

A STUDY IN THE LIFE AND WORK OF JESUS CHRIST

By Nell Truesdell

PART II (An Interpretation, continued)

At the wedding feast in Cana, Jesus' mother (who represents the feminine aspect, or affectional nature in man), took charge of affairs. All went well until a definite lack appeared. Then, having no power herself to remedy the situation, she turned to Jesus, who, so far, had let her have her way with Him. However, when she suggested that He do something about the lack of wine, He aroused and severed forever the attempted directive force of the affectional nature upon Him. This little drama of the exhausted supply of wine at the feast is an example of what happens in any consciousness when the spiritual Identity permits the affections to usurp and to wield administrative power. The wine (life) suffers lack.

When the wedding feast had ended, Jesus went to Capernaum. Capernaum symbolizes shelter of comfort; covering of repentance. The Ideal, by Its inherent nature, must move from the outer realm of activity to the inner. It seeks sanctuary where it can tarry and recover its forces.

The First Cleansing of the Temple
(The Historical View)

After Jesus' complete union with God (represented by the wedding at Cana), and His throwing off forever the restraining power of the affections, He went to Capernaum. During His short stay there, He familiarized Himself with the city and decided to make it His permanent headquarters. Then, as the Passover (April 11-17 in A.D. 27) was at hand, He and His men went to Jerusalem. After three days of hard walking, they arrived, animated by the prospect of worship with countless other pilgrims in the Temple. However, their enthusiasm was dampened by the force of what they saw.

Jesus' recent, fresh, conscious union with God laid bare to His eyes the conniving, heartless lust for gain that the moneychangers exercised upon the pilgrims, as they wrung from them a fee of about twenty percent of the value of all the coins that had to be exchanged for Temple money. The reason for the exchange was that all foreign money had stamped upon it either the heads of rulers or of gods. Only Temple money was accepted for payment of dues and purchase of sacrificial animals, for which the merchants demanded exorbitant prices. Therefore, the helpless victims were fleeced on all sides by swindlers who, under the guise of exchanging money and selling sacrifices for worship of God, passed for honest men.

Jesus quietly picked up small cords lying about on the ground, fashioned them into a whip, and, in an outburst of zeal, courageously defended His Father's House. "Take these things hence; make not my Father's House an house of merchandise." His act electrified everybody. In a matter of hours, His name was on every tongue in Jerusalem. Some infuriated religious leaders demanded a sign from Him for this assumption of authority. But, even among the members of the Sanhedrin, a few were impressed favorably, and one, Nicodemus, dared to call upon Jesus. "We know that thou art a teacher come from God," he declared. This thoughtful man undoubtedly had sought living knowledge of God, but never had found it. He knew that the Jewish faith had been overlaid with tradition and the Jewish Scriptures had been buried by observance of the teachings of men.

Accordingly he recognized in Jesus the light for which he had been seeking; but, being cautious not to expose himself unduly to the criticism of his fellow-members of the Sanhedrin, he called on Jesus at night.

Jesus was astonished to discover that this master of Israel did not know the simple truths of God. He told Nicodemus that spiritual birth is like the wind that blows and no one knows where it comes from nor where it goes; but Nicodemus failed to catch the spiritual significance of Jesus' instruction, "Ye must be born again."

Since Jesus' act of casting the moneychangers and merchants out of the Temple had aroused the Pharisees to fury, He chose to hide Himself in a secluded area on a bank of the Jordan not far distant from the spot where John the Baptist was carrying on his work; and there He remained with His disciples for a period of eight months. During this time, His disciples baptized many people, who sought thus to reveal their change of heart concerning things spiritual. Eventually, a controversy arose between the disciples of John and the Jews over the question of purifying. This idea was used as a springboard from which to accuse Jesus; but, when the question was presented to John the Baptist for answer, he remained loyal to Jesus, saying, "A man can have nothing, except it be given him from heaven."

Jesus, perceiving that the disturbance would draw undue attention from the High Priest at Jerusalem to both John and Himself, decided to leave Judaea and return to Galilee. On His way north, having chosen the road that goes through Samaria, He stopped at Jacob's well. He arrived at this place at noon, and there also a woman from Sychar, a town three quarters of a mile distant, came for water. Through her, Jesus was induced to remain at Sychar as a guest of the town. He stayed two days (probably in December, A.D. 27).

