

GLOBAL THINKING



"No place on earth
is more than 60 hours
from your local airport"

Have you had a look at one of the new "aviation geography" maps

the children now study in school? They show the world as it really is.
Because of the airplane the world has shrunk amazingly.

2 billion neighbors make up our global community
94 out of 100 do not live in the U. S.

- • • Europe has a population 4 times greater than ours!
- • Africa has more inhabitants than U. S.!
- Asia has nearly 10 times as many people!

4 out of 5 of our world neighbors are not Christians!

“Discrimination between peoples because of their
race, creed, or color must be abolished”

— SUMNER WELLES

BY THE 4 FREEDOMS DECLARATION THESE
PEOPLES, TOO, ARE OUR SPIRITUAL NEIGHBORS

*“Freedom of every person to worship God
in his own way -- everywhere in the world.”*

— FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

MANLY PALMER HALL HAS WRITTEN:

The Holy Bible is the sacred book of Christendom. I would remind you that other peoples also have their sacred books, writings which have guided moral conduct and spiritual aspiration for centuries. These scriptures of non-Christian peoples should receive the same veneration and the same research that is accorded to our more familiar writings. All the Bibles of the world united together reveal one spiritual tradition. In spite of human prejudice to the contrary, there is but one Religion and one Truth. It has been difficult for human beings to accept this truth, and for lack of inter-religious understanding there has been very little religious understanding

Streams of religious tradition flowing into various nations down through the ages appear in the course of time as the source of the numerous scriptural writings of the world. Our Bible is a book of comparative religion and worthless to the individual who perceives Christianity to be a unique revelation.

Wider acquaintance with other inspired writings will not destroy your faith in the Bible, but it may injure your faith in some of its translators.

You will see the uselessness of picking Bible phrases to pieces and trying to think in terms of “jot and tittle.” You will be free to consider the larger issues.

Extracts from the book: HOW TO UNDERSTAND YOUR BIBLE

TO VASTLY AID YOUR GLOBAL THINKING . . .

MANLY PALMER HALL'S 239 PAGE BOOK

How to *Understand* Your Bible

ALL the great faiths of the world are parts or fragments of one religion and one truth. The Scriptures of all peoples have been written to preserve and at the same time to conceal the secrets of the Eternal Law. To understand any one sacred book completely it is necessary to also understand all other sacred books. It has been difficult for human beings to accept this truth; each man, clinging to his own book, hugging to his heart his own fragment of the law, has believed there is a peculiar virtue in proclaiming a part and denying the rest.

Bibles, so called, are collections of inspired writings, recordings of ancient oral traditions. They can usually be traced to the lore of preceding civilizations. Built up from earlier fragments they should never be regarded as revelations in the sense of being delivered *in toto* to any individual by some divine being. The revelation factor is generally limited to interpretation: Some illumined individual, contemplating sacred matters, perceives some deeply concealed value — and by placing special emphasis upon this new aspect comes to be regarded as a religious founder.

Among ancient peoples sacred writings were available only to the priests. The priests interpreted such parts of the Scripture as applied to the problems of the occasion; they alone were equipped with the keys to the Scriptural allegories.

The Vedas, the sacred books of the ancient Aryan Hindus and of incredible antiquity, appear to be the source of most of the sacred books now venerated throughout the world. From the Vedas great saints and sages interpreted the ageless wisdom and wrote their commentaries or re-stated in the terms of their own day the Vedic lore and the sacred tradition. In China, Lao-Tze and Confucius were the interpreters, and their writings have become Scripture. In India, Buddha was the great Emissary. In Persia it was Zoroaster. In Egypt, Akhnaton and Hermes. In Greece, Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato. In Syria it was Moses, and later Jesus.

THE SOURCES OF THE CHRISTIAN BIBLE

THE Old Testament sets forth the secret doctrine in Israel; it is almost unintelligible without the assistance of certain commentaries.

The unknown authors of the Gospels of the New Testament possessed a working knowledge of the secret doctrine, and purposefully contrived to conceal this knowledge in what is made to appear an historical narrative of the life and works of an individual.

