

METAPHYSICAL BIBLE INTERPRETATION

Being All I Am Created To Be

Gospels Interpretation

Introduction

Jesus not only taught in parables, his life is a parable. This earthly story with a heavenly meaning evidences the possibilities for living in the Christ level of awareness. Paul envisioned this universal potential when he wrote "...Christ in you, the hope of Glory." (1 Col 1:27)

This work approaches the main events of Jesus' life and activities plus the central message of his teachings.

Jesus, the man from Nazareth, established the Christ level of awareness. He called it "the kingdom" and located it "within you" (Lk 17:21) Within each of us is the potential to be and do as the master demonstrated, "and greater things shall you do." (Jn 14:12)

This thematic study provides a systematic approach to Being All I Am Created To Be: the image and likeness of the Divine. We are the son/daughter/expression of spirit, encompassing all the possibilities of being here and now.

The Bible is our story. The story of our individual soul's unfoldment. We all exist somewhere in each of these stories. By opening ourselves to the lessons available through the symbology, we open ourselves to experiencing life more awake and alive, a more fulfilling and joy filled existence.

Metaphysical Bible Interpretation
Part 3

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- 1) THE GOOD NEWS: Matthew 3:2, John 3:16.
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- 12) THE NEW LIFE OF SPIRIT: Luke 6:37-38, John 3:1-15, 14:15-21.
Living in a consciousness of unity.

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Part 1

THE GOOD NEWS

The word Gospel literally means "God's spell" or "good-tidings": The Good News. There are four Gospels included in the standard Christian Bible. Each tell a different story of the life and teachings of Jesus, called Christ. Three: Matthew, Mark & Luke, tell essentially the same story and are referred to as "Synoptic" gospels. The word "Christ" comes from the Greek "Christos" and is an interpretation of the Hebrew word "Messiah" which means "the anointed one." There were several Messiahs or "annointed ones" in Biblical history: Saul, David, Cyrus of Persia, to name three. These leaders were "annointed" or called out to lead the people to new levels of experience of God, good, in our world. The birth of Jesus symbolizes the birth of the Christ level of awareness to all peoples.

The Synoptic Gospels record Jesus' first public teaching essentially the same way, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mt 3:2) "Repent" literally means to "think anew" or again, and includes an element of a new understanding. "for the kingdom of heaven", the kingdom of God, your good, "is at hand." It is within your reach, right here and now. The Good News of Jesus of Nazareth then is: "Think again with a new level of understanding for the experience of your good is within your reach right here and now."

The Gospel according to John is similar but couched in even more symbolic language. "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." (Jn 3:16)

"God so loved the world", this physical level of existence is the expression of God's love. It is here that we are God experiencing God. We are each expressions of God; we are each God's hands, feet, mouths, eyes, ears, etc., the power and presence of God experiences life through us.

"he gave his only Son" "Israel is my first-born son." (Ex 4:22) Israel is the Old Testament equivalent of the Christ. Israel is the covenant people of God. The Christ is a new universal awareness of the unity of God. "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." (1 Cor 12:27) The world has been given to us, as the only Son (and Daughters) or expressions of Spirit which is God, in order to experience our good.

"that whoever believes in him": God, good, Spirit, Life, Love, Substance, Infinite Creative Intelligence. To believe is to place our faith in. We place our faith in Spirit, in life, knowing that we are loved.

"should not perish but have eternal life." Life is eternal, it does not end. But our awareness of life is limited by our consciousness, our beliefs about life, the eternality of Spirit. When our faith is placed in the material appearances we "perish"; we limit ourselves to experiencing this Karmic wheel of life and death. When our faith is placed in the eternal we transcend this Karmic wheel and are guided to a new "enlightened" experience of life eternal. This is The Good News.

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THE BIRTH OF CHRIST AWARENESS

The story of the birth of Jesus can be found in the Gospels according to Matthew 1:18-2:23 and Luke 2:1-20. John tells a different, but related story of the "Word", vs 1:1-14. The symbology of these stories reflects those of many of the worlds religions, here we will concentrate on its relation to the Old Testament book of Genesis.

"...Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come (Christ)." (Rom. 5:14). With the birth of Jesus, or Christ level of awareness, we are given a rematch, a chance for redemption of the Adam level of consciousness in the "Garden of Eden" analogy. Joseph (intellect) was "resolved to divorce her quietly" (Mt 1:19), or to follow the appearances of sense consciousness just as Adam and Eve (intellect and feeling natures) followed the leadings of sense (the serpent) and not of Spirit (God) in eating of the fruit. (Gen 3:6) Instead, he and Mary (feeling soul nature) both follow the leading of Spirit (angels) and unite to birth the Christ level of awareness into physical experience (swaddling clothes).

So may we birth the Christ level of awareness into our conscious experience when we follow the leadings of Spirit even when it is in opposition to sense appearances. Here we know with Jesus that "I and the Father are one" (Jn 10:30). We are one with God, one with our good. The eternal awareness of this presence active in our minds, hearts and lives is Christ awareness.

"The Word" is the creative power of God or Spirit, analogous to the "God said" of Genesis. It is God, and has come into the flesh and dwells within us (Jn 1:14 & Lk 17:21). The creative power of the Word is directed by the words we speak, the thoughts we think and the feelings or emotions we hold. These set up a vibration that goes forth to establish the physical stuff of our world. In the Christ level of awareness we

are aligned with God, with our good and call forth seemingly miraculous results through the power of the Word.

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RESIST NOT TEMPTATION

The first event that Jesus participates in to prepare for his public ministry is his baptism by John. (Mt 3, Mk 1, Lk 4) Between the birth of the Christ level of awareness (Jesus) into consciousness and its full maturity of expression (ministry) is a passage of time (30 years). 30 symbolizes the three phases of being: Spiritual, Mental, Physical, raised to a state of completion (the added 0). When we come into a new awareness it is wise to allow for its maturity in consciousness when it is ready for baptism.

Baptism is symbolic of Spiritual cleansing of the mind, washing away all limiting material thoughts that we are anything less than the Holy Perfect Child of God. Every one of us is God's " ...beloved son (expression), with whom I am (God indwelling is) well pleased." The baptism of John is the denial or release of the limitations of sense consciousness which prepares us for the baptism of Jesus: the divine affirmation of creative mind that lifts us to a new level of life expression, the regeneration.

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil." (Mt 4:1) It is said that absolute power corrupts absolutely. This may be true in human, sense level, consciousness. When we are lifted by Spiritual awareness (baptism) we transcend the temptations of Sense consciousness (the devil).

Jesus fasted (refrained from negativity) for 40 days and nights, symbolizing a sufficient time of preparation (similar to the stories of Noah, Moses, Elijah, etc.) " ...afterward he was hungry." In the spiritual level of awareness our hunger is for a greater experience of the presence of God, good, in our lives.

The first temptation of sense consciousness is to believe that bread (physical substance) is our source of life. Christ awareness teaches us that God, Spirit, is the source of life and all needed good.

The Second temptation is to "make" things happen. Christ awareness teaches us that God is in charge and that all things happen for good.

The third temptation is to place our priorities on the physical, sense level of existence. Christ awareness teaches us that there is only one presence and power: God the good, and we **look to God first in all situations.**

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JESUS: WONDERFUL COUNSELOR

"...his name will be called 'Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.'" (Isa 9:6) The ministry of Jesus of Nazareth was one of a Counselor/Healer and Rabbi/Teacher. He not only healed us and showed us to heal ourselves but he taught us to "...do the works that I do; and greater works than these..." (Jn 14:12)

As a Spiritual Counselor he worked with three basic premises: 1) The individual is whole and complete just as they are; there is nothing to fix. See John 5:2-18 for example, 2) The Christ within each individual desires perfect expression. See John 10:31-39 and 14:20, and 3) guidance is not rationally or logically determined but is intuitively (Divinely) directed, see John 3:1-5. If we truly wish to assist another in finding their perfect, Divine, guidance or healing we can follow his example. Consciously call forth a recognition of the individual as whole and complete, affirm the individuals perfect expression of their infinite potential and encourage their own intuitive knowing of the solution to their desired good.

