

Optional Study and Practice Suggestions for Chapter 4, “Flesh and Flesh,” in *Awakening Mystical Consciousness*

This chapter focuses on the two meanings of the word “flesh,” the Scripture verse “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us,” and how we can apply these ideas in daily life. Joel says that “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us” is one of the major premises in both the teaching of Jesus and The Infinite Way—it is the nature of individual being.

(Note: You have probably noticed that in the writings, Joel uses capital and lower-case letters to distinguish between the two meanings of the word “Self.” He uses “Self” with a capital S to refer to the I of being, the true identity of an individual, and “self” with a lower-case s to refer to the human concept, the human being.)

Similarly, while it isn’t done in the writings, we found it helpful to distinguish the two meanings of the word “flesh” by using capital and lower-case f. “Flesh” (with a capital F) would mean spiritual form, spiritual idea, spiritual activity, and spiritual reality, while “flesh” (with a lower-case f) would refer to that which we behold through the senses; what we see, hear, taste, touch, and smell; the concept, the material form.)

Understanding the Terms

While this chapter and the recording that we heard are clear about the two meanings of “flesh,” the meaning of “The Word made flesh,” and how we can apply these ideas in our daily lives, if you want to explore the topic further, we suggest two things:

1. Use the [Electronic Search Tool](#) and search on relevant key words or phrases. For example, you could search on “Flesh and flesh,” or “The Word,” or “The Word was made flesh.” (Remember that if you use a phrase as your search term, put quotation marks around the phrase to ensure that the search results reflect the whole phrase.)
2. Listen to the supplementary recording, which is described below. This is recording 102B, which also has the title “Flesh and Flesh.”

After studying the chapter, listening to the recording(s), and using the Electronic Search Tool (if you choose to do so), in your own words write out the meaning of:

- “The Word”
- “Flesh”
- “flesh”
- The Bible verse “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” (John 1:14)

In doing this, you might think about how you would explain these to a new student.

Or, if you are of an artistic nature, it might be interesting to portray “Flesh and flesh” and / or “The Word was made flesh” in some form of art or in poetry. For inspiration, here are two examples of paintings in which the artist has given his interpretation of “The Word Made Flesh.”

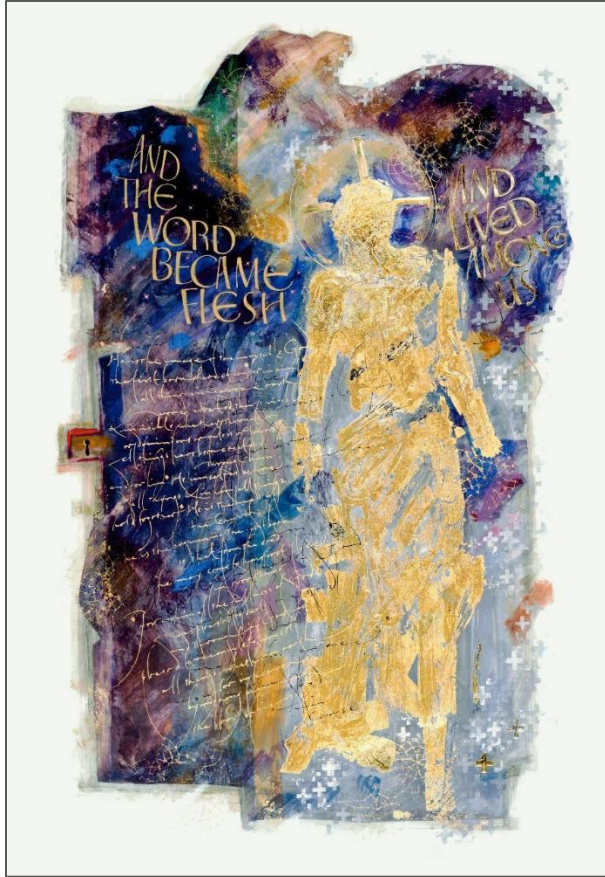


Image 1



Image 2

Image 1 is titled “The World Made Flesh,” by Donald Jackson, created for [The St. John’s Bible](#). Image 2 is titled “The Word Made Flesh, God Poured Out,” by Mike Moyers.

Supplementary Recording

Recording 102B, from the 1954 Seattle Practitioner Class, also has the title “Flesh and Flesh.” It is an excellent class, in which Joel speaks again about the two meanings of the word “flesh” and relates them to the Bible verse, “Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh...” (1 Timothy 3:16). In this class, which was given shortly after the class we heard for this chapter, Joel offers some very helpful additional insights, illustrations, and practices. We recommend it highly for your listening.

You can find this recording on [the same page as the recording for this chapter](#). To listen by telephone, call 1-641-715-3900 and enter 993828#.

Practices

Frequent Meditation Throughout the Day

Yet again, in this chapter Joel emphasizes the importance of meditation and making that contact with the Father within throughout the day. He says:

Every day it is necessary to go into the silence, sometimes a dozen times, to feel again that divine Impulse. After one has been on this path several years, it is not necessary to go back and establish that contact with every meditation or treatment given. There comes a time when “we live, and move, and have our being” in God; and we are rarely outside that awareness.

But he emphasizes that in the beginning, we must be consistent and persistent with short meditations throughout the day:

In The Infinite Way it is recommended that beginning students have not less than three periods of meditation every day. These periods may last from one to three or four minutes. It is not good to go beyond that at first because, after a few minutes, meditation is likely to become a mental exercise; then, of course, it loses its power. As one goes on in this study, these periods increase to six, eight, ten, or twelve in a day and from one to five minutes at a time. From then on, the periods themselves may lengthen; and a person may meditate anywhere from two or three to twenty or thirty minutes. But when the meditation becomes a mental practice, it is no longer meditation. The moment you feel a release within, you should stop the meditation. If you cannot get that release, go back to the meditation an hour or two later. Do not sit until the mind begins working because that is not meditation; that is just mental practice. Mental practice is without power.

This does not mean you must give up the practice of pondering, thinking upon, or meditating upon truth. That is quite a different thing from mental practice. When you first sit down to meditate, you may find the mind is loud, noisy, chaotic, and just will not settle down, at least it will not settle down into a degree of quiet wherein you can hear the “still small voice.” In that stage, it is wise to take some passage of Scripture or a statement of spiritual wisdom and ponder it, not repeat it as if you expected to gain by repetition, but ponder it for its inner meaning.

Why does Joel emphasize frequent meditation in this chapter? Because “as you learn to turn within and let the word of truth come into expression, you will find the invisible consciousness or awareness of truth within you becomes externalized as form. **It becomes visible flesh, visible form.**” But he emphasizes that we must be careful not to believe that the *form* is the demonstration, or to glory in the form. Rather, we must always recognize that the demonstration is *the presence of the Spirit* that appeared as the form.

Know No Man After the Flesh

Another point made in this chapter is that if we have known each other “in the flesh” as humans, now we must know each other as the Christ, as Spirit, as spiritual being. We must not know each other as good or bad, rich or poor, healthy or unhealthy, old or young, male or female, but only as the spiritual Christ.

When we attain this consciousness, “all things become new,” including our concept of body. Then we will know the body as eternal and immortal. “This body, as I see it, will change from day to day because the higher my concept of God or Spirit, the better looking and better feeling my body becomes.”

Ask yourself, “How can I practice ‘knowing no man after the flesh’?”