A reasonable interpretation of the Biblical writings is one based on a system of cross reference in which all great schools of ancient religion and philosophy are considered as one composite structure. As each religion has been built up from innumerable older beliefs, the understanding of these various background beliefs is absolutely essential if you are to comprehend the correct meaning of obscure passages in the Bible and fill in perplexing vacancies.

HOW THIS BOOK MAKES THE BIBLE CLEAR

(A Condensed Outline of the First Chapter)

The Biblical Theory of Creation is derived directly from the Chaldean and Egyptian. Cuneiform tablets have been found which are much older than the Jewish Bible and these contain many of the stories set forth in the opening chapters of Genesis.

With the aid of the Jewish and Cabalistic commentaries, Genesis is amplified into a rational account of the beginning of the universe—one far more vital, significant, and impressive than the accepted theological version.

"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The word in Hebrew is not *God*, or *Jah*, or *Jehovah*, but *ELOHIM*. The word is plural. It infers a combination of male and female attributes. *ELOHIM* therefore actually means "the male-female creators," or a host of powers, and not, under any condition, a *single personal entity*.

Inadequate translation has given us the misleading "*heaven and earth*" to be thought of as heaven the firmament and earth the planet, in an interpretation that destroys entirely the significance of the most impressive sentence in our Scriptures. In better interpretation, heaven and earth is spirit and matter, a superior and inferior condition, in the sense of qualities of life.

"In the beginning" presents no difficulties when interpreted as "in eternal principles."

This leaves only the word "*created*" for almost inevitable misunderstanding. We customarily conceive creation as the making of something that is new. But if a man creates a picture he requires the aids of paints and brushes and canvas; what he creates is only a new pattern made up of already existing factors; the creation is the inward inspiration which applies these instruments for the release of an idea. Creation in this verse thus implies Formation, or Manifestation—the arranging of ever-existing elements into new patterns to be the vehicles of purpose.

Thus, again reading the verse according to a fuller understanding of its meaning:

From the eternal principles and essences
the androgynous (male-female) creator-gods
manifested forth the positive and negative
aspects of Being.

Commentary matter from ancient Jewish beliefs can be brought to bear upon such clarified interpretation, and further comparisons in other religious systems check and justify the Jewish speculations. The *ELOHIM*, or the creator-gods, were the progeny of the union of life and matter. Moving in Space, they brought forth the mundane universe.

The Formation of the Worlds. The second verse of Genesis states: "*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 waters.*"

Interpreted according to the mystical tradition, this would read:

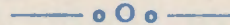
And the below, the passive aspect of Being,
was formless and devoid of manifested life, and
darkness and oblivion filled the whole expanse.
The spirits of *ELOHIM* moved, impregnated and
enlivened the essences of the negative Principle.

This motion of the *Elohim* is shown to be traditional to some of the Hindu works, the Cabala, Buddhist teachings of the Lamas, and teachings of the ancient Greeks.

The Seven Days of Creation. The wisest of the ancients insisted that the term "Day" in Genesis referred to an age, cycle, or great period of time. There is abundant confirming evidence to indicate that the Genesis given in the Bible describes processes occurring over a period of at least a billion years; and that it describes how the creative forces of nature brought forth the superphysical bodies of the solar system, then the material planets; and then, shifting perspective to the planet earth, unfolded life upon it up to its present state. It should be clearly realized that to the ancients "gods" were not personal beings performing sorcery in space; but rather, aspects of creative intelligence gradually unfolding through their own creations. — Verse 26 requires special emphasis:

*"And God said let US make man in OUR image,
after our likeness."*

And "*male and female he created them.*" It is evident that the word *God* is intended to be plural, and would be, if it read as originally, *ELOHIM*, the creators. Through recent stratosphere exploration a number of modern scientists have come to the conclusion that space contains living spores which, like drops of condensing water, represent seed-lives. Most of the ancient philosophies teach that life descended onto the physical planet from some sphere of superphysical energy which encloses the planet. While dwelling in the paradisaical state the energies which we now know as mankind were androgynous, "created male and female" — more correctly, they possessed inwardly the potentialities of both positive and negative powers.