Jesus' teaching methods include not only oral: sermons when talking to large numbers of people (Mt 5:1-7:28) and dialectic when speaking with his disciples (Lk 10:23-37) but example (Jn 9:1-12). He was a master who lived and demonstrated what he taught. He made effective use of the simile (Mk 10:13-16), the metaphor (Jn 15:1-11), the analogy (Mk 4:26-29) and the parable (Mt 13:1-52).

He especially utilized the parable. These earthly stories with heavenly meanings not only make the lesson concrete and interesting but drive home the message so that anyone can derive meaning. Upon study and reflection many levels of meaning can be derived from each story. They involve common experiences for the people to whom he spoke so that they might easily relate to the characters and events. Few masters throughout history, notably LaoTze, Budha and

Socrates, have woven such depth of understanding and expression into their teachings.

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BEING HAPPY

The Beattitudes, Matthew 5:3-10, are called such because of the Latin word "Beati" which begins each statement and can be interpreted alternatively as Blessed or Happy. These are the "Be Happy Attitudes." Jesus layed down 8 statements that define "Attitudes of Being" which can lead toward fulfillment and satisfaction in living. These parallel the 8-fold path of Buddhism and the 8-limbs of Yoga.

The Beattitudes form the framework around which the rest of the "Sermon on the Mount" (Mt 5, 6 & 7) is developed. Understanding these "Attitudes of Being" opens the door to understanding the "Sermon" which contains the essence of the message of Jesus of Nazareth and prepares us to enter into a "New Testament" level of awareness.

To be "poor in spirit" means to be without spiritual pride or prejudice. It is to be aware of the unity of all of God's creations and to live in a consciousness of oneness.

To be "mournful" is to release all negativity, that which is hindering our spiritual awareness, and gain clarity of consciousness.

To be "meek" is to be non-resistant to life, to be receptive to our good.

To "hunger and thirst for righteousness" is to be in a positive, growth consciousness, which affirms the true and good, and forsakes all negativity.

To be "merciful" is to be in a consciousness of Love: the fulfillment of the Law which is "as we give so shall we receive."

To be "pure in heart" is to live in a consciousness of Faith: the awareness of God alone as the One Power and Presence in our lives.

To be a "peacemaker" is to realize the Divine plan for our lives which is to live in health, harmony and abundance.

To be "persecuted for righteousness sake" is to enter into the process of Regeneration which cleanses our physical

bodies and lifts us to a consciousness of light and of light bodies.

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PRAY LIKE THIS

In the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:1-7:29), Jesus gives us a model for prayer that has come to be known as "The Lord's Prayer" (Mt 6:9-14, see also VS. 1-8 and compare to Luke 11:1-4). Some scholars believe that these seven statements would be more properly interpreted in the affirmative, ex.: "Thy kingdom has come, Thy will is done..." , etc. In this light, we can see how the seven parts to the prayer relate to the three basic elements to effective prayer.

1) We focus our **belief** by recognizing, a) the Divinity of Spirit and, b) our relationship to Spirit (vs. 9) and, c) our desire to be pure channels for the physical expression of the Divine Spirit (vs. 10).

2) We confirm our **willingness** to participate in the process by affirming that Spirit a) provides for our every need (vs. 11) and, b) purifies our mind and heart (vs. 12 & 13) as we c) release any thought of wrong or evil or temptation to believe that we are anything less than wholly perfect, sinless children of God: the One Presence and One Power.

3) We give praise and **thanksgiving** knowing that "...Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen (so be it) (Epilogue)."

Truly, the answer to all our prayers is "...seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. (vs 6:33)"

The Lord's Prayer, as well as Unity's Prayer for Protection and Prayer of Faith, are excellent tools easily remembered in times of trial and valuable for daily centering in possibility consciousness. But, the most effective prayer is the prayer of the soul. Heart-felt prayer that arises from your own prayer consciousness will truly move the mountains of apparent lack and limitation, pain and fear, whatever the obstacle may be. The words may be the same, most likely your own, but the belief, willingness and thanksgiving will be real to you.

