jesus gives this as a sign because there are those people who feel they must have some sort of guarantee that a concept is true before they will accept it. For instance, people often say to me "I would believe if I could make a demonstration." The funny thing about people who say that is, if they do make a demonstration they begin to doubt that it actually was one and feel that the same thing might have occurred without their treatment. What they do not realize is that we will never make a demonstration if we regard it from the point of view that *if* it happened it would be proof for us. One of the hardest things to convince people is that God is not interested in whether or not you or I believe. He is interested in intelligence. If you and I, after all the lifetimes we have lived, have not yet learned that there is something within us that is greater than anything in the outer world; that we have been given dominion over our lives which we are supposed to exercise—God is not going to do one thing to bring us to that realization. When we bring up our doubts and say "I will make a bargain with You, God. If You prove that this is so by doing such and such, I will believe," God does not take up the proposition. This is perfectly true.

One of the most important tenets of metaphysics is that if we do anything in a spiritual life just because we expect to reap a good, the chances of reaping that good are very slim. If we live a spiritual life because we believe it is the only life to live and we want it more than anything in the world, then everything else will follow. This is why Jesus says "seek ye *first* the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." SEEK YE FIRST, the kingdom of God. He does not mince any words about it. If we are going to say, "Look, God, if You want me to be on Your side, give me proof that You are really You: I am not going to waste time and energy trying to use the Law until I know for certain." Well, then, why should God? It is a very hard truth, and is one reason why so many sincerely devout and well-meaning people pray and pray and nothing happens.

This is one of the things that it takes us a long time to realize. We do not understand that to petition and to plead with God is the worst thing we could possibly do. When we do that we are completely denying that we believe that God is good and has already given us everything we could ever need. To petition is the weakest form of prayer because it implies a doubt of God. This is why the Lord's Prayer is a series of decisive

statements and claims. Whenever Jesus voices a prayer, under any and all circumstances, it is always with complete decisiveness in knowing that it is already done. Even on the cross, he says "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." He does not say, "Please, Father, forgive them because . . ." He made a direct statement which cleared his own consciousness. I think the most important thing we could ever realize is the fact that the greatest power of meditation is not that it sways God on our behalf—this is impossible—but that it opens to us the inner realization of what we have, and are.

In verses 13-20 we find that section which, according to their interpretation is considered to be the cornerstone on which the church is built. This is fascinating in the light of what was actually said. You will notice that Jesus asks "Whom do men say that I, *the son of man*, am?" which is the term he uses when speaking of himself as a physical human being. The disciple's response in verse 14 is interesting because it is one of the rare references to their belief in reincarnation. It also brings out the eastern belief in transmigration of souls with the mention of John the Baptist. Then Jesus asks whom do they believe him to be. Peter's answer can be read in one of two ways. First of all, Christ is the term for the Son—the second person of the Trinity—Who lives within. Peter is saying that the Christ—Who is within every man—is evident to him in Jesus. However, it is possible that Peter was confining this to the person of Jesus, because, as we will see, Peter did not begin to understand this aspect of Jesus' teaching until after his own experience at Pentecost. Nevertheless, what this is actually telling us is that Peter may have intellectually understood, in watching Jesus heal and listening to his teaching, but here for the first time he visually experienced the fact that Jesus was letting the Presence of God work through him consciously.

In verse 17 Jesus calls Peter blessed because he has the spiritual insight to enable him to see this. And, because spiritual development in any degree is the result of faith, he goes on to say that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against" this rock of faith. The use of the word church in this verse is due to editorial translation. We have discussed the origins of both the Greek and Hebrew words for this in the Introduction; I would only like to add that *The Interpreter's Bible*, which is the work of Protestant churchmen and scholars, says "If this verse reflects any genuine saying of his, he may have thought

with the statement "many are called but few are chosen." We are the ones who do the choosing, of course, and he uses this figure of speech to emphasize his point.

The example of the coin's inscription given in verses 15-22 is another way of saying that you must live according to the law of the land. You are supposed to live up to the highest you know in all areas of life. What do we have to "render unto Caesar"? We must be good citizens. This brings up a question which has been raised by many conscientious objectors and is important for us in other areas of our lives. They believe that they should not bear arms because they should not kill another person. The Law says "Thou shalt not kill." What do you think Jesus would answer if asked about this? "Render unto Caesar." If being a good citizen involves killing another human being, then this is God's prerogative, not man's. Each human being has a Karmic pattern, and I believe very firmly that it is impossible to take a life, you can only change a form. Actually, I do not think it is any more horrible to slay one person than to slay thousands with an atomic bomb. We are all responsible for these things because the country we live in is part of our individual consciousness, no matter what our personal beliefs may be. This all comes under the meaning of rendering unto Caesar his dues, and, further, not because we should but because we want to do so.

The trap which the Sadducees tried to set for Jesus in the verses which follow is interesting because it shows a belief which was held in the East concerning marriage. Actually, in Tibet until fairly recently if a woman was widowed and her husband had brothers, she was married, not as here, to one brother at a time, but to all the remaining brothers. Jesus' answer is very wonderful when he says "God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." He is saying very simply that the properties of sex and marriage belong only to the physical plane.

In verses 34-46 Jesus silences the Pharisees with both simplicity and symbolism. His answer to the question as to which is the greatest commandment is extremely simple and completely true. Then he asks them a leading question which they answer quite literally. He interprets this symbolically, metaphysically, and they did not understand what he meant, which is fascinating. Jesus asks them whose son they think the Christ, or Messiah, is. They answer according to the traditional belief that he is

have made in his teaching? What would the Catholics say? The Episcopalians? Seventh Day Adventists? All of them? Many religions still believe that Jesus is going to return and I think that if he did they would be utterly miserable for, as we see here, he certainly did not mince any words about what he thought.

I think the parables are fairly clear and the one concerning the two sons is self-explanatory, but I would like to make a brief comment on the parable of the vineyard. Knowledge is symbolized by the fruits of the vineyard. It means that time and time again we are offered the chance to attain freedom through knowledge of the Truth, and we "kill" it. The owner symbolizes God, and his servants are those who carry His words. In the sense of prophecy this pertains to the figure of Jesus, but by and large it is the story of human beings: it is your story and my story. How many times have we been brought into contact with a metaphysical concept which would provide us with the way of getting out of difficulties and have said, "Oh, this is impossible. It won't work," until finally we get to the point where the reality of it strikes us and we begin to use it in our lives.

CHAPTER 22. The parable of the wedding guests is a continuation of this idea. The reasons why the guests did not want to come are very nicely put. "One went to his farm and another to his merchandise." They were all too busy. You know, so often I hear people say "I only wish I had time for meditation," and I ask them "Do you manage to have time to take a bath and clean your teeth?" I get a horrified look and they answer "Of course." Well, this is even more important. Jesus speaks of those who just cannot find the time, those who are not interested and those who are almost pugnacious in their refusal. Then he describes one who does come in but is without his wedding costume, and he is similar to the man who built his house on the sand. He came but was not interested enough to prepare sufficiently. He is "cast into outer darkness" because he was worse than the rest. The others turned away because they knew no better but he came, knowing a little, and still was not interested enough to take a further step. In other words, as we have often said, "a little knowledge is a dangerous thing." When you start on the metaphysical path your reactions to a wrong use of the Law will come more quickly than they do for those who are not on the path. Jesus concludes the parable

of... his new and true 'way'."

Jesus continues by saying, in verse 19, that whatsoever you believe shall be bound to you on earth and in heaven, purely through faith. In other words, if you have faith "the size of a grain of mustard seed," this is your rock, and if you have that faith, nothing can be denied you. Suppose for the sake of argument, your faith is quite positive and everything is fine when you find that suddenly you are terrified of a particular disease. You are binding on earth and it will be bound in heaven. Heaven refers to the realm of the Perfect idea. In one way it is pure subconscious mind. An example in our time is the many people who were suddenly terrorized by the A-bomb, many of whom left their cities because of this fear. If this fear continues, they will not be destroyed by an A-bomb, but they are building, or binding, a catastrophic accident for themselves. We are always putting new ideas into subconscious mind, be they good or bad, and when we do we are taking them first from the earth and putting them into "heaven." We know of course that it is equally true when we bind to ourselves an idea of positive good, it will in turn be bound, or demonstrate, on earth. Jesus speaks of this concept in relation to Peter because he had a strong emotional nature and faith, and it is the combination of these two that is the binding force.

Jesus charges them to tell no one, in verse 20. This is because the innermost experiences of a person's development are completely personal and are not revealed except, to some degree, to those who are closest to the person. He also did not want the crowds to know that he had achieved this inner growth because it is a very rare occurrence and most people still have not evolved to the point where they could understand it. Throughout the centuries, in all mystic and occult tradition, the innermost secrets and teachings have not been revealed. It has not been until our present time that some degree of knowledge of these things has been possible.

In verses 21-28 we find that Jesus very definitely knew what he was going to do and how he was going to do it. Yet, somehow or other, this is one of the statements that the orthodox churches gloss over or ignore. They teach that Jesus was betrayed by Judas, and they hold the people who were involved with his death as responsible for it, yet it is clearly stated here that this was part of his plan. It is also surprising that Peter, even though he had heard Jesus say this many times and

had been with him for such a long time, still did not understand.

In this instance Peter represents temptation, as Satan did in the forty days in the desert, and that is how Jesus reprimands him. Jesus knew very well what he was going to do, but he also knew that he did not have to, and he certainly did not look forward to the process. Peter says, in effect, "You do not have to do this. How could such a thing happen to you? You do not have to put up with it," and Jesus tells him to be quiet. It took every bit of his own will, as we will see as we go on, especially in the Garden of Gethsemane, to carry through his plan.

We have discussed verses 24 and 25 quite fully in the Introduction, and I think there is little to add at this point. Verses 26-28 are a further explanation of what he means. Why do you suppose he places such emphasis on the son of Man? He is saying that when you follow this path you come into conscious contact with the Presence of God and every protection is given you, which is perfectly true. These verses have usually been interpreted to refer only to the person of Jesus. But, once again, the son of Man refers to Jesus as a physical human being, and he teaches that the kingdom is within. What was he going to show them, in verse 28? He was referring to the Resurrection. He is saying that when they see this, they will then know that there is no death.

CHAPTER 17. The Transfiguration, as described in verses 1-9 is the experience which climaxes the Third Major Initiation of the soul. First of all, it is most unusual for anyone to have an audience while taking any of these initiations, and yet we find that Jesus has witnesses to each of them, from the first, the Virgin Birth, to the fifth, the Resurrection. These are progressive experiences which occur in the innermost privacy of your own being, and they are psychological, with the exception of the third which has certain physiological reactions. There is never an audience, so we might ask why there should be in Jesus' case. Jesus took these experiences in this way so that humanity would have a record of the steps in soul growth. There was always someone with him to see it and write it down. One of the physiological changes which accompanies the Transfiguration is a brilliant radiance which emanates from the human being as a result of the tremendous consciousness which is reached. Evidently Jesus knew that this was the moment when

dead, the fact that a fig tree was withered was not impressive in itself. But they had heard him say "Stretch forth thy hand," "Take up thy bed and walk," "Lazarus, come forth," and seen immediate results. He wanted to show them that this was not always the case. This is also why he made the point in Nazareth that he could heal no one there, to show that you must have some rapport or agreement between you and the person to be healed. So here he saw a fig tree which was unfruitful, and he spoke the Word to wither it, to show them it would not happen before some time had passed.

Then we are told of the controversy of the priests and elders over Jesus' authority and the parables which Jesus gives in response. The controversy arises because Jesus was a threat to the organized temple through his tremendous following, and so they seek to throw doubt upon his authority. They were considered to be tremendously brilliant men, and no doubt some of them were, but you notice how easily Jesus stymies and traps them. We might also notice that he is not very kind in telling them in no uncertain terms what he thinks of them: he is quite outspoken.

Organized religions have always fought for those concepts which they use to maintain their life. I am one of those who firmly believe that the moment organization begins in religion the spirit departs. Jesus said very distinctly "you cannot serve both God and mammon" and mammon seems to take over the moment churches become organized with directors, campaigns and real estate. This does not mean that there are not many fine ministers in orthodox religions, for certainly there are, but – and I say this very flatly – I do not think they are spiritually developed, because if they were they could not teach what they do.

The things that Jesus is speaking against in his day are still to be found in our time. What do you think would happen if Jesus were to return? If he wanted to heal people, the A.M.A. would use all its power to stop him because he was not a doctor. If he wanted to hold a lecture and Central Park was the only place big enough, the Police Department would stop him because he did not have a license. There are a million and one things that could happen because we have arrived at such a narrow state of affairs ruled by myriads of laws that we have completely lost sight of the forest because of the trees. Which Christian sect would claim him with the changes they

hearkens back to the prophecy made by Zechariah 9:9. Incidentally, this account is found in each of the four Gospels with only slight variations which according to scholars is a certain indication that it physically transpired as it is related and is not a symbolic or allegorical account.

Once again, in verses 12-16 we see the very decided difference between Jesus the man and the orthodox portrayal of him as a weak person. It is obvious, first of all, that he was physically a very strong and vital man. Certainly this must have been the case since he lived outdoors all his life, constantly walked great distances and was the son of a carpenter and helped his father in that work. He must have been a powerful physical specimen. He very definitely had a temper. I will say that if I had been around at that time I would rather have seen him angry than witness the sarcasm which he expressed towards some people. In this section he is furious because he saw the temple, the idea of which was very sacred to him, being abused by people who were making money from other people's troubles. This was a complete desecration of the house of God. Jesus was very much a man of blood and spirit, and I am perfectly sure he cleaned out the temple that day, and he did it all alone. Again we are shown that to "turn the other cheek" does not mean that you should let people do things that you know are wrong, or let them walk all over you.

In verses 17-22 we find the story of the cursing of the fig tree. Firstly we should notice that Jesus chose a tree which was not flourishing. Then we should remember that he taught by parable; he taught by example; and he taught by explanation. Of the three, I think he used explanation the least because he realized the mentality of the people and the disciples themselves and so more often he tried to show them by example. He was exemplifying a number of important concepts here. A clue to the more important concept is found in Mark's account in 11:20 where it says that "*in the morning as they passed by*" they saw the fig tree withered.

The main point is that throughout this period he was teaching them that the same power resident in him was resident in them: the power of the Word. Practically every time he healed it was instantaneous, and here he shows them that this does not always happen instantaneously. His purpose was not to demonstrate his power—this they already knew. After having seen everything from the healing of the blind to his raising the

it would occur, so he took the three disciples with him so that they could witness the experience.

We are told that they saw Moses and Elijah speaking with Jesus. I have no doubt that this occurred. Certainly one can see discarnate entities. They are as much alive in their form as we are in ours, and they probably feel much more alive because our physical bodies are rather heavy and the counterpart, the etheric body, has no particular weight. It was typical of Peter's naivete to want to build a tabernacle there in honor of this meeting.

Do you think they heard the voice, in verse 5? I doubt it very much. It is more probable that, if it was heard at all, it was an interior voice speaking to Jesus as was the case in the Baptism. I do believe, however, that when they saw the radiance on the face of Jesus—because it is a brilliant radiance—they became terrified and fell to the ground.

Then in verses 10-13 we have another hint that this was the experience of the Initiation, because it is after the Third Initiation that you know your past lives and are also well equipped to know the past lives of others. So, promptly after the experience Jesus says that Elijah was John the Baptist. Too, this is another corroboration of reincarnation which the later editors, perhaps not knowing what it actually meant, left in. We read it and still do not understand.

