

February 13, 2006 – Subject: Mind.

Dear Friends: Mary Baker Eddy gave her students 26 subjects for weekly Bible Lessons, to be covered twice yearly. Flowing through the year in her order of the subjects, we hereby present fresh views of each one by outstanding Christian Scientists. In this way, we hope to partake with you of new unfoldments of her infinite revelation.

Our selection this week is from: a Verbatim report of a TALK ON THE GOSPEL OF LUKE by John Morgan.

MIND as MIND

(Ch. 4:1-13)

The divine demonstrating is always in the realm of Mind, making man independent of matter.

V. 1. Matthew says that he “was led up of the Spirit,” Mark says that the spirit driveth him into the wilderness,” - the divine impulsion of the Christ; but Luke tells us that he went into the wilderness because he was full of the Holy Ghost. If in Christianity one just becomes filled with the greatness of the development of Life, Truth and Love, that leads one into whatever experience is right for one’s growth, and sometimes it is very right that we should be led into the wilderness. We need never jib at the desert experience; it is a bit dry sometimes when we are there, but it is, healthy. You know, humanly speaking, there is no disease in the desert; it is so clean; hot days, cold nights, enormous space and wide horizons. One has there a great sense of cleanliness, of untroubled vision, and of thinking things out afresh with God. So the symbol is, in Mind as Mind, that Jesus is putting all the cares of the world out of sight.

V. 2. It was a famine sense.

Luke presents the same three temptations that Matthew gives, but in a different order. Here we have the bread, the possession of the kingdoms of the world, and the casting oneself down from the pinnacle which indicate the temptations to accept, respectively, life in matter, intelligence in matter, and substance in matter. Luke shows how Christianity weans us away from believing that matter is either

necessary or desirable. We can only be weaned away from these things; Love doesn't yank us out of some situation that has meant a lot to us and simply leave us bereft of our familiar supports, but weans us gradually from our dependence upon matter, our faith in it and our fear of it. If our practice of Christianity is to be Christ like, we too must deal understandingly with our neighbour.

Vv. 3, 4. Note "this stone," not "these stone?" as in Matthew. In Matthew the temptation was to translate mere objects of sense into a different form of matter, still leaving one dependent upon the material. Here it is the temptation to use your understanding of the calculus to demonstrate matter.

Demonstrating Matter

What are the rights and wrongs of trying to demonstrate matter? The criterion, as always, is our motive. You certainly can "demonstrate" all sorts of things in the human, - money, or body, or home, - simply by outlining what you want and then being positive about it, because the mental is always the dynamic. So it can be done, but at what a cost! If it builds up for you a dependence on matter and fear that you would be desolated without it, in the long run it is not worth demonstrating. Many students do just that, and mistakenly call it Christian Science, which it decidedly is not; all it is utilizing the power of the human mind for its own ends but doing so in the name of the spiritual. The emphatic purpose of Christian Science is to dissolve the mortal concept, not to build it up.

Christian Science proves your supremacy over matter in two ways. First it enables you to do without it, to depend upon Mind meeting all your needs. Then it says that you can now have all that the world offers, because those material things will be to you servants of the idea, and not ends in themselves. The student whose enlarged understanding of substance gives him a flourishing business is not "demonstrating matter;" he now loves the idea of substance more than his bank balance. And it is precisely because of that attitude that his business now flourishes. So "Command this stone that it be made bread" is the temptation to outline the human need and then to work for it, - which sounds very reasonable in many circumstances. But Jesus discerned the subtlety of it, and saw how working on

those lines would obscure the light of Mind and paralyze the power of metaphysics. Ideas alone supply our need; that is why Jesus answered, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God." (S. and H. 336:30-31; 257:12-21; Misc. 307:1,2.)

Vv. 5-8. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" - thou shalt worship the power of Mind only; Mind is to be the only factor; that is the answer to the second temptation - intelligence in matter.