At the conclusion of this unscheduled visit, Jesus returned to His homeland, where He was received with joy by many Galileans who had been in Jerusalem when He had cleansed the Temple. It appears that Jesus, instead of going directly to His home in Nazareth, went on to Cana. We may conjecture that His mother was in Cana to be with her daughter-in-law, who was doubtlessly expecting her first child. It was natural that Jesus would go where His mother was on His return to Galilee after nearly nine month's absence.

While Jesus was in Cana, a nobleman, whose son was sick unto death from a fever in Capernaum, walked the fifteen miles to ask Jesus to return with him to heal the child. Jesus did not expect this man to have sufficient faith and chided him, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." However, the man, in true earnestness, again asked Jesus to come with him, and Jesus, discerning his faith, told him that, when he returned home, he would find the child in good health. This divine assurance was justified.

We do not know where Jesus went after His visit to Cana. He may have gone on to Capernaum to lay plans for His future work in that area. We do know that, either in February or in April of A.D. 28, He went again to Jerusalem to celebrate a feast. On this visit, at the Pool of Bethesda on a sabbath day, He healed a man who had been infirm for thirty-eight years. For this miracle he was persecuted by the Jews, who sought to kill Him.

Meanwhile, Herod the tetrarch, who had been reproved by John the Baptist for marrying his brother Philip's wife, had had John imprisoned in one of his palaces, possibly at Machaerus, east of the Dead Sea. When Jesus had heard of this, He left Judaea immediately for Galilee; for He knew that He too would be

imprisoned if He remained in the area of Herod's jurisdiction. Thus ends the first period of Jesus' ministry, from His baptism in the year A.D. 27 to John's imprisonment in A.D. 28.

An Interpretation

All of the activities and each of the incidents in the life and affairs of Jesus Christ can be used to symbolize the movements that take place in the consciousness of any person who seriously takes up the study of the things of God. As anyone considers God, he discovers that there is a place in consciousness where he can go to know God as the true Cause or Be-ing of himself. As he does this, he finds that he does not live of himself, but he is lived by the activity of God in his consciousness; and he comes gradually to realize that this activity of God within him is Jesus Christ, his Lord.

Awareness of God baptizes a man in a two-fold manner: he is cleansed mentally (the water baptism), and he is cleansed spiritually (the Spirit baptism). This double cleansing is symbolized by Jesus' experiences: first, the baptism by John in the Jordan; second, the baptism of the Holy Spirit in the wilderness. After such a cleansing, a man attracts disciples: that is, attributes in consciousness are awakened and come into focus. The disciples of Jesus, represent these attributes, which can be identified as the Likeness of God in man, Jesus Christ is the image of God in man; the disciples symbolize the Likeness of God in man.

The Image and Likeness is suddenly welded into an inseparable unit, symbolized by the wedding at Cana. After this union, a man is no more subject to the dictates of the affectional nature or the emotions. He has reached the point in development where he must accept spiritual manhood. Consequently, he begins his particular work of being about his Father's business; and each incident that takes place thereafter reflects a phase in his spiritual unfoldment.

The first serious experience is that of cleansing the Temple. The place of worship in the midst of consciousness must be relieved of all that would barter spiritual values in order to lay up treasure in the world. Jerusalem represents the center of worship - the within - and the moneychangers and merchants represent the scheming motives that debase pure spiritual inclinations for the sake of worldly gain. The sanctuary must be cleansed. However, when the Identity (Jesus Christ) purges the sacred area, attitudes of mind (particularly those of a religious order) begin to persecute the Image of God that dares to make an adjustment that exposes the cupidity of the ruling power (the priesthood). Because of this intense opposition, the Identity (Image) goes into hiding by the river (life stream) and abides there a long time. It is driven deep within where It spends time gathering Its spiritual forces and learning direct from Spirit the Truth of Be-ing. While It is in this seemingly dormant state, Its attributes (disciples) baptize all who come nigh (the thoughts and feelings that yearn for spiritual sustenance). Gradually, so many of the thought processes gravitate to this center that again the religious body is infuriated and strives to kill out this Image. Therefore, it has to leave and go to Galilee, where, for the time at least, It is safe. On this upward circuit, the Soul energy is strengthened and a miracle of healing is performed. A loved son is healed of a fever (flaring, destructive emotional reaction). After a short period of quiet, the Identity again returns to Jerusalem (the spiritual center of consciousness), where It restores the organism by releasing it from the grip of paralysis brought about by a firm belief in bondage to the human will. This miracle (at the Pool of Bethesda) maddens the religious body,

which seeks again to slay the spiritual Image. But the Identity escapes and returns to Galilee for safety.

