

READERS' QUESTIONS

Human Discontent • Jehovah and the Holy Spirit • Changes in Religion

QUESTION: I've often been dissatisfied with my life and longed for a "change," though I can't put my finger on exactly what sort of change. One author I recently read said that we are dissatisfied because we haven't yet reached our potential—that we have a lot to give but haven't yet found channels through which to do this adequately. Would you comment on this?

Answer: Many people, we believe, suffer from vague, if not pronounced, feelings of discontent or restlessness. Much of this is due to the fact that spiritual longings which we do not yet fully understand are beginning to stir in us. If nothing else, our subconscious is aware that there are higher concerns than our physical and material well-being toward which we are meant to be striving. Ultimately it is the destiny of every human being to be quite literally "as our Father in heaven." Within us already, in latent form, are His Light, Powers, and Attributes. We came from out of God eons ago and descended into matter in order to gain the experiences which will potentiate our God essence. We are now embarking on our return journey to God. The physical Earth is not our true home; it is only the temporary field of our present activity and consciousness.

Basically, our discontent, whatever form it may take and whatever its surface manifestations, is the expression of an ineradicable longing to return to the abode of Spirit. This return will take additional eons of time, most of us requiring many future earth lives before we can live in continuous Spirit consciousness. This goal can be most effectively realized by dedicating our lives to service in the

physical world, which will help us to evolve the spiritual qualities of compassion, altruism, and selflessness. By doing this—serving the Lord Christ in thought, word, and deed, voluntarily and unstintingly—we placate our spiritually-based restlessness and longing for our eternal home .

Thus the author of whom you write is quite correct in saying that we have not yet reached our potential and also that we have a lot to give but have not yet found the channel through which to do so. The ultimate channel for us at this time is that of selflessness. It is only as we give of ourselves, and to the extent that we give of ourselves, that we find peace and fulfillment. This applies to the offering of our talents in service for the upliftment of our fellow humanity, to the routine work associated with physical existence that we all must perform, to the thoughts of love and blessing that we send to others, and to the relinquishing of low desires, the fulfillment of which renders us unfit for the higher work of life.

JEHOVAH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Question: The teaching of the New Testament as touching the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, so winsome and so gracious, makes it difficult to identify the Holy Spirit with the vengeful Jehovah of the Old Testament. How is this to be reconciled?

Answer: It was the mission of Jehovah and His Angels to multiply whatever is upon the earth. In other words, He was the giver of children. Take the announcement of the angel to Mary: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you and you shall conceive." There you have already a connecting link; but just as there are two sides to every question, so there are two sides also to the Holy Spirit. One

phase of His work is done from the outside as a giver of law, and law when it is applied without, is a taskmaster that drives us to do this or that or prohibits us from doing other things. It demands an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. There is Jehovah, the author of the law; but when the time comes that we have received the law within and are not driven from without, the taskmaster becomes the Comforter.

The whole universe is governed by law. Everything in the world rests upon law, and it is our safeguard as well as our taskmaster. In the morning we leave our homes without concern, depending upon the law of gravity to keep them in place during our absence. We know that upon our return we shall find them where we have left them, although our planet is rushing along in its orbit at the rate of 65,000 miles per hour. We rely upon the expansion of gases for our motive power. In fact, everything in nature is based upon laws, and whether we know it or not, we are their slaves until by knowledge we learn to use them, to cooperate with them, and thus make them do our bidding and save us labor.

Similarly it is with the moral laws given by Jehovah upon Mt. Sinai. They were designed to bring us to Christ, and when Christ is born within, the law of the Holy Spirit also enters in. Man then is symbolized by the ark that stood in the Holy of Holies and had within it the tables of the law. You will notice that the Comforter who came to the men of old was not an outside Comforter, but one who worked within, one who entered into them and became a part of them.

When the Spirit of Law, the Holy Spirit, enters into us, He is the Comforter, because we do willingly the things which are prompted by this inner urge, while we resented and begrudged doing the bidding of the exterior taskmaster.

CHANGES IN RELIGION

QUESTION: Why have there been changes in the religions of the world? If one religion were true, why should it not, be satisfactory for all ages?

Answer: In his first epistle to the Corinthians (13:11), Paul says: "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child,



Illumination, folio 283 recto in Latin manuscript 2 of the Urbino Collection, Vatican Library

Pentecost

The Holy Spirit as communal Comforter and Advocate first appeared fifty days after Christ's Resurrection.

but when I became a man, I put away childish things," and his message is so plain and clear that it cannot be misconstrued when applied to the individual. Yet there is a broader application implied, the application to all mankind in the process of its evolution. One often speaks of the childhood of a race or the infancy of a people, meaning in its early stages of growth.

Christ in one of his last meetings with His disciples before His betrayal and subsequent crucifixion and resurrection says, "I have yet many things to say unto you but ye cannot bear them now." Who will venture to deny that He has been giving us the message from that time to this through the multitudinous voices of nature, yet, "We have eyes and see not, ears and hear not, neither do we understand." Sometimes we have to be knocked down, so to speak, by the truth before we see it and recognize it as such.

Literature, art, music, invention, and religion have evolved side by side with the development of man. They are all expressions of his inner consciousness and by a careful analysis of any representative of its period, its time in the world's history may be determined.

So religion has evolved side by side with man and thus it must ever continue to do or it will be cast aside as the outgrown garments of a growing child. □