CHAPTER TWO

Rightly considered as an allegory, the story of Adam and Eve is a rhetorical analysis of cosmic processes which resulted in the differentiation of the human species. In comparative religion research, ancient writings show the symbol *ADM* (Adam) playing many parts as the figure of all things — of the ancient sciences he is mathematics; of forms of knowledge he is pure wisdom; of religions he is the esoteric tradition itself. *ADM* is a species or kind, meaning a particular generation, a *genre*. Nearly every personality discussed in the Bible is primarily a symbol, and not an historic individual. Of incredible antiquity is the *Garden* used always as the symbol of the astral world. One of the most ludicrous errors of theology is that "With Adam's fall we sinned us all," in literal acceptance of the benighted misunderstanding which has regarded an ancient Chaldean myth as history. The ancient writings of India, Egypt, and China frequently represent as *serpents* the currents or waves of force moving in space, and the key to the "presence" of the tempting serpent in the Garden is given in the metaphysics of the ancient Persians. The Bible reader acquainted with these records will know, too, that similarly the *Tree* of the Garden is the earth's axis; that Adam is not

an individual, but the human life-wave; that Cain is not a son who slew a brother, but a race; and the story of his wanderings is an account of racial migration.

CHAPTER THREE

Noah's Ark is not called a boat in the very ancient writings, but a peculiar form of enclosure, a superior place to which men could go for refuge; the idea of a boat floating on the water was a poetic figure of later theologians. The key to the whole story is the system of the astronomy of Ptolemy; the three parts of the heavens are the three decks of the Ark, the three sons of Noah. The 365 kinds of reptiles which Noah took into the Ark are, according to the Talmud, the days of the year. Ancient Jewish rabbins did not consider the Deluge to have actually consisted of *water* — the term inferred cosmic substances, both male and female, described as the waters which were above the firmament and the waters which were beneath the firmament. The Ark of Noah symbolizes primarily a container, and this is the clue to the whole interpretation. Deluge stories are to be found in the mythologies of all ancient civilized peoples, showing the close relationship of the Biblical record to the veiling of the secret of man's lost spiritual estate in the lore of the Hindus, Chinese, Chaldeans, and Mayans... The story of the *Tower of Babel* is of the same type as the Greek myth of Prometheus... Abraham means "A Brahman."

CHAPTER FOUR

Israel is a synonym for the name of Jacob, and the Bible itself makes evident that the accepted translation of the word is hopelessly inadequate. The true meaning of Israel is divine power as manifested throughout the universe; and we are not to think of a tribe or a nation but of the whole life of nature, the gods of heaven whose shadows are upon the earth. The life of *Moses* is most obscure if considered historically, for Moses is a title, not a name; it is merely a rearrangement of the Hebrew letters of the word which means the Sun. The dramatic incident of the receiving of the *Ten Commandments* is to be studied through numerous commentaries, most of them entirely

unknown to bible students. The *Tabernacle* is patterned after the shrines of the Egyptians, as a movable temple, an appropriate symbol of religion itself: Truth is not given to any one people or in any one place, but moves about the earth.

CHAPTER FIVE

Solomon is a name to be divided into three syllables, SOL-OM-ON. Each of these syllables is the name of a Sun God, or a Divine Principle. SOL means Sun. OM is the sacred syllable of the Vedas, a supernatural intonation among the Hindus; and ON is the Persian name for a Supreme Being... Throughout the Bible mythology and history, fact and fable, are closely entwined. It is written that the Temple of Solomon was "*built without sound of hammer or voice of workmen*" — Josephus, the historian, was aware that the Tabernacle in the Wilderness was a symbol of the Universe; this is also true of Solomon's Temple. The three men who supervised the building symbolized the three great powers which created the world. The Holy Place of man is in his mind; the most Holy of Holies is the heart: The Dionysian Artificers concealed under the symbolism of architecture the secret and spiritual mysteries of the regeneration of man.

CHAPTER SIX

The Story of Samson is a cleverly concealed myth which very closely parallels the earlier Greek myth of Hercules; its grand significance is astronomical in the rotation of the seasons, indicative of humanity's struggle for truth... *Job* is the finest and most significant book of the Bible. Unfortunately its sublimity has been sensed by few, and its inner meaning has been entirely ignored for centuries. The testing of Job appears to be the story of a man in adversity; it is actually an account of the speeding up of evolution as the result of consecration to the spiritual life... *Melchizedek's* meeting with Abraham seems to be the first statement of the Eucharist. Translation of the word Melchizedek to mean King of Righteousness is entirely exoteric. In the old Chaldean Hebrew, Melchizedek means the Authority of Sedek, and Sedek is the sun—he is a sun-man, like Moses, the first priest.

THE study of comparative religion, through the sacred books of other nations, brings realization that the Scriptures of various people have a common origin and a common purpose. The age of bigotry has passed. Sincere students have outgrown intolerant addiction to any sect or creed. It is impossible for man to function normally without some spiritual guidance. The present international chaos is due to the failure of idealism in the affairs of men. This failure is due, at least in part, to religion itself; that is, what we call religion. It seems incredible to an intelligent person that any sane man or woman could have accepted literally the spiritual significance of the Old Testament's war and carnage; yet millions of people today live by the jot and tittle of such realism. The wars of the sacred books of all peoples, the massacres and captivities, are all symbolical. They all represent the great battle of life itself, supply the keys to the mystical art of living.

THE Old Testament was written in Hebrew; the New Testament was written originally in Greek. No manuscripts of the first 200 years of Christianity are known to exist. The old codices reveal considerable change and amendment; omitted in the King James version are a number of passages which might have caused doubt about the uniqueness or infallibility of the Christian faith. The actual translations for this familiar version of our Bible were made by a number of elderly scholars 1,611 years after the birth of Christ, and when the manuscript was completed it was given into the hands of Lord Bacon; he is responsible for its present literary excellence, having

ceremony of the communion of bread and wine. In the rites of the ancient Greeks the mystery of the god whose blood is life, and whose body is the world, were represented by wine and bread... *The Pass-over* was the annual passing of the sun from the southern to the northern hemisphere, and the sacrifice of the lamb at this period was practiced by the pagan Greeks who regarded the vernal equinox as the annual rebirth of the savior god. Christ called the Lamb of God, and the ceremony of Easter, is the perpetuation of pagan rites... The crucifixion of Christ is the real foundation of Christianity: The blood of Jesus spilled upon Golgotha purifies all who believe on

achieved the impressiveness now incident largely by taking liberties with the text. Thus there is no justification for acceptance of the King James version as an infallible production, or in believing that the divine dictates were revealed originally in the King's English.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Birth and Childhood of Jesus. An old manuscript which dates centuries before the King James version supplies a direct clue to the greatest omission in history: Where was Jesus in the formative years between ages twelve and thirty? In the King James version, St. John 6:42, reads: "And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" The older manuscript does not stop there; it continues: "Is it because he has dwelt among the Greeks that he comes thus to speak with us? What is there in common between what he has learned from the Egyptians and what our fathers have taught us." By leaving out the last part of this verse, the life of Jesus between his thirteenth and thirtieth years have been left empty and mysterious. And by an unworthy stratagem his connection with great systems of learning has been withheld from his followers... Very little contained in the Gospels is not also to be found in the other great religious systems of the world.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Flight Into Egypt to escape the persecutions of Herod is inserted during the infancy of Jesus to prevent the pious reader from inferring that Jesus was a student of Egyptian philosophy. The date of the return from Egypt is not given, thus leading readers to the conclusion that Jesus returned while still a child. But history gives the date of the death of Herod, the persecutor, as four years before Jesus was born; and there can be little doubt that the compilers of the New Testament perpetrated other pious frauds. The life of Jesus between his infancy and thirtieth year undoubtedly was devoted to travel and study. It is a fallacy to believe that the teachings attributed to Jesus are a direct and unique revelation. All of his teachings can be traced to older religions and the faiths of other peoples... *John the Baptist* is said to have been decapitated and his head brought to the daughter of Herodias. But, Salome seems to have begged this favor more than thirty years after history says Herodias was dead; so we may suspect the account is allegorical. The death of John has several interpretations. One is, the passing of an old religious system, in substance, the pagan world. The death coincident with the ministry of Christ is a shrewd artifice to advance the cause of early Christianity. Jesus' insistence that he be baptized by John has an inner meaning: Jesus insists upon being accepted into the old dispensation. He brought not a new law, but a fulfillment of the law... *The Lord's Prayer* is generally believed to be a unique document of supreme Christian significance. It is, however, derived in its entirety from the TALMUD.