Meanwhile, John the Baptist, who, represents the vital, but sincere, innocent physical forces in consciousness, is imprisoned by Herod, the ruling human will, and is killed. At this unrighteous act, the Image (Jesus Christ) is forced to carry on alone, and daringly takes up the cry throughout consciousness, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of God is at hand."

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SPIRITICITY, May 1951

THE RESURRECTION

By Alden Truesdell

The process of resurrection involves the raising of something from a lesser to a higher state, or the transformation from a seeming lack of a certain commodity to the exposition of a limitless supply of that same thing: such as, the appearance of no life to an assured expression of abundant life. To resurrect a thing is to bring it into use after it has been discarded as useless. To resurrect a person is to bring him into a living state after an apparent state of lifelessness, or death. Jesus resurrected several people from a lifeless to a living state. The widow's son was restored to life at Nain. The daughter of Jairus was raised to life, and of course the best known of such miracles is the raising of Lazarus from the dead after four days of lifelessness.

There is no record to show that those whom Jesus healed and resurrected were permanently healed or enlivened; but, as far as Jesus was concerned, they might well have been, had they so desired; for, in healing, He dealt entirely with the fundamental Fact of eternal life and wholeness. Jesus, through uncompromising exercise of eternal and all-competent Principle, proved Himself worthy to identify, to individualize God for the record of the race; and yet He considered Himself a normal man of God, and believed a man of God to be a permanent Image and Likeness of an eternal and indestructible Deity. He declared the things He did could be done by any one who believed as He did. But, as far as His healings and resurrectings were concerned, if those who were made whole by the spiritual Reality were unwilling to continue on in the way of Truth, they were not obligated to do so, any more than Adam was obligated to stay in the "garden eastward in Eden."

Ideas of life differ. There are many concepts of life, personal concepts and popular concepts. The general tone of grumbling is proof that many know something to be wrong, but few seem to know how to correct it. The supposition is, then, that things are supposed to be wrong, that even the race itself is conceived in sin and therefore doomed to destruction. The doctrine of Jesus Christ has nothing in common with this popular concept. John the Baptist saw this dissimilitude, and advised individuals and race to repent, to let loose, to be amenable to a higher Fact: not that they were to die and go to heaven, but that the kingdom of heaven is to be the order of the present day. Similarly, many wise men have seen the necessity for a complete reversal of premise on the part of man's consciousness. There must be an acknowledgment of the inadequacy of accepted axioms. Socrates saw this inadequacy and said, "I am wise enough to know that I know nothing." Plato saw it and declared "We look for one to come

who will set aside nature's laws." In fact all truly wise men have disclaimed any individual brilliance on their own account. The wisest have relegated all wisdom to Omniscience.

John the Baptist disclaimed any credit, but Jesus bore witness to John's greatness, greater than any of the prophets, greater than any born of woman; and Jesus insisted that John baptize Him. John was reluctant to baptize Jesus, saying, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" Then Jesus expressed the words revealing the understanding existing between those ordained by the same Cause: "Suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."

There can be no doubt but that these men were speaking and working from plans and specifications not generally comprehended. John knew a vast change was to take place. His Champion was at hand. John's message was, "Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John declared and prophesied the coming kingdom; Jesus proved and established it in the minds and hearts of the race. Jesus came as the efficiency expert installing a new and superior system of living. He was appointed to that task and anointed for that purpose. "For this cause came I into the world." Jesus never lost sight of that purpose, nor overlooked an opportunity to prove this new, or rather this true, way of life.