Mental Manipulation

Now I feel that that allurements is the temptation of mental manipulation, - to "take thought" after the manner of psychology. With the insight which Christian Science gives into the workings of the, human mind, it is very difficult not to do that, but once again it is our attitude which determines the way we go. It is easy to discern where someone's "thinking" has, in belief, caused their physical trouble, and you find yourself advising some improved mode of thought. But that thing is only effect; and if one tries to manipulate the human mind so as to direct it into a healthy channel without first, "worshipping God,"- without first worshipping the fact that man has the Mind of Christ alone, -then it is merely mental manipulation and it is not Christian Science. Don't we all find ourselves doing that? Aren't we all tempted to suggest to someone that they should think more charitable thoughts, for example, if they wish to get rid of an irritation? It is true that we all have to express more love and charity, but in practice it can only be done, because it is the outcome of the fact that man has the Mind of Christ, and therefore naturally loves, and not through improved human mentality. To suggest to people how they should think should be a very secondary thing, and if you feel you need to tell somebody something like that, let it be backed up by, your own conviction that man has the Mind of Christ and cannot think otherwise than in a Christ like way.

Jesus saw that manipulating human affairs with a half -scientific wisdom and a human morality is the devil, because it would confer upon man a creative intelligence of his own which has free will for thinking good or evil; hence his reply, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Christian metaphysics is concerned solely with the divine Mind and

not with the workings of something called a human mind, which is only an etherealized form of matter. Mrs. Eddy says that “Christian Science ...excludes the human mind, as a spiritual factor in the healing work” (S. and H. 185:17-21).

Vv. 9-13. The third temptation: For a season! Jesus went on being tempted until there was no more mortal concept, but he met the major points of mortality herein these three, the beliefs of life, intelligence and substance in matter.

Confidence in Mind

Now this temptation to cast oneself down from the pinnacle of the temple represents the belief of substance in matter. We see Jesus tempted to “demonstrate” bodily safety on the basis of taking care of one’s matter-substance, and how he refuted that suggestion through his understanding of the forces of Mind. As we gain confidence in the parent Mind, the control and the direction and the governance of Mind, then we shall have less faith in the workings of matter, and less fear of chance or accident.

Here is a wonderful statement of the parent Mind: “Adhesion, cohesion, and attraction are properties of Mind. They belong to divine Principle, and support, the equipoise of that thought-force, which launched the earth in its orbit and said to the proud wave, “Thus far and no farther.”

“Spirit is the life, substance, and continuity of all things. We tread on forces. Withdraw them, and creation must collapse. Human knowledge calls them, forces of matter; but divine Science declares that they belong wholly to divine Mind, are inherent in this Mind, and so restores them to their rightful home and classification” (S. and H. 1-24:20-3,1). Those “thought-forces” are the controlling elements of the parent Mind which sustain and maintain everything in its universe regardless of matter. Mind forces don’t know anything about matter, they supersede it; and they hold man within Mind through divine atomic energy.

I think that as we cultivate that more absolute confidence in the substance of idea, we shan’t always be taking precautions against matter-happenings of which we are afraid, nor will we stake a chance

on their happening in a beneficial way. You see the element of chance in the wording of the temptation, “If thou be the Son of God...” – When the tempter says to him, “In their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone,” he is saying something truer than he knew, because that scripture is a wonderful way of showing us the substance of idea. The stone, as we noticed in the first temptation, is the divine infinite calculus or Mind of Christ.

If through the pure power of Mind we learn not to misuse that stone either to demonstrate lots of matter or to manipulate human consciousness for material benefits, then it won’t become for us a stumbling block in the way of progress: “They” - those thought-forces of Mind - “shall bear thee up...” We can only bang our feet against an obstacle in the way of Life, if we are not lifting them up out of the dust, out of matter, but if we have cultured a purer sense of Mind-power we are lifted up above those temptations; we haven’t abused that stone and therefore we don’t trip up on it. So let us watch that we are not constantly looking for matter benefits in Christian Science or we shall always have a stone just in front of us at every step.

Now it might be thought that these three things - to have plenty of supply to control or guide human thinking, and to be proof against accidents are normal and desirable in the ordinary way. On the surface, they are harmless; but Luke shows us that it is the “innocent” activities that bedevil us if our attitude is not truly metaphysical, and so we can now see the three as the claim of dependence upon matter, faith in matter, and fear of matter. Jesus, of course, discerned the subtlety of it, and through his absolute reliance on Mind gave us a wonderful lesson in divine metaphysics.

February 20, 2006 – Subject: Christ Jesus.

Our selection this week is from: THE BIBLE FOR EVERYMAN by Rosalie Maas—Our second selection is from CIVILIZATION LIETH SQUARE by Gordon Brown.

