

## THE EASTER ADVENT

By Alden Truesdell

Changes are a daily occurrence in the world and in the life of every person, but they become more evident in Spring. The chemical constitution of every living thing changes with each passing moment so that nothing is ever again as it was yester-moment or yesterday.

In the realm of Nature, sometimes it is Summer, and the Sun, conducting his symphonic composition, is relentless in demanding the last iota of perfection in color, tone, and quality from the mid-season score. This is the time when Nature, the Exhibitor, proudly presents the epitome of beauty, the ultimate in glorified plant-life.

When Autumn displaces Summer, the picture changes completely. The increasing intensity of color deepens. Nature is now cast in the role of artist. Having completed the brilliant Summer masterpieces, she now stirs the bright colors into a ruddy blend for her overall landscape treatment. The deep, rich Autumn hues of harvest time portend prosperity. The atmosphere is charged with an expectant quality of substantiality, lavish providence, opulence, and abundance. Truly the fruitings are not according to measure; they overflow and fill all space.

The evergreen, russet, and gray shades of Winter, with its blue overcast, shifts the scene again. During this period, life seems more subdued and protected. The stage of action is beneath the surface. The snow-white relief in the general color scheme tends toward austerity as silver ice, low temperatures, and high winds drive all life into an interior activity. Everything in Nature, including man, is in a state of hibernation and preparation. Winter is the time when Nature rests from her labors in anticipation of some event of import. (A point to note is that the diligent in other seasons rest in comfort during the Winter; while the indolent may experience hardship.)

While no Season can say to another, "I have no need of thee," Spring, with a mighty surge of all her essences (emerging through forms), tends to burst through every available avenue, and makes all things new, fresh, and clean. The breathless suspense and alert expectancy that accompany Spring cause us to give her our most favorable attention. Spring's garments of countless colors against a background of fresh green catch our fancy and stir our imagination. Of all the changes in Seasons, Spring's is the most pronounced and completely transforming.

Projects that have been germinating through the Winter months suddenly swing into action and become visible. Substances begin to flow as the penetrating rays of the Sun release repressed energies. Truly Spring is a time of complete renewal, a time to celebrate the Easter advent of the resurrection.

As man has no control over the Seasons, so the various changes in his on-going are fraught with transforming features, all of which are under the jurisdiction (or grace) of God. These changes in the consciousness of man are definite as the Seasons though they are not always recognized and understood.

With each change, the individual himself tries out his capacity to stand in his own integrity and lets his stirred-up talents exercise to fuller extent.

As Nature's Seasons unfold in orderly sequence, so do spiritual aspirants become aware of changes -- temperings, testings, triumphs -- as they, too, unfold in spiritual development. The hearts of the disciples, for example, must have quickened in ratio to their understanding and appreciation of the Master in whose Presence they were growing spiritually. Surely, more than any other men, they were in a position to realize the possibility of a resurrection. They had been with Jesus throughout His ministry. On one occasion they had seen Him meet a funeral; and at sight of the mother's grief, He was filled with such compassion that He touched the bier and said to the boy lying dead thereon, "Young man, I say unto thee, arise." They had seen Jesus take a dead girl by the hand and invite her to arise, and she obeyed. They had seen Jesus raise Lazarus after he had been dead four days.

Still, it was difficult for the disciples to associate that same resurrection with the same Jesus who was their friend and teacher. They wanted to believe something highly desirable would result from their association with Jesus, but they were hardly prepared for the exhibits they were to witness. The first was, of course, the transfiguration. Peter, James, and John were led by Jesus into a high mountain, apart by themselves. When Jesus was transfigured, they saw Elijah and Moses talking with Him. While Peter mumbled something about building three tabernacles, a cloud overshadowed them, and they heard a voice say, "This is my beloved Son; hear Him."

Little wonder they were sore afraid. They were unprepared for such radiant glory. Their reaction was that of men emerging suddenly from underground darkness into the brilliant noon day sunlight. They were dazzled.

The changes that took place in Jesus and in the disciples during this transcendent experience also take place in modified form in Nature, and in the consciousness of human beings. Mental changes occur in man when Ideals in the unseen realm above thought touch his consciousness and stir it to open and accept Ideas, which, in turn, ultimately take form as thought. The fruiting takes place when the consciousness is at a high pitch of receptivity. The transfiguration can be compared to the Summer Season in Nature, during which all growing things are rushed into vibrant bloom and profuse fruiting.

The "Fall" and "Winter" of the Master's life follow this incident in quick succession. The high color of His interrelations with the people and the priesthood, followed by the dismal season of arrest, condemnation, and death, with the consequent scattering of His frightened followers, force all the powers of His Being into focus within Himself so that His awareness of God fuses completely with God's awareness of Himself in His chosen Son.

The story of the resurrection is so familiar to us that the one point we shall make here is that in but five or six brief meetings with the Master after His resurrection, the disciples received their post-graduate course in things spiritual and became masters in their own right. Each man eventually presented one of the twelve manner of fruit for the healing of the nations.

The Springtime phenomenon is a symbol of the metamorphosis of the resurrected man of Spirit. As Nature exhibits her best, so man may expose his integrity, and God be thus glorified in His creature.

## NEWS ITEMS

The CHRIST TRUTH LEAGUE announces the Summer 1950 Session of its College of Metaphysics from July 8 through July 15, inclusive. Each day will be scheduled, with classes in Old and New Testament, Meditation on and Contemplation of the Spiritual Principle that is the Cause of Being, assignments in reading, and a nightly address.

Each day will begin with prayer and praise to God, and will end with prayer for added understanding of His Presence in the individual consciousness.

Private cabanas are being built so that the students who lodge with us may enjoy complete isolation during periods of private prayer. Since these accommodations will be limited, we invite out of town guests to make reservations early. An over-all charge will be made for lodging and meals. A free will offering will be accepted for the teaching and ministry. Day students who live in Fort Worth may register a short while before the Session begins.

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RELENTLESS GOD

By Nell Truesdell

As the universal atmosphere enfolding this planet takes unto itself all the foul odors of the earth and makes them nothing, so the Love of God enfolding us dissolves and makes nothing the effects of errors and misjudgments of human willfulness. Negation, the sum of man's mistakes, is nothing at all. No matter how large the sum, man can remit it by sending it back into the nothingness whence it issued. Negation is but the dismal figments of man's vain imagination playing upon abominations as though they were real. What benefits can be gained from placing the hopes in the garbage and spoilings of active living? Rather, all benefits come from God who is the Cause of active living. The unreality of Negation is confirmed the instant the vision is set God-ward. To gaze only toward Him is to see and know Him only. Anybody engaged in giving his attention to God experiences the undeniable conviction that God engulfs and shines out of memory all shadows and untruths that have been believed in and accepted as fact.

The resounding command of our Scripture is to turn God-ward. "Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." The things of God are so simple that a child can accept them. They are Principles that are so near that they flow in and through consciousness as easily as breath flows in and through the lungs. To receive these Principles consciously is to move into a new phase of existence.

The question arises, If this is true, why do not all men know of such Principles and be delivered from the limitations of the three dimensional world? The answer, in part, is that mortal man is too enamored of the three dimensional world to want to look away from it long enough to consider the things of God. A man must be ready to give his attention voluntarily to hidden spiritual mysteries of which he is unaware though, actually, they abide in his heart.

When is a man ready? When he is so tired of gazing into the realm of things for his good that he is willing to fix his attention upon something within himself that is utterly strange and not easily understood. God is always gazing toward man. The sight with which God looks toward His created is the same sight man uses to look toward God. Whenever a man is ready to make straight the pathway of God through the wilderness of his own consciousness (by giving his attention to God), he will be quickened. Once quickened, he begins a never-ending search for that which he has possessed always but has not known. God will ultimately possess a man wholly. Though he resists mightily and builds up a great world of "nothing" in which he tries to hide, God will ferret him out. Then, all that he had thought was real will fade out of existence; for man was made to know and to return to his Maker.

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#### MOSES' THEOPHANY OF THE BURNING BUSH

By Robert Applegate

About 3300 years ago there occurred an event of unique importance for the future history of mankind. This event is briefly described in two chapters of the book of Exodus. The written account dates from several centuries after the episode itself; and quite naturally questions have arisen as to whether or not the account is pure invention. According to the record, Moses, while tending the flocks of his father-in-law, Jethro, had a vision of God, who appeared to him as a flame of fire in a thorn bush. Inspired and instructed by his vision, Moses returned to Egypt, led the enslaved Hebrews forth from their captivity, brought them into a covenant relation with Yahweh in the same place where he had had his own vision, and then disciplined them and formed them into one people, while he led them for forty years through the wilderness. Thus, according to the tradition, the theophany of Moses at Mount Sinai was the beginning both of the Hebrew religion and of the Hebrew nation, although of course Moses built upon the foundations of previously existing religious beliefs and racial affinities. It will be the purpose of this paper to examine briefly the claims of this tradition to authenticity, the nature of Moses' experience, and the origin and character of the deity with whom Moses became acquainted and whom he, in turn, introduced to his Hebrew brothers. In view of the unanimity of later tradition, the historical existence of Moses cannot be seriously questioned. As Oesterly and Robinson declare:

It is quite impossible to deny either the fact of the Exodus or the historicity of Moses. An event which stamped itself so deeply on the consciousness of the people as to control all its later thinking, to ratify its religion, and to dictate its theory of history, can by no possibility have been a mere invention. ... A like remark may be made of the personality of Moses. The work which he accomplished in the formation of Israel as a people was such as to demand the power of a single genius, not merely brilliant in conception, but also endowed with a compelling personality. Once only in later history had an achievement of similar magnitude been accomplished in the Semitic world, and that was the union and organization of the Arab tribes by Mohammed.

If we had no account of Moses at all, it would have been necessary to assume the existence of a person such as he is said to have been.

Concerning the life of Moses previous to his theophany we are largely reduced to conjectures as the account of his birth in Exodus 2 is obviously apochryphal. The name "Moses" is Egyptian and means "son." It was probably originally connected with the name of an Egyptian divinity, as in the instances of Tutmose and Ahmose, and it is easy to see why such a prefix was dropped in Hebrew tradition. It is certain, in any event, that Moses had Egyptian affinities, and it is quite possible that he was part Egyptian by birth. Since it is held by scholars that only the Rachel tribes were settled in Egypt, Moses must have belonged to one of them, although which one is not certain.

According to the account in Exodus 2, Moses fled from Egypt into "the land of Midian," where he spent forty years tending the flocks of the Midianite priest Jethro. This separation of Moses from the scenes of his youth and his future field of action was a necessary prelude to the work of redemption that he was to accomplish. Such a "withdrawal" preceding a subsequent "return" has been characteristic of all the world's great leaders, as Arnold Toynbee demonstrates:

The withdrawal makes it possible for the personality to realize powers within himself which might have remained dormant if he had not been released for the time being from his social toils and trammels. Such a withdrawal may be a voluntary action on his part or it may be forced upon him by circumstances beyond his control; in either case the withdrawal is an opportunity, and perhaps a necessary condition, for the anchorite's transfiguration; 'anchorite', in the original Greek, means literally 'one who goes apart'; but a transfiguration in solitude can have no purpose, and perhaps even no meaning, except as a prelude to the return of the transfigured personality into the social milieu out of which he had originally come. ...

The same motif of withdrawal and transfiguration leading up to a return in glory and power can be discerned in the spiritual experience of mysticism and in the physical life of the vegetable world and in human speculations on death and immortality and in the creation of a higher out of a lower species. This is evidently a theme of cosmic range.

