

THE MASTER SPEAKS
ON BIBLE INTERPRETATION

These questions and answers have been transcribed from tapes made during our Leader's sessions with members and guests at Centers throughout the United States during his trip in March & April 1965.

Should the first 11 chapters of Genesis be taken literally or parabolically?

The Divine Principle takes Genesis, chapters 1 through 11 as the truth of God or the Word of God. This is truth in its fullest meaning, but not following the Bible word by word. The Divine Principle clearly shows how the Bible is symbolic and how it is parabolic. Adam was a real person. Eating the fruit was symbolic of an action. The Bible is based upon the truth. The Divine Principle gives the true meaning of the secret behind the verse.

The story from creation to Abraham is pre-historic. It is revelation and is not literal. We quote the Bible exactly, but we do not know the meaning exactly, according to the meaning of today. For instance, the calendar of that time may have been quite different from the one we use today.

Consequently, we take the Bible, sometimes literally and sometimes figuratively. According to theologians the first 11 chapters are not history, but are a pre-historic account. But we take it as literal history.

The Bible says that one year can be a thousand years, and a thousand years can be one year. It can't be measured in our concept of time. We accept the span from Adam to Noah as 1600 years in order to understand how God revealed His principle. As long as you understand the principle of God through this revelation, then the purpose of the Bible is met. Unless you truly know the meaning behind it, the Bible can reveal very little.

Unless you be realistic about the organization of the Bible, for instance, consider the Gospels from Matthew to John. These are not a perfect organization of Jesus giving the revelation. They record many instances. When Jesus spoke to different persons, he had to talk accordingly. Sometimes people rebuffed him. Sometimes he had to speak in a sweet or flowery way. This is the way the Bible is written.

Jesus said, 'Love your enemies,' and I cannot see killing one that you love.

Let us seek the answer in the Bible. Jesus told the story about the farmer who planted the crop. During the night the devil planted weed seeds. So when the crop grew, the weeds grew also. The servant came to his master and asked if he should pull out all of the weeds. The master decided against this, explaining that weeding now might hurt the crop and that it was better to let them grow together and that the separation would be made at the harvest.

This means that during the growth period as Jesus prepared his

disciples, if he tried to weed his enemies, the good followers would be hurt. The faithful were in the minority. Jesus said, "Love your enemy", which meant to tolerate him, even though he be evil. Which means that if you tolerate your enemy, he has to tolerate you; giving you the choice of the time to act. At the harvest the grain goes to God and the weeds are burned. So do not be fooled by cheap sentiment when you read that Jesus said, "Love your enemy." If Jesus loved the enemy, how could he put the weeds into the unquenchable fire?

How could Jesus say, "Love your enemy," and also say, "I came as a judge"? We must understand the complete picture and not look at it piece by piece. God is love, and since He is love, He does not want to tolerate prolonged suffering of mankind. Because He loves us, He wants to restore this world as quickly as possible so that all men can live in Heaven here on earth and spirit Heaven thereafter. In pursuit of His dispensation God asks that the purity of His chosen people be maintained. Hence, at Canaan, force was used; the Gentiles were killed.

Also evil used violence against good in the Garden of Eden. Cain slew Abel. On the world-wide scale, the struggle between good and evil is inevitable in order for Abel to win over Cain. We cannot be hesitant about this.

Two biblical passages are: "Wine makes glad the heart of man" and "Beware of strong drink". Will the Leader please comment?

Alcohol is an intoxicator. It is one of Satan's best tools for making the world evil. Alcohol causes a person to lose control of his mind. Alcohol does not bring good results. A drinker may feel a temporary joy, but this does not make a truth of the poetic statement about wine making the heart of man glad. Whether or not a person drinks alcohol has nothing to do with his acceptance of the Divine Principle. If God needs that person, then after he listens to the Divine Principle he will find drinking repulsive. God will teach him. A person's money can be put to a much better use. More important than the question of drinking is whether the person is righteous in the sight of God. A person's ancestors have a lot to do with his selection of God

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