

This thinksheet uses the BOTANICAL ANALOGY (plants' whole process from seed/tuber/rizone to shoot to leaf to branch to flower to fruit) in two directions, viz., how a thinksheet gets into readers' hands and how God's Re-Rule/Reign/Kingdom comes:

THE PUNCTILIAR/LINEAR OF THINKSHEETS

1. Of course I'm talking about how the world gets the fruit of all instances of brain-mind process ("thinking"), not just about my thinksheets. And the first thing to say is that through the mystery of how brain (physical) and mind (metaphysical) are related we touch the Mystery philosophy points to in the everywhere-and-always question, Why should there be something instead of nothing? On this point of tangency, why should anybody get "a thought" in the first place?
2. And why, having gotten a thought, do some folks play around with it till it "gives," i.e., produces the psycho-equivalent of botany's fruit? Jas. Thompson said that we do the hard work of holding onto and working through a thought for the sake of the joy in the process (Jesus' futuric joy--Heb.12.2--being parallel, on which see the second section of this thinksheet): "Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,/ To teach the young idea how to shoot." (THE SEASONS, "Spring," 1152) This grabs me, for all year long I'm into the joy of both plants and thoughts, into the nurturing process that moves both plant and thought into fruit. I myself am fruit of this as mega-process, and the dendrites in my brain look exactly like plants; and my mind is to my dendrites as God's mind is to the whole creation. I am a plant of the "heavenly Father" (Mt.15.13), and it is all one flow to the glory of God when I arise if I go to devotion/study or to greenhouse/garden work or to writing (thinksheets et al). (As for conversation, it's the basic forking in the dendrite system of home/church/society.)
3. Meaning comes from future into present: one plants and cultivates with a view to flower and/or fruit. Writers of shortstories and novels have, as one strand of their motivation, "to see how it's going to turn out"--an excitement of gardeners and winemakers (the latter dependent on the growth of plants, yeast, in the must). First the planting (a decision-point, punctiliar), then the cultivation (a process, line, linear), then hopefully flower and/or fruit (a point, punctiliar). The seed-idea for a thinksheet is there in my waking consciousness almost every morning, but seldom is there sufficient excitement to get to the typewriter "to see how it's going to turn out." Seldom, but not infrequently: it's happened 1,740 times.

THE LINEAR/PUNCTILIAR OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD

1. Jesus' rural metaphors include a number of botanical analogies, some linear and some punctiliar (as do the major and minor Prophets and the Psalmists). While other rabbis were using parable to expound Torah, he used this form to point to the Kingdom, especially as coming (M.1.15). Ten of his parables use plant life, five each of punctiliar and linear (acc. to my study today, 15Aug83): a neat balancing of the Kingdom's growth ("slow," in the thinksheet's title) and "sudden"ness. The Kingdom comes slow-sudden-SOON, and our preparation is (1) singleness of devotion (cf. Jer.29.13[†] in repentance and forgiveness-acceptance and (2) living out the divine benevolence vis-a-vis our fellows, in obedience and without prejudicial boundaries.
2. One can be the majority, a certainty outnumbering the uncertainties. So was the Kingdom for Jesus, who embodied it and disciplined to it.

* In this chapter, Jer. is under attack for being linear (vs.28: "plant gardens"), whereas his attacker is punctiliar (the Return from Babylon to occur before the seed-to-harvest completion.)