

WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

The Parable of Christ's Ministry

CORINNE HELINE

Parables of the Pearl of Great Price and of the Hidden Treasure

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man has found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls;

Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.—*Matthew 13:44-46.*

The Pearl of Great Price and *The Hidden Treasure* are twin parables. Each recounts the same truth, namely, the necessity of entire and complete dedication to the quest of the spiritual life. This full allegiance is the primary requisite of the Path of Discipleship. Nothing less will suffice than that the *whole* energy of mind, soul, and body be sent in *one* direction.

Parable of the Mustard Seed

And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the Kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

It is like a grain of mustard seed, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth.

But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

—*Mark 4:30-32; also Luke 13:18-19.*

The Parable of the Mustard Seed teaches us once more that we are all Christs-in-the-making, and that each one of us must, in a small way, make our lives a replica of the life of the Christ. The mind is the path; therefore the beginning of the resurrection within our own lives must be accomplished by establishing within ourselves a new mind through the creative power of thought.

The Master knew this truth and gave

it to His disciples and to the multitudes gathered around Him. He likened the attainment of the kingdom (within) to the planting of a seed in the ground. As the seed lies embedded in darkness, hidden away from the light for a time, apparently inert and lifeless, so it is with the aspirant when he begins to live the spiritual life. For a time it may seem that he is making no progress. He is beset with trials and temptations and enveloped in darkness, and knows not how it is possible for the seed of the Spirit to spring up.

Jacob Boehme describes this place on the Path so aptly that it finds an echo in the heart of everyone who has passed this way. He says: "It is not so easy a matter to become a child of God as men imagine . . . *To turn the mind and destroy self* there is a strong and continued requisite, and such a stout and steady purpose that if the body and soul should part asunder by it, yet the will would persevere constantly and not enter again into the self. A man must wrestle until the dark center that is shut up close breaks open, and the spark lying therein kindles, and from thence immediately the noble lily branch sprouteth — as from the divine grain of mustard seed, as Christ saith. A man must pray earnestly, with great humility, and for a while become a fool in his own reason and see himself void of understanding therein until Christ be formed in this new earth incarnation."

If we possess ourselves of this strong and continued earnestness of purpose we may rest assured that we shall come to know the truth of the Master's words: "The earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear."

(Continued)