

BIBLE LESSONS

Compiled by
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Correlated to *The Infinite Way* and
Spiritual Interpretation of Scripture
By Joel S. Goldsmith

Lesson 1: The Nature of God

Introduction to the Bible Lessons

At Joel Goldsmith's 1962 Princess Kaiulani class in Hawaii, Joel invited Virginia Stephenson to give daily lectures on the Bible. To his delight, the whole class attended the lectures, and there was a great receptivity to them. As a result of these Bible lectures, Joel asked Virginia to make up a Bible study program that revealed the timeless, universal spiritual principles which are the basis of the Infinite Way. Joel wanted every student to be familiar with the spiritual thread of Oneness that runs through the Old Testament and the New Testament. Virginia's Bible Lessons originally appeared in Joel Goldsmith's Monthly Letters starting in January, 1963, and continued through April of 1965. They focused the students on the various principles and aspects of mystical unfoldment.

A mystical teaching like The Infinite Way requires study. It is not a religion in which you can find comfort in a church, temple or mosque. The way one comes to mystical realization is through study and meditation. These lead to illumination – that state of consciousness in which the presence of God is experienced. The tools we have for this kind of study go back to antiquity. Many great lights lived as transparencies for the Divine, and many of them left records of the principles for living in that mystical consciousness. Joel Goldsmith's work is a message of Christian mysticism, and he left a large body of work for people to study. To fully understand the principles he left to the world, it is helpful to know the Bible.

These Bible Lessons require the active participation of the student; they involve more effort than just reading from a book. They guide the student into finding the connections between the modern presentation of mysticism and its ancient roots. Not everything in the Bible is spiritual. Much of it describes the struggle of a people wanting to know God, and defines their concept of God and how man relates to the divine and to his fellow human beings. The mystical revelation in the Bible is hard to find, and often it is veiled behind a human agenda. Because of Joel's many years in Christian Science, where the Bible is essential to the service, Joel knew the Bible and was able to unveil its mystical thread. In his Infinite Way message, Joel continued to use the Bible as the foundation for mystical revelation.

How to study the lessons

To study these lessons, first read the Bible passages given in the box. These passages have been selected to emphasize the theme of the lesson. Then read the selection from Joel's book(s) that is given after the Bible passages. Read just one section at a time and contemplate and meditate on what you have read. In this way you will increase your knowledge of scripture, and you will discover the connection between the mysticism of The Infinite Way and its ancient root.

Studying these lessons can also be a group activity. Individuals can take turns reading the passages and the group can meditate after each section is read.

Please note that the page references for quotations from *The Infinite Way* (abbreviated “TIW”) are from the DeVorss & Company thirty-fourth printing of the book in 2006. Page references for quotations from *Spiritual Interpretation of Scripture* (abbreviated as “SIOS”) are from the DeVorss & Company twenty-fourth printing of the book in 2003. If you have older or newer versions of these books, the passage that is quoted may be on a different page. If you are using the e-book versions of the books, you may not have page numbers at all. However, you can use the “Search” function on your e-reader to search for the first few words of the quotation and easily locate the passage.

Each book reference is given in this format: [*Book Title, page number: paragraph number*]. For example, the reference “*TIW, p. 21: 1-2*” refers to *The Infinite Way*, page 21, paragraphs 1 and 2. The reference “*SIOS, p. 25: 2*” refers to *Spiritual Interpretation of Scripture*, page 25, paragraph 2.

The paragraph numbers refer to “whole” paragraphs. In other words, a partial paragraph at the top of a page is not counted as the first paragraph on that page. It is considered the completion of the last paragraph on the preceding page. So for example, the reference “*TIW, p. 34: 1*” refers to the first complete paragraph on page 34 of *The Infinite Way*.

All Bible quotations are from the King James Version. Today, there are many online Bible study websites such as biblegateway.com and biblehub.com that are rich with features to facilitate study. Most of them allow you to specify a Bible passage, and then read that passage in many different translations. While Joel always used the King James Version, it can be helpful to read the same Bible passage in a few different translations before contemplating the passage to discern the meaning.

Our Gratitude

We are most grateful to DeVorss & Company for their gracious permission to use quotations from *The Infinite Way* and *Spiritual Interpretation of Scripture* for these Bible Lessons.

Lesson 1: The Nature of God

Part I

Genesis 1: 1-3

- ¹ *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*
- ² *And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*
- ³ *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

“Spiritual illumination enables us to discern the spiritual reality where the human concept appears to be. Spiritual sense discerns the reality of that which is appearing as concept.”¹

John 1: 1-5

- ¹ *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*
- ² *The same was in the beginning with God.*
- ³ *All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.*
- ⁴ *In him was life; and the life was the light of men.*
- ⁵ *And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*

“Spiritual illumination comes to us in a measure with our first investigation of truth. We believe that we are seeking good, or truth; whereas the light has begun to shine in our consciousness compelling us to take the steps we have since taken. Every increase of our spiritual understanding was more light appearing and dispelling the darkness of sense. This inflow of illumination will continue until we come to the full realization of our true identity as ‘the light of the world.’ Without illumination, we struggle with the forces of the world; we labor for a living; we struggle to maintain our place and position; we compete for riches or honors. Often we war with our own friends and even find ourselves at war with ourselves. There is no security in personal possessions even after the battle to acquire them has been won.

“Illumination first brings peace, then confidence and assurance; it brings rest from the world’s contests, and then all good flows to us through Grace. We see now that we do not live by acquiring, gaining, or achieving. We live by Grace; we possess all as the gift of God; we do not get our good, because we already have all good. ‘Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.’”²

¹ *The Infinite Way* (DeVorss & Company, Thirty-fourth printing, 2006), p. 33: 1. Please note that all subsequent references to this book will be abbreviated as “TIW.”

² *TIW*, p. 34: 1- 2

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word was made flesh.’

“The Word was made flesh’ – but it still is the Word. By being made flesh it does not change its nature, character, or substance. Cause becomes visible as effect, but the essence or substance is still the Word, Spirit or Consciousness.”³

Part II

Genesis 1: 11-12

¹¹ And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

¹² And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

“God evolved the world and all that is therein. What we behold through sense is not that world, but the false and finite concept of the world of God’s creating. Rising in consciousness, we begin to perceive the spiritual universe and something of its purpose.”⁴

Genesis 1: 21, 25-27

²¹ And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

²⁵ And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

“The Bible is literally true when it says that ‘the earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof’ and ‘Son ... all that I have is thine.’ There is no need therefore to take any anxious thought for our own well-being. As we forget ourselves and learn to be a state of receptivity, we will find ourselves filled with Soul-power, Soul-consciousness, Soul-

³ TIW, p. 21: 1-2

⁴ TIW, p. 68: 2

resources, and our lives will be filled with the company of Soul-filled men and women sharing the joys of their discoveries with us.”⁵

“The Bible reveals to us the basic truth of being, namely, that ‘God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.’ In this all-good that God made, there is nothing that ‘defileth ... or maketh a lie,’ and there is no other creative Principle. It becomes clear then that that which is appearing as error, sin, disease, pain, and discord is illusion, mirage, or nothingness.

“Let us then, as part of our prayer, remember that God made (evolved) all that was made, and in this universe of God there is only the All-Presence and All-Power of God, divine Love, and therefore that which at the moment appears to us as error is a false sense of reality.”⁶

Part III

Genesis 1: 20, 22, 27-28

²⁰ *And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven.*

²² *And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.*

²⁷ *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*

²⁸ *And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.*

“Let us agree now to see that just as we need take no thought for oranges as long as we have the source or supply which is continually producing fruit for us, so we need no longer take thought about dollars. Let us learn to think of dollars, as we do of leaves on trees or oranges, as the natural and inevitable result of the law active within. There is truly no need to be concerned even when the trees appear to be bare, as long as we are conscious of the truth that the law is even now operating within to bring forth fruit after its own kind. Regardless of the state of our finances at any given moment, let us not be concerned or worried because we now know that the law acting in, through, and as our consciousness is at work within us, when we are asleep as well as when we are awake, to provide all those added things.”⁷

⁵ *TIW, p. 84: 2*

⁶ *TIW, p. 105: 1- 2*

⁷ *TIW, p. 135: 3*

Matthew 25: 14-29

- ¹⁴ For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.
- ¹⁵ And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.
- ¹⁶ Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.
- ¹⁷ And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.
- ¹⁸ But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.
- ¹⁹ After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.
- ²⁰ And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.
- ²¹ His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.
- ²² He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.
- ²³ His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.
- ²⁴ Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:
- ²⁵ And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.
- ²⁶ His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:
- ²⁷ Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.
- ²⁸ Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.
- ²⁹ For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

“Since money is not supply, what is? Let us digress for a moment and look at the orange tree which is laden with fruit. We know that the oranges do not constitute supply because when these have been eaten, or sold, or given away, a new crop starts at once to grow. The oranges are gone, but the supply remains, because within that tree, there is a law in operation. Call it a law of God or a law of nature – the name of the law is not too important, but the recognition of the presence of a law operating in, through, or as, the tree is important. That law operates to draw in – through the roots – the minerals, substances, elements of air, water, and sunshine which it then transforms into sap that is drawn up through the trunk of the tree and distributed through the branches and finally sent into expression as blossoms. In due time, this law transforms the blossoms into a green marble and this becomes the full grown orange. The orange is the result or effect of the operation of the law acting in, through, and as the orange tree. As long as this law is present we will have oranges. The orange of itself cannot produce another orange.

Thus we understand that the law is the supply and oranges are the fruits, the results or the effect of the law.”⁸

“Within you and within me, there is also a law in operation – a law of life – and our awareness of the presence of this law is our supply. Money and the things necessary for daily living are the effects of the consciousness of the activity of the law within. This understanding enables us to take thought off the things of the outer world and abide in the consciousness of the law.”⁹

“We must begin our days with the inner reminder of our true identity. We must identify ourselves as Spirit, as Principle, as the law of Life unto our affairs. It is a very necessary thing to remember that we have no needs: We are infinite, individual, spiritual consciousness embodying within ourselves the infinity of good; and therefore, we are that center, that point of God-consciousness which can feed five thousand any day and every day – not by using our bank account, but by using the infinity of good pouring through us the same as it poured through Jesus. We do not meet people with the idea of what we can get or what they can do for us, but we go out into life as the presence of God.”¹⁰

Part IV

John 14: 6-12

⁶ *Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

⁷ *If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.*

⁸ *Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.*

⁹ *Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*

¹⁰ *Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.*

¹¹ *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.*

¹² *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

“There is only one answer to the question, ‘What is God?’ and that answer is, ‘I AM.’ God is the mind and the life of the individual. Any mental hedging or inner reservation on this subject will result in ultimate failure. There is but one universal / whether it is

⁸ *TIW, p. 133: 2*

⁹ *TIW, p. 134: 1*

¹⁰ *TIW, p. 139: 2*

being spoken by Jesus Christ or John Smith. When Jesus revealed, 'He that seeth me seeth him that sent me,' he was revealing a universal truth or principle. There must be no quibbling about this. You either understand this truth or you do not – and if you do not, there is no need for you to seek any further reason for failure to heal. The revelation of Jesus the Christ is clear. 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.' Unless you can accept this as a principle and therefore as the truth about you and about every individual, you have no foundation upon which to stand. The truth is that God is the mind and life of the individual. God is the only *I*."¹¹

"Never forget that you cannot live scientifically as man or idea, but that you must realize yourself to be Life, Truth, and Love. You must accept Jesus' revelation of the *I AM* until it becomes realization with you."¹²

"Consciousness lives Itself – you do not live It."¹³

¹¹ *TIW*, p. 111: 3

¹² *TIW*, p. 142: 1

¹³ *TIW*, p. 161: 4

Notes: The Nature of God