CHAPTER NINE

Jesus Walking On The Water. In the religions of the world there are many accounts of gods, priests, and heroes who walked upon the waters. In every case the meaning is the same. It is faith quieting the storms of life... During *The Last Supper*, Christ as a "priest after the order of Melchizedek," performs the eucharistic

indeed, a strange foundation for a faith; and is peculiar to Christendom alone of all religions. Why is the crucifixion present in more than a dozen ancient religions? And why is the resurrection incident common to all great religious systems? If the account is not allegorical rather than literal, at least the significance is allegorical: Truth which is crushed to earth in the life of each person does not utterly die, and the true resurrection is the lifting up of Truth in the individual.

CHAPTER TEN

Parables are a favorite method of religious instruction to be found in most of the sacred writings of the world's great religious systems. The reader must not overlook the fact that a large part of the New Testament itself is a parable, a human statement of divine matters, with Christ the personification of the righteous man passing through the vicissitudes of life... Interpretation came out of the chaos of early Church councils, to emerge as the Churchianity of today—such doctrines as vicarious atonement, infant damnation—in orthodoxy, the enemy of truth. Jarring sects have theologized Jesus out of existence, and put in his place a figure of their own conception. The mystical truths of Christianity remain a part of all truth, all revelation.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

The humanity of Jesus, and the divinity of Christ were weighty problems to be decided by illiterate men, the ragged bishops of the early Church. Yet upon their decisions hung the future of a great religion and the fate of generations yet unborn. They divided into two warring camps of opinion, and from their gropings for truth have emerged the hundreds of sects which together now constitute the Christian faith. To one early group, Jesus was a good and holy man who had brought a revelation of the Divine desire. To the second and favored group, whose opinion has long dominated the Christian Church, Christ was no ordinary mortal, but a very god incarnate. He was nominated and elected to this high estate by his own bishops. Meantime the great religion of Islam grew out of the doctrine of the humanity of Jesus. On one occasion Mohammed is reported to have said: "This Jesus was a good and holy man, a teacher among the Jews, but one day his disciples became mad, and made a god of him." Although *Peter* thrice denied his Lord, in the symbolism of Christianity he was the "rock"—PETROS, the stone—on which the Church of Christ was to be built. To Peter, Christ was God, justified by the doctrine, and demonstrated by the miracles. *Paul* realized that it was not the Jesus who walked the dusty roads of Syria, but the "Christ in you" that is "the hope of glory." He realized that Christ is a principle, and not a man, that Jesus had come to "bear witness" for that principle. Paul sought to honor the teacher by honoring the teaching. The Christian Bible is a semi-historical account of certain happenings. It is proper to study history, but not proper to worship it. The orthodox Christian historian's fanatical attitude is based upon the fear that a mystical interpretation will detract from the uniqueness of the Christian faith. This would be a harrowing and mortifying discovery to one who believes that Christianity is different from all other faiths—it would breach the walls of Christian isolation—it would destroy forever the superiority complex of Christendom.

CHAPTER TWELVE

The Book of Revelation was restored to the Bible after the death of Martin Luther. An earlier attacker was St. Jerome, who insisted that through some machination of the evil one, the devil had introduced his voice into the Scripture itself, in an effort to undo the whole labor of Christendom. In Revelation comparative religion is introduced. The rites of the great mystery institutions which dignified the past are set forth in various sections of the Apocalypse. Recent translations of Egyptian manuscripts indicate that in some cases the pre-Christian text has been quoted word for word—writings

which became canonical, but remained century after century unidentified as to their original sources. . . In conclusion, Manly Palmer Hall states: "Historically, the Bible is of little value. It is a book of comparative religion. The Christian Bible as we know it today is a fragment of the Christian traditions of the first and second centuries. This fragment was arbitrarily preserved and the rest destroyed. Still with all its faults, and with all its misinterpretations, the Christian Bible is the greatest book in English literature. But like most other great books, it must be approached with understanding, gentleness, impersonality—and a sincere desire to find truth."

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