Jesus Lived the Days of Creation

Jesus was obviously very familiar with the Old Testament, as all Jews were. But his understanding of it was as something alive and

to be used, whereas most of his contemporaries neglected the living spirit of the Old Testament by concentrating on its dead letter.

Jesus Christ not only understood the first day; he identified himself with it by saying, "I am the light of the world." And because he was so aware of that, he was able to heal a blind man (John 9) the spiritual enlightenment he radiated was always bringing enlightenment at every level.

Again, the firmament of the second day of creation was so real to Jesus that his understanding of it was a dynamic separator of the true from the false. He often cast out unclean spirits and cleansed lepers - he purified thought by washing away gross materiality. In Luke 4 there is an instance of a healing of this kind. The story runs: "And in the synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an unclean devil, and cried out with a loud voice, saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art; the Holy One of God. And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not." Jesus forced the separation of man from the infiltrations of impurity and evil, and the result was that manhood stood forth in its pure goodness.

The parable of the prodigal son in Luke-probably the best known of all the parables - was Jesus' way of putting the third day of creation into other words. He knew that the dry land of our identity as sons of God can never be lost, though it may seem to be lost to sight through sin. Man just cannot lose his place as the beloved son of the Father, who bestows on him all good, and thus removes any desire to seek material means of satisfaction. The sinner must always return home to the basic truth about his spiritual selfhood, and Jesus was constantly showing that in his ministry.

We saw that the fourth day of creation, introducing the sun, the moon, and the stars, symbolized ideas of universal spiritual power, available to anyone who understands its divine Principle; all sense of personality yields when thought perceives that which is forever in operation. This is clearly brought out in the story told in John 4 of Jesus' healing of the nobleman's son, who was dying. The father

besought Jesus to heal his son, and Jesus said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe" - he saw that the nobleman regarded him as a man with a flair for performing miracles, instead of as the obedient servant of Principle. "The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way." Afterwards he found that at the moment Jesus had said, "Thy son liveth," his son had recovered. The operation of Principle is instantaneous and impersonal, wherever thought is attuned to it. Jesus was attuned to it because he was continually pondering its operation. No material circumstances, therefore, could make conditions for him.

The fifth day of creation, with its symbols of birds and fishes, represents a tone in the ascending scale, which Jesus was perpetually striking. Think how often he said, "Rise up," and how often he lifted up, and of how he resurrected from the dead: consider the healing of the man sick of the palsy, of Peter's wife's mother, of the woman bowed together who "could in no wise lift up herself," of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, of the raising of Jairus' daughter and of Lazarus. Then think of Jesus' sense of the abundance of true living; he said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," and he fed the multitudes and showed the riches of inspiration.

No one has risen to the full stature of manhood as Jesus did. He was able to say, "I have overcome the world." He allowed himself to be tried and crucified in order to furnish the proof of his indestructible spiritual being, and that is why he said to Peter when he was arrested, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Jesus' everlasting victory over "the world, the flesh, and the devil" was the proof of his understanding of the sixth day of manhood with dominion over all things.

Jesus had a conscious awareness of the seventh day of rest no less than of the other days. Did he not say, "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do"? He could say that, because he had

identified himself with every one of the seven days of creation, symbolizing the nature of God and therefore of His man. Jesus also said, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest." He constantly proved that the "harvest" is here, by using his sure understanding of the perfection of the spiritual creation to heal someone desperately ill or dying. He demonstrated true womanhood as well as manhood, because he loved and cherished the spiritual above all else and used his understanding of it with the deepest compassion.

Jesus evidently meant us to follow his example; he said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also." How do we "believe on him"? By making our understanding of the seven days of creation and their illustration throughout the Bible as exact and natural as his was. We start in very small ways, but our dominion inevitably increases, and it is the Bible, which gives us the greatest of all gifts - the ability to use the perfection of the spiritual to bring health and happiness to human life.

Our second selection is from: Civilization Lieth Foursquare by Gordon Brown.

Standpoint Defined

Twentieth Century Flood

"IT IS I; BE NOT AFRAID," said the voice of the new world order to a boatload of human beings toiling in the dark in a storm-tossed sea contrary to the prevailing wind. "Peace, be still," was the command to the engulfing wave. An imperturbable confidence, based on the certain scientific knowledge that the forces governing the universe are in truth beneficent, surmounted the raging turmoil, controlled the otherwise uncontrollable, and restored a natural calm. Jesus comforted the frightened disciples: "LET US PASS OVER UNTO THE OTHERSIDE." He said, AS HE LED them TO ACCEPT A RADICALLY NEW OUTLOOK ON LIFE.

