

LIVE BY THE RIGHT CHOICE

By Nell Truesdell

COMPLACENCY is a disease that is no respecter of civilizations, nations or persons; it affects all with the same deepseated disorder that causes an inner structural deterioration, ending in total collapse. It has destroyed many high civilizations; not one has ever recovered from its blow. Nearly all the men of outstanding achievement who have been worthy of being recorded have fallen into the snare of complacency. Only the exceptional leader has withstood its mesmeric influence and escaped the trap of destructive self-commendation.

Adversity is the friend of man. Adversity forces a man who would rest on his laurels to use his God-given faculties. If he is not cowed by suffering, he may escape from anguish and misery by discovering ways that will open into new states of existence far superior to any he has known. Look into your own life and see how adversity was not hostile; but how, as your champion and prod, it saved you from the debilitating consequences of catering to your own desires and exulting in your own achievements.

No one can stand still for long. Either he is overcome by a stronger force or he wakes up to his potentials and does something to advance himself. The human being is a seeker; it is this drive that fills him with discontent with his worldly lot. Adversity, when met with a determination to be free, urges man to overcome insurmountable obstacles.

The story of the Israelites' escape from slavery in Egypt and of their experiences in the wilderness points up certain steps that man takes in his deliverance from bondage to the flesh and from ignorance of his spiritual sonship to God. In this article I shall briefly review the first part of the story, for it illustrates what takes place at the beginning of every person's transition from Egypt (darkness) to the Promised Land (light).

After Moses had secured the Pharaoh's permission to take the captive Israelites on a three-days' journey into the wilderness (supposedly to offer sacrifice), the Pharaoh revoked his decision and sent soldiers to capture the slaves. But, miraculously, Moses got the company across an arm of the Red Sea and safely into the wilderness. After a three-months' trek, he settled the unhappy crowd by tribes at the base of Mount Horeb (Sinai). Then, to commune with God and receive further instructions, he climbed the mountain alone. After many soul-searching days, he received two stone tablets inscribed with Ten Commandments, which the people were to obey.

While Moses was absent the people, having no responsibility, decided to mold an image of a calf and worship it. When Moses descended into camp and found the people dancing about the idol, he furiously broke the stone tablets, destroyed the idol, and chastised the people. He returned to the mountain top to bewail his lot before God and to ask forgiveness for his people. For forty days he fasted and communed with God. Then he received a duplicate copy of the Ten Commandments together with instructions as to how to deal with the Israelites. When the chastened people saw their leader descending the mountain the second time, they waited respectfully and listened humbly to his messages. The Scripture reports that "the people did all manner of work which the Lord had commanded to be made." They prepared the tabernacle with its special equipment,

built an altar for burnt offerings, and brought all manner of gifts to Moses for use in honoring God. Then, suddenly, the Voice of God spoke through Moses:

"Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount: turn ye, and take your journey, and go."

Imagine what the whole company must have felt when they received this order. They had been comfortably settled; daily supplied with ample food and drink; occupied with building the ark, casting the golden candlesticks, weaving the tapestries, and among other religious symbols to be used in worship of God. And now they were ordered to break camp and move toward an unknown destination through "that great and terrible wilderness." Their next stop, Kadesh-barnea, was eleven days' journey away! What would they meet there?

From Kadesh-barnea twelve men were sent to spy out the Promised Land. Ten reported that it was indeed a rich land, but that the Israelites would not be able to take it. Two said that their invasion would be successful. They were almost killed in the riot that followed.

Kadesh-barnea was the turning point in the sojourn of the Israelites, the point at which they turned the wrong way. With little effort, they could have taken the Land that had been promised to them; they failed because they did not trust God. They trusted the fears of ten cowards and so condemned themselves to forty years of wandering. All but two of the older generation perished in the wilderness.

So it goes with us as Truth students. We have been delivered from bondage to the flesh and slavery to ignorance; we know the Commandments of God. Have we been obedient? All that has gone before in our lives had led up to our Kadesh-barnea. Now we are faced with the decision either to cross the hills into the Promised Land or to wander in unproductive futility. Wandering (in any field of endeavor) is severe punishment.

Shall we go on to deliverance by way of the Christ Truth or shall we retreat into the false safety of the wilderness?

The choice is ours. How sad that of our own free will we choose to wander in outer darkness!

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SPIRITICITY, January 1963

PHYSICS AND METAPHYSICS

By Robert Applegate, Jr.

(Continued from last month)

LAST MONTH we saw that the physicists have now arrived at the point where they realize that it is impossible for them, by their methods of approach, to understand the workings of nature. As Joseph Wood Krutch says: "Newton told us that the mysterious heavens were as knowable to common sense as our own back yard; Einstein tells us that our own back yard is as mysterious as the heavens were ever supposed to be."

This seemingly negative result of years of intense research is an advance in our understanding; for to believe that we know when we do not is the worst form of ignorance. Thousands of years ago the author of Proverbs wrote: "Do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? there is more hope for a fool than for him." And to the self-assured of His day, Jesus said: "If you were blind, you would have no error; but now that you say 'We see,' your error remains." It has always been those who were quite sure that they were right - who were sure they knew what was right - who have persecuted those who disagreed with them. They have been the tyrants and persecutors. Humility is salutary.

But if the scientists do not understand nature, how have they achieved the phenomenal results that they have? The answer is that the dependable part of any science is the mathematics of it (which enables the scientists to predict what will happen under given circumstances). Physics is an exact science; therefore it deals with things that can be measured - or, rather, it deals with the measurements of things. Then it sees if these measurements can be made to fit into an orderly scheme. They do fit quite neatly, and the result is a sheaf of mathematical equations. These sometimes delight the physicists with their beauty and elegance; at other times they appall them by their number. But in any event the end product of physics is always a group of equations. But we are so constituted that we are not satisfied with pure mathematics. We ask, "What does it mean?" And the history of science has largely been the history of mathematics that was right, or very nearly right, combined with explanations that were usually very wrong.

The mathematics of physics has been proved right by the only test that can be applied to it: the ability to predict phenomena. But we still want to know not only what will happen, but why. And this is the unanswerable question. The physicists cannot give an explanation of what their equations mean. They say they can give us only "parables." These "explain" different facets of their findings, but are always deficient in some respects.

Today the scientists say that their equations are best understood as pointing to a region beyond time and space. Sir James Jeans writes: "The new mechanics is most simply expressed in terms of symbols which are best interpreted by passing beyond space and time. ... We find there is something in reality which does not permit of representation in space and time. Thus space and time cannot contain the whole of reality, but only the messengers from reality to our senses. ... All earlier systems of physics fell into the error of identifying appearance with reality; ... the new quantum theory has shown that we must probe the deeper substratum of reality before we can understand the world of appearance."

The mathematics of the Quantum Theory has forced the scientists to a "new concept of reality." They have fought against this new concept, but their experiments have forced them to accept it. They used to regard reality as consisting of those things that we can see, feel, and hear; they thought that they could study this reality in a completely objective way and so find the laws that govern its operations. They now know that reality consists of much more than the things we see (which they designate by the word "phenomena"). Beyond the phenomena there is the "substratum." This substratum is beyond time and space and therefore beyond our direct perception. In it lie the causes of all the events we see in the phenomenal world.

The scientists now tell us that reality consists of three parts: the phenomena (all the events we see and observe), the substratum, and the observer.

And these three cannot be separated! So science points to the truth that Emerson expressed:

"We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal ONE. ... The act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one."

The scientists have discovered that both energy and matter consist of particles and waves (but never both at the same time). They observe the particles directly (or nearly directly); they can never observe the waves, but the waves are a necessary inference from their experiments. In fact the waves appear to be more real than the particles. For the particles are present only when they are being observed; there is no justification for our assuming their existence at other times. The waves explain what happens between observations; they are the pictorial representation of the equations of Quantum Theory. Since the mathematics is the dependable part of the Theory, the waves are more real than the particles. But they are not physical waves at all. This is especially clear with matter-waves. For the waves of every electron require three dimensions; so the waves of a thousand electrons require a space of three thousand dimensions. It is obvious that this cannot be a physical space.

So the scientists present us with the picture of particles that are physical, but not real; and waves that are real, but not physical. The particles are part of the phenomena that we observe. As we pass from the phenomena to the substratum - from appearance to reality - from events to the causes of events - we pass from that which is discrete to that which cannot be conceived within the framework of time and space.

A particle is a separate entity that we can identify (although atomic particles are exceptionally hard to identify and we are told that we never observe the same electron twice). A wave - or what the physicists call a "wave packet" - is an indivisible whole. Only in our minds can we separate it into individual parts. So as we pass from appearance to reality, from particles to waves, we pass from individuality to community. Some scientists have gone so far as to suggest that this fact points to the oneness of all living things. Jeans writes:

"Just as there are wave-pictures for light and electricity, so there may be a corresponding picture for consciousness. When we view ourselves in space and time, our consciousnesses are obviously the separate individuals of a particle-picture, but when we pass beyond space and time, they may perhaps form ingredients of a single continuous stream of life. As it is with light and electricity, so it may be with life; the phenomena may be individuals carrying on separate existences in space and time, while in the deeper reality beyond space and time we may all be members of one body."

And Erwin Shrodinger writes:

"The only possible alternative (to accepting impossible conclusions) is simply to keep to the immediate experience that consciousness is a singular of which the plural is unknown; that there is only one thing and that what seems to be a plurality is merely a series of different aspects of this one thing, produced by a deception (the Indian MAJA)."

The enlightened of course have always said that the causes of events are in an Unseen Realm that the "things which are seen were not made by things that do appear." (We could as well say, "The things that are done are not done by things that do appear.") This Unseen Realm is what the seers call "Eternity," which is not a long expanse of time, but is that area beyond space and time wherein lie the causes of all the events that we observe. The beauty and value of the spiritual insight is in the discovery that this Unseen Realm is available to all and is friendly to all. A nameless prophet of Israel said; "Thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the spirit of the contrite.'"

And the enlightened have also said that in the Unseen Realm, which is our true home, we are all inseparably one. Whether we like it or not, we are "members one of another."

(To be continued)

SPIRITICITY, January 1963

GOODNESS

By Alden Truesdell

"THE EARTH is full of the goodness of the Lord," declares the Psalmist. And Paul lists Goodness as one of the fruits of the Spirit, adding, "If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in (the consciousness of) the Spirit."

The Goodness of God is omnipresent; in It "we live, and move, and have our being." Nevertheless there is in mankind a perversity, a tendency to renege in making the acceptable plays in the game of life. This perversity is known by many names, including "Satan" and the "son of perdition."

We remember how this perversity tried to get Jesus to use His powers for making bread out of stones, for self-exaltation, and for pseudo-worship; and how Jesus told it to get behind Him. The son of perdition thrives on attention and grows with opposition. The reverse is also true. If the lie is rejected in favor of Truth it dies of its own nothingness.

When Jesus was in the wilderness being tempted of the devil, He went into no long tirade. He was quite polite to the devil. He agreed with His adversary without accepting his directives. He said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." He said, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." And finally He said simply, "Get thee hence, Satan; for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."

Here is a pattern for the critical decisions that occur in the life of every man, and here is the basis for the profitable way of life. At some time or other, each one will have the opportunity to make his own decision regarding the fundamental ways of life. To everyone the offer will be made: "I have set before you life and death: ... therefore choose life."

Everyone has to choose between "the works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit." We are all somewhat familiar with the results of the popular choice even though few of us have actually experienced "the depths of Satan." This popular choice, or Satan-choice, has a way of presenting its benefits so attractively that anyone seems naive to neglect the splendid opportunities. On the other hand, the choice of the Spirit seems almost to require apology. This is because the fruit of the Spirit is not spectacular, getting none of the headlines and comparatively little publicity. The big, black letters across page one of our newspapers proclaim many responses on the part of man to Satan's blandishments, but we seldom see in headlines where the angels of the Lord have come and ministered to man. In other words, it is difficult to sell a bill of goods unless they can be displayed, and the fruit of the Spirit is unpretentious.

Not only are the gifts of the Spirit unassuming; Spirit Itself is even more so. "No man hath seen God at any time," John declares. Since this is true, any seeker of God must seek Him sight unseen. This would discourage most seekers were it not for the fact that man soon tires of that with which he is familiar, both the gadgets of man himself and the machinations of the "devil." Man is an explorer who will tire of Satan in due season as a child tires of his toys; then he will be found seeking adventure and succumbing to the lure of the unknown. Man, however, has explored the world and investigated the realm of mind. Now, as he seeks new fields, he must turn toward Spirit; and in so turning, he will order the devil to get behind him.

The last frontier is in the spiritual nature of man, the greatest adventure is the hidden treasure-hunt within this nature. As man's soul and spirit are unfolded and revealed, he will find himself as eager for new spiritual revelations as are the explorers eager for new lands to discover. He will find that only the infinite Goodness of God can satisfy his inner hunger. With Zephaniah, he will cry out, "How great is His beauty!" In fact, when he tries to describe his discoveries, he will feel an acute inadequacy of language. Even the most mystical phrases - even the unlawful, indescribable, unfathomable, wordless expressions will seem banal and inadequate to describe the Goodness revealed.

Without freedom, the greatest gifts are of little value; but in God is there perfect freedom. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Just as the Polish pilot, who flew his plane from behind the red lines to neutral territory, found freedom from the terrors of totalitarianism in the asylum of democracy, so anyone who turns from the world to seek the Goodness of God "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Man's insatiable desire for the best, his pursuit of perfection, is God's greatest drawing power. As Jesus Christ said, "There is none good but One, that is God"; and so man's desire for goodness must eventually lead him to God. Here he will find that God's Goodness is so comprehensive as to make the entire realm of the unknown amenable and beneficial. Here he will find satisfaction.

"Oh that men would praise the Lord for His Goodness, and for His wonderful works to the children of men! For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day of the Month

JANUARY 1963

1. The Lord shall ARISE upon thee.
2. Shine as the BRIGHTNESS of the firmament.
3. Know the CERTAINTY of the words of Truth.
4. I say unto you, I Am the DOOR.
5. Let all things be done to EDIFYING.

7. Christ may dwell in your hearts by FAITH.
8. There is none GOOD but One; that is GOD.
9. All men shall HONOR the Son.
10. I have walked IN mine INTEGRITY.
11. He is near that JUSTIFIETH thee.
12. Receive the grace of God ... by KNOWLEDGE, ... by KINDNESS.

14. I have LED thee in right paths.
15. To be spiritually MINDED is life and peace.
16. I have esteemed his words more than my NECESSARY food.
17. OBSERVE thou that which I command thee.
18. We are made PARTAKERS of Christ.
19. When He giveth QUIETNESS, who then can make trouble?

21. His RIGHTEOUSNESS endureth for ever.
22. The Lord is my STRENGTH and SONG.
23. All THINGS come of THEE.
24. Thou ... Hast pleasure in UPRIGHTNESS.
25. By Him were all things created, ... VISIBLE and invisible.
26. They shall WALK, O Lord, in the Light.

28. YET not I, but Christ liveth in me.
29. He was ZEALOUS for my sake.
30. Love the Lord your God.
31. Bear witness of Me.

"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."

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