In verses 14-21 we find a very clear instance of Jesus expressing annoyance and irritation, in this case towards his disciples who could not heal despite all they had seen and been taught. The child "possessed of a devil" was no doubt an epileptic, since we are told that he fell into the fire and water, which indicates that he had no control over his body. Jesus says, in verse 21, that this kind of healing requires prayer and fasting, which means that you must raise your consciousness to such a degree that you are not affected by the outer picture. An epileptic fit is rather horrifying to witness, and Jesus is saying that in order to heal this, one requires a powerful concentration. This, as you know, is the result of daily meditation, and the "fasting" of your thoughts to such a degree that they are positive by nature. It is also true that any healing requires a rapport, conscious or unconscious, between the healer and the person to be healed, and this too requires the ability to see through the outer picture.

Do you think they really understood what he said in

verses 22 and 23? Personally, I do not. I think they would be sorry to hear this said of anyone. If they really understood that this referred to Jesus, we would certainly have some record of at least one of the disciples trying to do something to prevent it. As was the case in the previous instance, they heard with their intellects but it did not sink in. I am making a point of this because it gives an insight into the character of the disciples. They would have laid down their lives for him, but they had not reached the point of inner understanding which comes by evolution. For that reason, even though he states these things very clearly, they understand them in the most limited sense possible, which we will see repeatedly as we go through the Gospels. I think it is important for metaphysical students to realize this, particularly those who have come from Christian backgrounds where the disciples are elevated almost to the level of Jesus simply because they were his disciples. He chose them because he saw what their development *could* be, but they did not attain that development, even by the end of their lives. If they had, they would not have died martyrs, and the only one who did not was John. They misunderstood because they did not have the capacity to understand and so they, too, interpreted what Jesus said about taking up the cross as a literal instruction.

In the incident of the tribute money, in verses 24-27, the fish symbolizes the Piscean Age, and is also the symbol for the manifestation of Christ. He is saying that God is the Source of our supply, and that we take from His substance what we need. The real tribute and real gift is of God, to God. We take from substance, not from something that is ours. This is another way of saying "render unto Caesar . . ." In other words, render to the physical world what you are here to do, not in the sense of paying tribute to man, but because you are paying tribute to God.

CHAPTER 18. In verses 1-14 Jesus is certainly not advising us to become infants again: he is saying that we should develop the qualities of faith, enthusiasm and expectancy which a child has. The child, or person, who has these qualities instinctively is "greatest in the kingdom of heaven." Verse 7 certainly cuts through any Pollyanna concept of life. Jesus knew of the terrible things that were done then and he knew these things would continue to exist. One point that most people overlook is that Jesus did not think that because he had come

absolute dominion over their subjects. He tells them that they should not think in those terms but should realize that nobody has dominion over them. Whatever comes into their lives, they have earned and we are all responsible for and to ourselves: we are all "on our own." Then he says "whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister," which is to say "the first shall be last and the last shall be first." The chapter ends with Jesus healing the two blind men.

CHAPTER 21 begins with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem: one of the first steps in the fulfillment of his plan. There is little symbolism here other than an ass being a symbol of the physical form, and the concept of Jesus exalted by the crowds being an outpicturing of the fact that Christ is incarnate—the Word is made flesh. However, its importance to us lies in a statement in verse 2 which most orthodox Christians, as well as Jews, do not seem to want to recognize. Jesus knew in advance what he wanted and where the colt and the ass were to be found. He directed the manner in which the final days of his life would be lived, step by step. The scene is now being laid for the enactment of those events which he had already told his disciples would occur.