Moses, like Amos and David after him, was condemned to long periods of solitude by his calling as a shepherd; and it was during these hours of aloneness that he came to know Yahweh, however much of an introduction to this Deity he may have received from his father-in-law.

It is possible that Moses' theophany of the burning bush is a later presentation of a long period of spiritual unfoldment that Moses experienced during his sojourn in Midian; but it is more likely that the theophany was an actual experience, which culminated such a period of development. As Fleming James remarks, "We can think of Moses ... as receiving his call in a prophetic ecstasy. His hearing his name spoken, his answer, his realization that he was standing on 'holy ground,' and his hiding his face in fear, are all normal features of such an experience." Such an event, as James declares, would necessarily have been repeated by Moses to the Israelites in order to convince

them of his divine commission, "and it is surely not impossible that it could have come down without substantial disfigurement to the J and E writers." Further, Moses' shrinking from the divine assignment is hardly a feature that is likely to have been invented by later writers.

There is some disagreement in the sources as to the exact nature of the theophany of the burning bush, but there is agreement upon the following four points: (1) that God was henceforth to be addressed as Yahweh; (2) that He was the same God as that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, (3) that He would deliver the Hebrews; and (4) that Moses shrank from his commission as the agent of this deliverance, whereupon Yahweh promised His assistance in persuading the Egyptians (E) or the Hebrews (J). According to J, the name Yahweh had been known since the time of Enoch; according to E (and P), it was now revealed for the first time to Moses.

It is now generally recognized that Yahweh was originally a god of the Kenites and that Moses was introduced to Him by his father-in-law, Jethro. The Kenites were the smiths of antiquity; and Yahweh, as He first appears, is predominantly a God of fire, although He has other attributes as well. The Kenites were a clan of the tribe of Midianites, among whom Moses settled; and Jethro is referred to indiscriminately as a Kenite or a Midianite. The important point, however, is that he was a priest, and thus it was undoubtedly he who first introduced Moses to Yahweh. This explains the deference that Moses is portrayed as showing to Jethro in Exodus 18:15-24 and Numbers 10:29-32. It explains also why Jethro is depicted in Exodus 18:10-12 as offering a sacrifice to Yahweh:

"Blessed be the LORD (Yahweh)," said Jethro, "who delivered you from the power of the Egyptians and the power of Pharaoh, who delivered the people from under the power of the Egyptians and the power of Pharaoh. ... I know that the LORD is greater than all other gods, in that his power prevailed over them."

(To be continued next month.)

Alphabet Of  
DAILY MEDITATIONS  
For Every Week Day of the Month

APRIL 1950

1. ASK what thou wilt.
3. BELIEVE in the Lord.
4. CLEANSE thou me from secret faults.
5. Let us DRAW near to God.
6. Lift up now thine EYES.
7. The law of the wise is a FOUNTAIN of life.
8. The Lord will do GREAT things.
10. I am the Lord your HOLY One.
11. Continue INSTANT IN prayer.
12. I would do JUSTICE.
13. Be KIND one to another.
14. Come unto Me all ye that LABOR.
15. Let the Lord be MAGNIFIED.
17. There is NONE Holy as the Lord.
18. OVERCOME evil with good.
19. PUT ye on the Lord Jesus Christ.
20. QUIT yourselves like men.
21. REMEMBER me, O my God.
22. SPEAK, Lord, for Thy SERVANT heareth.
24. Be ye TRANSFORMED.
25. He that walketh in his UPRIGHTNESS feareth the Lord.
26. I Am the true VINE.
27. Thou broughtest us out into a WEALTHY place.
28. Assemble YOURSELVES.
29. Ye are ZEALOUS of spiritual gifts.

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"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

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SPIRITICITY is the working Power of the Spiritual Principle,  
As electricity is the working power of the electrical principle.