Man is prone to be grateful for that which comes under the head of provision and for things which contribute to comfort. The consciousness from which Jesus Christ spoke was so firmly established in the Provider and Comforter that He took all these things for granted, saying, "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." In feeding the multitudes, Jesus blessed the available supply, but He gave thanks directly to the Father that the Source of supply is easily accessible - that original relationship still obtains. He knew food as a God-given commodity, to which the beasts of the field and birds of the air have access. He proved lack to be a lie by feeding the multitudes. He proved sickness to be a fallacy by shining symptom and disease out of existence; and, although He had proved the superiority of life over death in the cases of the resurrections of Lazarus and the others, He knew the success of His mission and its subsequent vital development was dependent upon His own demonstration of eternal life through His own crucifixion and His own resurrection. Except for this, He would have been just another prophet; with this, He became the Saviour.

Herein is the final computation of a complete and competent demonstration of the Principle of eternal life in all its application to the affairs of man. Herein He balanced the account of the book of life and signed and sealed His audit with His own crucifixion, His own resurrection, that the race might be turned about, and scattered forces syphoned back into the only true way of life. For freedom did Christ set us free. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage."

SPIRITICITY, May 1951

MAN IN THE UNIVERSE

By Robert Applegate

According to the physicists and astronomers, the entire universe is running downhill, because that which maintains the universe is the transfer of energy from one state to another. The total supply of energy is constant, and hence it can never be exhausted. However, it can travel in only one direction: from small quantities of intense energy to large quantities of weak energy. This change is also one from energy of high availability to energy of low availability. The end product is heat; and, when energy has taken the form of heat, it cannot be transferred back to a form of higher potency or greater availability. The end of the universe, therefore, will come when all convertible matter has been transformed into energy and all energy has been turned into heat. This heat, being diffused through the vast spaces of the universe, will serve to raise the average temperature less than one tenth of a degree. The entire universe will then be a cold, dark, lifeless region. The astronomers and physicists, however, have not pushed their investigations far enough to arrive at the final answer to the question of the nature of the universe, because their accepted method of procedure allows them to reason only on the basis of impressions received through the senses. If we ask the question, "What is the ultimate source of the energy that maintains the universe?" they can say only that it comes from the electrons, protons, and other particles of which the atoms are composed. They cannot tell us whence the particles derive the energy to begin with. We can, however, answer this question for them by pointing out that the only Source it can come from is God. Furthermore, since this Source is infinite, it cannot be exhausted; for any amount subtracted from Infinity still leaves Infinity. Thus, although the energy sustaining the universe seems to run perpetually downhill, its Source can never be diminished. Moreover, we can push this reasoning one step further and say that, since the source of all energy is God and God cannot cease being Himself, energy cannot change its form, but remains always infinite in intensity, as well as in amount. The whole picture of a dying universe is thus seen to be a delusion produced by belief in reports of the senses.

We may grant the astronomers this much: that, insofar as the universe they are talking about is material and therefore changing, it must pass away, since everything that changes is mortal. If we push our reasoning to the limit, however, we must conclude that what is mutable and mortal is not real; and that, therefore, the only Reality is the unchanging, eternal God, who is both the Beginning and End of all things. The real Universe, consequently, is the Being of God and this is the only Actuality in the dream universe of the scientists. In this Universe man lives and moves and has his being.

(To be continued)

Alphabet Of
DAILY MEDITATIONS
For Every Week Day Of The Month

MAY 1951

1. The way of life is ABOVE to the wise.
2. BEFORE they call, I will answer.
3. Faithful is he that CALLETH you.
4. God hath DEALT graciously with me.
5. The angel of the Lord ENCAMPETH round about them.

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7. Thou shalt lift up thy FACE unto God.
8. The GLORY of the Lord is risen upon thee.
9. I will set HIM on HIGH.
10. I am their INHERITANCE.
11. The lips of knowledge are a precious JEWEL.
12. I am with thee to KEEP thee.

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14. LOOK up, and LIFT up your heads.
15. Thy judgments are MADE MANIFEST.
16. His NAME shall be in their foreheads.
17. I have set before thee an OPEN door.
18. In the day of PROSPERITY be joyful.
19. Many waters cannot QUENCH love.

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21. Thy greatness REACHETH to heaven.
22. Ye are the SALT of the earth.
23. I will abide in THY TABERNACLE for ever.
24. Thou UPHOLDEST me.
25. Be thou a son of VALOR.
26. I WILL WRITE on him the name of my God.

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28. YOURS is the kingdom of God.
29. Let the children of ZION (peace) be joyful.
30. Show me Thy ways, O Lord.
31. I trust in Thee.

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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.