The Christian world and, for the most part, the Judaic world do not seem to want to recognize that Jesus always had a choice in every step of his life. He had such tremendous development and understanding that he knew what he was going to do, how it was going to be done and the time it would take place. We might ask ourselves, why of all times should he choose this particular day to make this particular trip? Why had he not done it the year before? Why not wait until the next year? No one forced him to go to Jerusalem that day. It had been stated that he would live to be thirty-three. This is also in one of the Gnostic gospels. He is setting the scene for the fulfillment of his own predictions concerning himself as well. Let us say I know that in six months a certain thing may occur in my life and I state this as a prediction. It certainly could take place, but I am perfectly sure that, say, by the fifth month I will not have the kind of development that is able to cause circumstances and situations to occur in a step by step development of that idea. I have no way of knowing the means by which this will take place, but Jesus did know and he used these means to completely fulfill his own prediction for himself and those made by others. This too is why, in the fifth verse, Matthew

the moment we put our faith in the things rather than in the Source, we begin to build trouble for ourselves.

And, in verses 27-30, when Peter says that as his disciples they have given up everything and asks what their reward will be, Jesus says that their reward will be the inner regeneration which will bring them complete dominion and integration.

CHAPTER 20. The parable in verses 1-16 expresses, in terms of the farmer and his vineyard, the same concept as the parable of the prodigal son. Jesus tells us very simply that we are all one to God and it does not matter what has gone before, the moment we say "I will arise and go to my Father," at that moment we are welcomed by Him. This holds true for the best or worst person in the world. One of the reasons Jesus used the symbol of money to express this concept was because in those days people were not only graded economically and socially, but they were graded spiritually according to their financial wealth. The poor person was regarded with disdain by the temple and the rich person was considered to be of the spiritual elite. Jesus was very much aware of this and so he makes the point in these terms to tell them there was no economic caste system with God.

"The first shall be last and the last shall be first" tells us that it does not matter when you take the first step toward God, you will be as welcome as one who has always been there. This was not a popular concept. In fact, it is still not too popular, particularly with those so-called spiritual people who wear their halos very openly so that everyone may know that they are the spiritually chosen.

In verses 17-29 Jesus once again tells his disciples simply and clearly what is going to happen, and once more they do not understand. The lack of understanding is strikingly evident in the request of the mother of Zebedee's children. She is asking Jesus to "play favorites" and is trying to buy her way into the kingdom of heaven, so to speak. His answer is very clear. He tells her and us that we will reach his stature not because of his intercession but by our own efforts. He predicts that the two sons will "drink of his cup" and be baptized. In other words, they too will attain the spiritual development which he exemplified to that degree.

When the other disciples became angry with the two sons, Jesus gives them very sound advice. In verse 25 he refers to the fact that rulers in those days were believed to have

and given his message the whole world was going to change overnight. He knew it was going to take a long time and he says so. He also says, in verses 8-9, as he did in the Sermon on the Mount, that it is better to lose any part of the physical body than to have the sickness of soul which can perpetrate such things. Then he gives the beautiful example of a lost sheep. It is true of the person whose life is directed to bringing people to some degree of self-fulfillment, that if they find one they are really able to help, he is far more important than the rest of the world, which will go along on its own way.

Verses 15-20 give rather amazing advice considering the literal interpretation which is usually placed on the advice to "turn the other cheek." Jesus tells us to do our best to clear up an unpleasant relationship but if, after you have done your best, the person still holds a grudge, drop the matter and forget him. Do not think that you are still responsible if you have done what you could to right it. "Let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican" is not advice that most people expect to hear from Jesus. The line which follows in verse 18 is the key and is most important. What does it mean to "bind on earth and in heaven" as he uses it in this instance? In other words, we say in meditation "I fully and freely forgive you now. I loose you and let you go. I am free and you are free." When we say this and really mean it, it becomes an accomplished fact. However, if we say this and still carry a resentment, we are binding ourselves to the same pattern and we will sooner or later have a repetition of the incident. We are told to get rid of our resentment, do the thing we know is right, and if we find it is not accepted we should forget it. This is a far cry from the church's teaching that we should be terribly concerned about saving our brother's soul. It is also another fascinating example which we see throughout the Gospels that Jesus was a complete realist with amazing logic. He knew all about the problems of human beings, and he knew as well that we had the capacity to control our emotions.

Verses 21-35 cover the question of forgiveness, which is the crux of metaphysics since it is the one thing that assures us of freedom. Have you ever thought about how quickly we forgive people in whom we are not interested, and how difficult it is for us to forgive those we care for? We have all had experiences which have wounded us deeply yet, regardless of the hurt, we must forgive. We must realize that it could never

have happened unless there was something within us that brought it into being. We should realize that forgiveness is important, not only to free ourselves from resentments and hatreds, but because we are writing our own passport to total freedom. If you were consciously or unconsciously the cause of a situation in your life through something you thought or did in the past, then by forgiving the person involved you have removed that cause from your life. It is then that you have control over your life and can remake it into what you really want.

Jesus also discusses forgiveness from the point of view of Karma in the parable of the servant. It is perfectly true that whatever you do that is wrong you will eventually have returned to you. Take the instance of a man who has tormented and killed thousands of his fellowmen, and there were many of them during the war: when this man incarnates again he is going to be at the mercy of his fellowman. Probably for a number of lifetimes he will think that humanity is unbelievably cruel, until he grows into the realization that he and he alone brought this upon himself. Longfellow was quite accurate when he said "the mills of God grind slowly, but they grind exceeding small." Very often our trouble is that we would like to have a hand in the grinding process and speed it up a bit, which is a tendency we should guard against in ourselves. There are many negative characteristics which we each carry with us as a result of past experiences, and forgiveness of others is our means of eradicating them. We grow through these experiences until we get to the point of realizing that we are all one. We are all created by one God, and are all the sons of the one God, and the difference between us is the difference in our understanding and faith. Perhaps it sounds very simple to say this in the face of all the tragedies of humanity, but it is nevertheless true. Our goal is the point where we each live by the statement, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

CHAPTER 19. Verses 1-16 contain another of the much argued and discussed teachings of Jesus and, while there is a symbolic level here, it also gives physical instruction. Jesus is speaking of the idea that in the beginning we were each created with one other person who for us was, and is, our true mate. This is the marriage made in heaven to which he refers. As we go through incarnation after incarnation we have lost touch with our Source, as the other person also has, and we sometimes wander far away from each other. It also follows that

there comes a time when we do meet that other person again in a particular incarnation. It is a strangely beautiful thing that there is a definite knowing about them as there is about your own identity. But it does not always follow that in that particular incarnation you, or the other person, are ready to resume the course of life together. The meeting may also take place in many forms of relationships other than that of man and woman: it may be one of close friends, or in a family relationship of some kind.

However, this is one of the reasons why we find so many problems in marriage, because we follow a trial-and-error method, for the most part, while we seek that one person. There is a quotation, the authorship of which I do not recall, that I have always considered to be one of the most beautiful I know which says, in effect, "Sex is the search of split divinity for its other half." Jesus is referring both to the fact that the marriage between the two people who were created for each other is the real marriage, and to the fact that sex is meant to be used, not abused. It is well known that sex is taken rather lightly in our time and, although the Jews did have a greater respect for women and marriage than most people in those days, morals were nevertheless not particularly high then.

He also refers, in verse 12, to other reasons which cause sexual problems. First of all, the Essenes and Gnostics both taught that sex in marriage could only exist at certain times, and at other times celibacy was imposed as part of training. However, it is also true that as we go through incarnations we frequently change our form, from male to female, and when we get to the stage of our final evolution we will return to the form in which we were created.

In verses 13-15 Jesus once again stresses the idea that child-likeness—not childishness—is the key to the kingdom of heaven. Then in verses 16-26 Jesus refers to the concept in the commandment "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" as it applies to the question of wealth. Jesus evidently saw that to this young man, as good as he was, the most important thing was his possessions, and so Jesus asks him to give them up and, as much as the young man wanted God, it was not enough to do this. Jesus is pointing out that as long as we recognize that there is but one Source for everything that exists, and that all our possessions are loaned to us by this Source, we are being good custodians and can retain them. But