In mythology, the sea is the symbol of what, today, psychoanalysis calls the collective unconscious, that unfathomable realm of the mortal psyche from which, apparently, latent mental forces rise malevolently into human experience beyond conscious control. So widespread and virulent do these forces seem to be in the closing decades of the twentieth century that mankind may be forgiven for believing that its world is drowning. When, in accordance with the gospel, men learn to understand the real source of their being -what the I, the Ego, the Self, truly are - they will no longer be afraid, and the violent upheavals will cease.

Actual historical data in support of the gospel story seems so scant that perhaps one does not believe such a person, as Jesus of Nazareth really existed; one doubts that the man ever lived who said and did the things the New Testament claims. Undeniable, however, is the fact that the Gospels propound a universal Life-principle, with intelligible ideas, rules, and laws, such that when these are understood and practiced, their Principle proves its saving ability in individual and collective experience. In the measure that mankind bases itself understandingly on this Principle it will come to exercise the same spiritual power, be governed by the same spiritual laws, perform the same spiritual works, as those ascribed initially to the way-shower, Christ Jesus.

At the same time, an appreciation of the underlying Science of the Scriptures, viewed comprehensively in relation to the civilization journey of mankind, begins to convince unprejudiced thought that the man Jesus did inevitably appear in human history at the moment accorded him, proving the deathless reality of man, exemplifying from beginning to end the solution to the universal life-problem, whether there are adequate historical records of this or not. Certainly someone had to formulate and utter the gospel teachings; otherwise they would not be there. Why not one who so understood and loved their Principle that he supplied the living, indelible proof, which the Principle itself demands?

The prophets in the Old Testament as well as Jesus and the apostles in the New, proclaim that the power, which comes to rescue the human race from its self-imposed agonies, divisions, and

destructions, does so in two phases. These are called the first and second advents of the Messiah, or Christ - the twofold appearing of the healer, redeemer, and Saviour of mankind. The first is where a single inspired individual demonstrates before the world the total solution to the problem of mortality; the second is the revelation, in consequence, of the living Science of this solution, interpreted by a Principle which the world itself can understand, and whereby it can follow the example set by the first individual. Armed with the Science of universal Christianity, all mankind will solve at last the problem of being in the way Jesus solved it, and civilization in consequence will be none other than the ecumenical city foursquare envisioned in the book of Revelation as the ultimate ideal of all human society.

Foretelling the coming on this universal scale of the very Christ-idea which he himself was expressing and being, Jesus, according to the gospel, declared the following: "As the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Today, the general state of corruption and violence in the world seems closely to resemble the Biblical account of the days of Noah. Opposing the widespread terror, however, and happening simultaneously, is the second coming of the Son of man. That is to say, a "Son" is even now being born to "man" (man in the generic sense), which is the unity, sanity, and harmony of man himself as the Son of God.

Parallels exist, therefore, between the symbolic story of Noah in the early chapters of Genesis, the prophesied Second Advent, and events of our own day. The earth is corrupt and "filled with violence," God is represented as saying to Noah when telling him of the cleansing, destroying flood that is to come upon the human race. Interpreting the story metaphysically, Noah was bidden to build himself an ark of spiritual understanding, and to find truth and safety therein. Then, when the baptismal flood had fulfilled its purpose, and humanity was purged of its suicidal lusts, hypocrisies, and greed, the world itself would be born again. This is symbolized in Genesis by Noah and his family emerging from the womb-like seclusion of the ark and beginning life all over again on new foundations - living and working, that is, If you wish to live and not perish you must be born again, Jesus said in effect to Nicodemus. This same rethinking, repentance, rebirth has to take place today on a world scale if mankind

is not to destroy itself, and if civilization is not to perish in the dead-end of materialism.

Jesus was talking with his disciples on the Mount of Olives, looking at the buildings of the old sacrosanct Jewish temple, when he drew these parallels between the world of Noah, the Christ's second advent, and the circumstances of our own day. All our solid-looking, long established beliefs and practices will be thrown down, he implied, if we do not release them for a deeper and more enduring reality. