



THE GOOD NEWS MESSENGER

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If You Want to Know What God Is Like

By: G. A. Smith (from an old "Gospel Trumpet")

In order to convey a knowledge of something the hearer knows nothing about, it is often necessary for the speaker or writer to employ figures of speech, to compare the thing being discussed with something the hearer is familiar with. The Bible is full of such figures of speech.

In speaking of divine things to finite beings (people), God could not use purely spiritual language. We live in a natural, physical world and (can understand naturally) only natural, physical facts. We would not be able to lay hold of spiritual truth except as God has provided carefully selected steps by means of which our understanding can rise to the comprehension of spiritual facts. Therefore the Bible is filled with symbolic language and figures of speech by means of which God reveals spiritual truths to us.

For instance, in speaking of the Holy Spirit, God uses the figures wind, fire breath, water, etc. Thus he conveys to us the idea that the Holy Spirit is in some respects like water or similar to the action of water.

Before God introduced Christ as the "Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world" and as his "anointed," he had carefully established in the minds of the Israelites just what he meant by such expressions. He did this by the way in which literal lambs and oil were used in Israelitish worship.

Jesus' preaching was full of figures of speech. He called himself a vine and his disciples branches. He called himself a shepherd and his followers sheep.

In the Bible many different names and titles are used in referring to Christ. He himself used different names or titles. Each one reveals something concerning his nature and work. It is necessary that many names and titles be applied to Christ because no single one could reveal all of the characteristics of Christ. Each name or title is a symbol or figure of some-

thing important concerning him. By studying the significance of each name, we reach a fuller understanding of Jesus. Some of these titles applied to him are advocate, king, door, servant, etc. Jesus once referred to himself as "the Amen" (Rev. 3:14).

The word "amen" means "firm" or "established." As an interjection, it means "so be it" or "may it be." When a worshiper, listening to a sermon, says, "Amen," he is supposed to mean that as far as he is concerned the statement just uttered by the speaker is an established fact, is the exact truth concerning the matter being discussed.

Jesus began many of his sayings with the word "amen," which has been translated "verily." John 3:3 could say with equal accuracy, "Amen, amen, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again." By this Jesus evidently means, "Absolutely, absolutely," or "positively, positively, I say unto thee, Ye must be born again." The expression obviously conveys the idea of finality and completeness. It is as though Jesus had said, "This is it; ye must be born again," or "This is the last word; ye must be born again."

When Jesus prefaced any statement with "amen, amen" he evidently meant to emphasize the fact that this declaration was the full statement of an established fact, and any modification of it was both impossible and unnecessary.

It is clear, then, that when Jesus called himself "the Amen," he meant that he was and is the final and complete revelation of all that God is, and beyond or beside himself no better or fuller revelation of God is possible or needed.

That this is true is borne out by the testimony of John the Baptist: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:13). Jesus said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:9). Therefore Jesus is the "amen," the "this is it," the "last word," the ultimate in the revelation of God.

If you wish to know what God is in any respect, you have only to consider Jesus and you know, for Jesus is "amen, amen," "the Amen, the faithful and true witness" of all and to all that God is.

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A farmer in England placed on the wind indicator on his barn the words, "God is Love." A friend asked him, "Do you mean that God is as changeable as the wind?" "No," replied the farmer, "I mean God is Love no matter which way the wind blows." - Selected

Joshua in Trouble

Excerpt from *The Secret of Prayer* by E. E. Byrum

The blessings of the Lord rested upon Joshua according to the promises that had been given him, and when the proper time came, at the command of the Lord, Joshua led the children of Israel to the brink of Jordan. By his implicit faith and confidence in God, he was enabled to be an instrument in the hands of the Lord for a mighty manifestation of his power as with Moses at the Red Sea. He instructed the priests, who bore the ark of the covenant, to step into the waters, and at his command to go forward, the water then parted, and the hosts of Israel passed through on dry ground into the land of Canaan. They were now in their own promised land—in the land that was said to be a place which flowed with milk and honey. They were now in a country inhabited by their enemies, whom they were soon to meet, but the inhabitants of the land had heard of the mighty works of God through his servant Moses, and now as the waters had parted for Joshua and he led the hosts of Israel into their land, they quaked with fear.

No doubt, Joshua often went to the Lord in prayer and communion for the purpose of receiving the needed wisdom and help in time of need. They were soon to make the first attack upon the city of Jericho. The Lord had promised that if they were true to him he would fight their battles for them. By following the directions of the Lord, the City of Jericho was easily captured. Their instructions were to take nothing from the spoils of the city, but while the city was being destroyed, someone did take something from the spoils, which act greatly displeased the Lord.

Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, telling them to go up and view the country. Upon their return, they gave a favorable report, and told Joshua that they did not think it necessary for all the hosts of Israel to go up there to take the city, but that two or three thousand men would be sufficient. Having had such marvelous success at Jericho, they were confident that nothing but victory awaited them in the taking of the next city. About three thousand men were dispatched for that purpose, but when they were about to make the attack they had to flee before the people of Ai. “And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water.”

Now came the testing time for Joshua. He knew nothing about the smuggling of goods from the city of Jericho, and therefore did not know the cause of the defeat of his soldiers. Having had such positive promises from the Lord, Joshua could not understand why there should be such a marked change in affairs, and so sudden a defeat.

“And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.” Joshua 7:6.

It was then that he raised up his voice in prayer, and said, “Alas, O Lord God, wherefore has thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side of Jordan! O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?” Joshua 7:7-9

Joshua was almost at the point of discouragement. It is now readily seen why Moses and the Lord particularly charged Joshua

to be strong and courageous.

“And the Lord said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff.” Joshua 7:10, 11

The Lord not only heard Joshua’s prayer, but he answered by telling him just what had happened, and left with Joshua the responsibility of finding out the one guilty of such a deed. Joshua prepared to make investigation. He told the children of Israel what had happened, and called them before him by tribes, families and households, until the guilty one was found. “And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what hast thou done; hide it not from me.

And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the Lord God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done. When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.” Joshua 7:19-21

Achan received the penalty of death, after which the favor of the Lord was with Israel, and Joshua was assured of success. “And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise, go up to Ai: see, I have given unto thy hand the king of Ai, and his people, and his city, and his land: and thou shalt do to Ai and her king as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee in ambush for the city behind it.” The city was taken with a great victory.

At another time, when Joshua was in a hot conflict with the Amorites, he called upon the Lord, and again exercised such confidence and boldness that “He said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon: and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel.” Joshua 10:12-14

Among the lessons to be learned from the life of Joshua are his true-ness to God, his confidence and boldness and his determination to do the will of God and walk uprightly so as to find favor in his sight, in order that he might be able to commune with him in prayer, and prevail, obtaining help in time of need.

The Carousel

By. Eric Sütter

What bright path I was walking anointed
 My way seemed evident and clear
 The Way it was certain and clear
 For no district within seemed disjointed
 For the Lord was leading me here
 I remember was nothing disjointed
 From that which brought me back here

(Continued on next page)

The Carousel (cont'd)

By. Eric Sütter

The path paved with light shining onward
 Narrow and straight was the Way
 Narrow and perfect the Way
 The vessel drifts not port nor starboard
 So steady without hint of a sway
 The crew looks not port nor looks starboard
 For our Captain from right will not sway
 My head turned adrift but a moment
 My eye caught the glimmering bell
 In my ear rang not sorrow nor torment
 A bright song from an old carousel
 "I shouldn't," said I, "No, I couldn't"
 as the children beckoned my soul
 as the children pleaded my soul
 "But they're children; certainly they wouldn't"
 I said while I turned from my goal
 They said, "Just one turn and you wouldn't
 be long to return to your goal."
 I've no money to pay not even a token
 but they lure me on just the same
 I believed not that I soon would be broken
 by my payment in full for this game
 The first spin was a pleasure so slow: not bearing
 with glee I looked out at the world
 The horses were panting too much for their caring
 awaiting great darkness unfurled
 with malice great horrors unfurled
 I knew now where I sat for the children had gone
 to my left stood a lord of devices
 of deceptive malignant devices
 I looked out at the faces of my loved ones and on
 them was pity, they perceived me in crisis
 The Carousel spins faster it goes on and on
 surnamed "Sin" I perceive this old crisis
 "How did you trap me? How far have I fallen?"
 This lord grimaced but said not a word
 'Til the sickness inside overtook me and all in
 the world rang in my ears in accord
 they sang of my fears in accord
 The whirling faces they seemed now distorted
 The faces I cherish and love
 The faces of those whom I love
 I wrest my eye from that deemed most morbid
 turn my face now to Heaven above
 I cry out now to Heaven above
 I fell down from my horse to the floor
 four great hooves I was trampled beneath
 four interminable hooves lie beneath
 The daughters of evil stood more
 they smiled and lied through their teeth
 "We would love you to stay ever more"
 her forked tongue drew behind her black teeth

I'll bear this no longer, I was beaten and broken
 I longed for the path bright arrayed
 I longed for the Way bright arrayed
 I knew what I'd pay for Death was my token
 Thus the wages for those who have strayed
 In a hopeless endeavor, I stretched forth my hand
 It was grasped...
 It was held...
 The dark lord cried in protest, "Do not look above you!"
 but I needed to see who would save me
 A kind trumpet rang out, "The dark does not love you."
 and now I could see who would save me
 From above there is one who has joined me
 spoke through my fears a great love in His eye.
 Descended to that which purloined me
 "Who's there?" My Lord whispered, "'Tis I"
 Will His strength bear me forth? I nearly wondered aloud
 Of whom I spoke I nearly forgot
 Oh how is it, I nearly forgot?
 But to step off the wheel into Death's darkened shroud
 "I'm afraid!" He but whispered, "Be not."
 Can we not hinder this beast? Must we step into the shroud?
 "I'm afraid!" He but whispered, "Be not."
 So I take the first step; put my faith in His heart
 and fell not, but flew from that place
 The wailing of demons scream as we depart
 I knew not they were chained to that place
 Feeling no more the horrors aghast in my heart
 We return at a comfortable pace
 a relaxing and comfortable pace
 Can I hope to begin? Awash and renew
 I take steps in a brightly lit way
 Just one step this divinely lit Way
 Lord, help me set sail down this light Avenue
 Just one Step... one day by day
 One more day, I need you this day
 What paths I forsook through a curdled blood brook
 And paid Death for a ride on her horse
 Now onward I look and hold tight to His book
 Set my feet: I remember this course
 Set my way down this most holy course.
 The nightmare does linger, it remembers the bell
 rung in steeples of ash and lies born
 Yet I take this a lesson thus fades the death knell
 and the nights where my soul lies forlorn
 I embark a new quest wrought with patience
 counting not the spoiled fathoms I fell
 He counts not the deep fathoms I fell
 For my soul I'll forsake not its nascence
 and seek not for the dangers I tell
 And those dreams they must die in their cadence
 the dreams of the black carousel



A Call for Help from a Far-Off Land

From *Egermeier's Bible Story Book*—Acts 15:36-16:15

One day Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go again to visit the brethren in the Gentile countries." Barnabas was willing, so they arranged to start at once.

Now, John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, had come to Antioch again, and wished to go with them on this second journey. He had started with them on their first journey but had turned back, so Paul did not care to take him this time. Barnabas, however, thought it would be well to take the young man, even though he had turned back the first time. So he took Mark for his companion, and Paul chose Silas, the preacher from Jerusalem, to go with him.

Barnabas and Mark went to the island of Cyprus, while Paul and Silas went further on, to the churches in Asia Minor. When they came to Lystra, the town where Paul had been stoned, they found a young man named Timothy whose father was a Gentile though his mother was a Jew. This young man was an earnest believer in Jesus, and Paul was pleased with him.

Timothy joined Paul and Silas, going from Lystra to other cities where the gospel had been preached. And he continued with Paul for a long time, loving him as a father. Years afterward, when Paul was shut up in prison he wrote beautiful letters to Timothy, showing how great was his love for this faithful young man.

The missionaries did not stop at every place to preach, because the time had not yet come when the people were ready to receive the gospel. The Holy Spirit caused the missionaries to understand this, and they passed on to other places.

Finally they came to Troas, a city that was built on the seacoast where ships came from countries even farther away from Jerusalem. Those countries had never been visited by any one who knew the gospel. One night while the missionaries were in Troas, Paul had a vision. He saw in his dream a man standing on the shore of the country across the water from Troas and calling. He was looking earnestly at Paul, and crying, "Come over to my country, and help us!"

Paul knew from the appearance of this man that he belonged to the country of Macedonia. When he awoke from his dream he told his companions about the vision, and they believed, as he did, that God wanted them to cross over to Macedonia and preach the gospel there. So they bought passage on the first ship that sailed from Troas to Macedonia, intending to preach the gospel to the heathen people who lived there.

Now another disciple, a doctor named Luke, joined Paul's company, and sailed with him to Macedonia. This Luke afterwards wrote the "Gospel According to Saint Luke," and also the "Acts of the Apostles," both of which are found in the New Testament.

The first city of Macedonia which they visited was Philippi. Here they did not try to find the man whom Paul saw in his dream, calling for help. They knew the vision was meant to teach that many people were needing to know about

Jesus, and they believed God had sent them to preach to all who would listen.

In this city there were only a few Jews. They had no synagogue, but the missionaries found a place outside the city where people met together by the riverside on Sabbath-days to pray. So on the first Sabbath they went down to the riverside.

Only a few people were there and they were women. But Paul and his companions sat down and taught them more about the true God. Paul told them about the great gift that God had sent to men in his Son, Jesus. And while he talked, one woman, named Lydia, believed his words about Jesus and knew that her sins were forgiven. Then she was baptized in the name of Jesus. Her household also listened to the gospel and received it gladly.

Lydia, the first Christian convert in this far country, now invited Paul and his companions to lodge in her house. She was a rich woman and she showed her gratitude to the missionaries by caring for them while they stayed in her home city.

Bible Study—Christ's Mission

By: S. L. Speck—Luke 2:11

I. Christ's mission to the earth was

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. To seek the lost | Luke 19:10 |
| 2. To save sinners | 1 Tim. 1:15 |
| 3. To give spiritual life | John 10:10 |
| 4. To make an end of sin | Dan. 9:24 |
| 5. To put away sin | Heb 9:26 |
| 6. To save from sin | Matt. 1:21 |
| 7. To take away sin | 1 John 3:5 |
| 8. To wash us from sin | Rev. 1:5 |
| 9. To give us an example of the Christian life | 1 Pet 2:21-23 |

II. Christ's power

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|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. He has all power. | Matt. 28:18 |
| 2. He has power to save. | Isa. 63:1 |
| 3. He has power to forgive sins. | Matt. 9:6 |
| 4. He has power to keep from falling. | Jude 24 |



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Spanish interpretation is available in the services.

Service Times:

Wednesday Prayer Meeting	7:00 p.m.
Sunday School	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Young People's Service (Sunday)	4:45 p.m.
Children's Service (Sunday)	5:00 p.m.
Sunday Evening Service	6:00 p.m.

We have literature available for those who would like to study the Word of God in the confines of their home. Let us know if you are interested by contacting us at the above telephone number, address, or website.