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THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

A foundational teaching of Unity and New Thought encompasses the concepts of Heaven and Hell. Where or what is Heaven? Traditional Christian teaching is that heaven is a place in the sky where our souls go to after death, if we are good and/or chosen. This doctrine arises from extra-biblical or non-biblical writings that contradict Jesus' message of Love and Truth. It is not supported by the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus mentioned the Kingdom of Heaven many times and described it mostly in parables: "it is like" or "may be compared to". Nearly a dozen parables describe the Kingdom and never does he refer to it as a place in the sky or to be experienced after death.

Jesus teaches us that Heaven is an activity in consciousness that we can choose to participate in right here and now. See Matthew chapter 13. He likens it to sowing seeds that grow to maturity, to leaven that leavens flour, and to treasures that are hidden but when found are worth releasing all else to obtain.

The seeds are our thoughts and feelings that we plant in the soil of our subconscious. The leaven is the Spirit of Truth that when realized brings all of life into perspective. The treasure is the kingdom which when we find it we realize that it is all that we need for a happy, success-filled life.

His parables also refer to the negative aspects of thoughts and feelings as weeds to be gently removed when they make themselves plain and the positive are strong. The process requires forgiveness, see Matthew 18:23-35. When we begin the work is not as important as the fact that we enter into this work, see Matthew 20:1-16. All of our parts of self are called to be lifted into spiritual awareness, but must be in harmony with Spirit to enter in, Matthew 22:1-14.

Heaven and Hell are states of consciousness that we chose to participate in. Jesus clearly located the Kingdom of Heaven as "at hand", Matthew 4:17. It is "within" or "in our midst", Luke 17:21. It is here and now, within our reach, within our ability to recognize as our operational reality.

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THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

Three of the most misunderstood concepts included in Biblical literature are: Sin, Evil, and the Devil. When the root meanings and the history of these words are understood, all of the dogma that has surrounded these concepts melts like ice in the warmth of the sun; the darkness disappears in the light of understanding.

The word Sin comes from the Latin word *Syne* which is an archery term that literally means to miss the mark. When an archer misses the bulls eye he has synned. To sin is to make a mistake or not live up to our potential. The answer to sin is to "...go, and sin no more." (John 8:11) We learn from our mistakes though the learning may be a painful "hellish" experience.

The beginning of the awareness of Evil is symbolized by the Garden of Eden story where Adam eats of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:15-3:19) Adam becomes aware of the possibility for something other than good, God, which we call evil. But in reality, evil has no existence in and of its self. In Truth it is all good. "And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good." (Gen 1:31) God never made no junk. The awareness of the appearance of evil facilitates our growth in realizing our potential. Just as fire tempers steel, we are stronger for the challenges that we have met and surpassed.

The Devil concept has grown out of the human need to assess blame for apparent evil upon a supernatural force, and therefore remove our responsibility for taking care of ourselves, our neighbors and our planet. It is beyond our control. The word comes from the Chaldean "Satre" which means: adversary, tempter, tester. He symbolizes that within us which draws to us the challenges (apparent evils) that can strengthen us and lead us to a greater realization of heaven on earth.

The Old Testament "Satan" was a member of God's heavenly host. During the period of the "Babylonian Captivity" (586-538 BCE) the Israelites were exposed to the dualistic Zoroastrian Religion. This influence spurred the development of the "Satan" concept into the New Testament "Diablo" or Devil and the belief that we are locked in this struggle between the forces of darkness and the forces of light that pervades traditional and fundamental Christianity. This is contrary to the teachings of Jesus who clearly says that this belief is the starting point for all error "because there is no truth in him." (John 8:44) The Devil does not exist in and of its self. It only exists in the mind darkened by sense consciousness, in the lives of those who are not able to lift their vision beyond the physical plane of existence and see the glory of God which is all about them ready to express through them in abundance.

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"WILT THOU BE MADE WHOLE?"

The basic metaphysical question underlying every need for healing is "Wilt thou be made whole?" (Jn 5:6 KJV) Life, abundant life, and health are our Divine Right as sons and daughters of God the most high. As Spiritual beings there is nothing on the physical plain of existence that can limit our expression of Divine Life, not germs, "bugs", viruses, "accidents", the past; only our selves can get in the way of our experiencing the abundant expression of health that is our Divine Right.

Now, don't start beating your self up if you are experiencing something less than a healthy expression of life, but rejoice in the possibilities that you encompass.

You can choose right now to experience a greater level of health and abundant living, when you choose to work with the law. "This health law is three fold: spiritual; ...mental; ...physical." (Myrtle Fillmore, co-founder of Unity) Our mental understanding, or consciousness of our spiritual nature determines our physical expression. Our consciousness of health and of our relationship with God determines our expression of health and of God's life. This three fold law of health can be manifested in consciousness through the three step process of belief, willingness, and thanksgiving.

The one element common to all of the healing miracles demonstrated by Jesus of Nazareth, recorded in the Gospels, was Jesus: the consciousness that expressed its self as Jesus. "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours." (Mk 11:24) We must truly believe, without doubt, not only in God as our source ever ready to provide, but also in our relationship as the Son/Daughter/expression of God deserving of a perfect expression of God life.

"Wilt thou be made whole?" We must be willing to be a channel for and to express health. This includes the

willingness to experience all that this entails giving up and taking on. Sometimes releasing the benefits: attention, strokes, support, that we have received by expressing something less than abundant health can be the biggest stumbling block to manifesting divine health.

"And Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, 'Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.'" (Jn 11:41) Giving thanks in advance of the demonstration with the realization that what is done in consciousness naturally outworks into manifestation is a necessary step towards completion of the process. This attitude of gratitude allows us to release the outworking to the highest and best for all which is known only to the cosmic or divine consciousness that is God.

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7 STEPS TO TRANSFORMATION

The Gospel according to John is often called "The Spiritual Gospel" for it differs dramatically from the 3 synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark & Luke) both in form and content as well as in flavor. His focus is on the Principle of Creation, the "Word" or Logos (vs 1:1-18) as the expression of God and equates it with the underlying essence of physical manifestation. This parallels the very beginning of the Old Testament story of creation (Gen 1:1-2:3) through the word "God said..." "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made..." (Psalms 33:6 et.al.) But now this principle of creation "...became flesh and dwelt among us..." it is inherent in every "son" and daughter of God.

The Gospel according to John is organized around the framework of seven miracles or "signs" of Jesus. This parallels not only the seven days of creation found in Genesis but the seven-fold series of seven visions which defines the book of Revelation. This is significant of the power of the Logos or "Word" which is the Creative Principle of Divine Self and of our abilities to tap into this power when we have "...ears to hear..." (Rev 3:22).

The first "sign" occurs within the story of the Wedding at Cana (vs 2:1-11). This signifies the union and transformation of dominant states of consciousness: male & female, water (earthly) to wine (spiritual). Transformation is a balancing act. All aspects of self are to be aligned (wed) in preparation for lifting to a new level of expression.

The second is the healing of the official's son (4:46-54). This signifies a new "Universal" awareness of the relationship of man and God. There is not us and them, you and me, there is only one. All we see is an expression of our individual consciousness of Being. It is all good. (Gen 1:31)

The third is the healing of the man at Bethzatha (5:1-18). This signifies a new relationship with the world. The world is an expression of spirit; spirit can work through the physical.

The fourth is the feeding of the 5,000 (6:1-14). This creates a new awareness of God as "substance", the source of all there is, everywhere present, abundantly available to fulfill our every desire.

This substance is readily manifest as we learn to do "...the works of God..." which is the significance of the healing of the man born blind (9:1-7), the fifth sign.

The sixth sign is the raising of Lazarus (11:1-44). Which represents the overcoming of "The last enemy..." (1Cor15:26).

This sets the stage for the last great demonstration: the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension (20:1-10). This is the final process of transformation in the "New Life" of Spirit: Release, Renew, Regenerate.

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THE FINAL TEACHINGS

Between Jesus' return to Jerusalem and his arrest and crucifixion lie much of his most difficult and least understood teachings. See Matthew Chapters 21-26, Mark 11-14, Luke 19-22, & John 12-17. When we read these sayings about "The end of the age", "The Great Judgement" and the coming of the Kingdom (second coming) from a literal standpoint, they can be quite confusing and troublesome. If we are, then we have missed the keys to their understanding: "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away till all these things take place" (Mt 24:34, Mk 13:30, Lk 21:32), "...the kingdom of God is in the midst of you" (Lk 17:21) and "He who believes in me, believes not in me but in him who sent me." (Jn 12:44)

Literally these events did take place within the span of the generation to whom Jesus was speaking. The similarity of these events and later occurrences to the present day are testimony to the truth that our lessons repeat themselves until they are learned. All prophecy is directed to the current age and not a hundred or two thousand years in the future. But the consciousness to which the prophecy is directed is revisited with each generation until we shall have moved into the new age: where we live in Christ consciousness.

These statements are directed to our lower, earthy, selves which resist growth in Spiritual awareness. See 1 Corinthians 15. The part of us that believes it is "only" human and limited to existence on this earthly plain of experience will eventually give way to awareness of our Spiritual Reality (1 Cor 15:45-49). This is the "New Age." But the earthy, physical, sense conscious self of us is as tenacious as a goat. Thus the analogy to the separation of the sheep from the goats in Matthew 25:31-46. The reference is to the sheep which are ideas and beliefs in consciousness that follow the Christ, Spiritual, pattern for expression, and the goats which are resistant to things of the Spirit. In resistance there is pain and

suffering. Through non-resistance (sheep), we flow with the transformative changes of Spiritual growth "into eternal life."

Chapters 14-17 of the Gospel according to John are a beautiful meditation and prayer of Faith, Peace, Love, Comfort and Unity. "Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me." "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you." "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." "When the Spirit of Truth comes he will guide you into all the truth..." "In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you."

Our destiny is to grow into the Spiritual awareness demonstrated by Jesus, Budha, Baba Ji as well as other Spiritual Masters. As we grow we may experience the tribulations of the "end times". But as we choose to separate "the sheep from the goats" we learn to flow into the new life of Spirit.

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The New Life Of Spirit

Jesus' final demonstration of spiritual awareness: his crucifixion, resurrection and Ascension, is an inspiration to each of us to "...do the works that I do; and greater works than these..." (John 14:12) In this demonstration Jesus played out a common mythological theme of death and rebirth. Compare it with similar stories such as the story of the Phoenix, taken from a neighboring culture: the Egyptians.

The Phoenix is a great bird that circles the earth for 500 years taking on the troubles "sins" of the people. After 500 years he builds a funeral pyre of sweet woods and resins. Directing the sun's rays he sets the wood on fire and perishes in the flames. In so doing the "sins" are released, transformed, and the people are "saved" from the results of their transgressions. Out of the ashes a new Phoenix is born.

The story of Jesus takes this theme to a new level, the Ascension experience. The New Testament level of consciousness is one of increase. We have moved beyond the old level of even exchange "an eye for an eye" to that of the Law of Increase "...give, and it will be given you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap." (Luke 6:38) We are not only reborn, but we ascend to a new level of experience; we are born of the Spirit.

This "new birth" comes as an extension of the process that begins with crucifixion. When we die to the physical, sense, level of consciousness we cease looking to the outer, physical, world as the source of our good. This can result in great tribulation as our old beliefs, thoughts and habit patterns are not want to go easily. When we hold strong to the knowledge of God as our source, no matter what the appearances, we will move through this crucifixion experience to be resurrected to a greater level of awareness of life and living.

In this resurrected state, our minds are opened to even greater levels of experience to which we might ascend. The

step of Ascension is not an end but a new beginning. It is the lifting of our conscious awareness of reality.

This experience can be compared to that of the Buddhist concept of Satori: an intuitive perspective of reality that transcends duality, an awareness of the immediate facts of existence. This is a consciousness of unity: a realization of the interconnectedness of all existence, a consciousness of the oneness of God and humanity, the physical and the spiritual.

In the book of Revelation, the Apostle John has an experience of the Ascended Christ: the level of awareness that awaits our realization. This compounded series of visions points the way to this experience of "...a new heaven and a new earth..." (Rev 21:1)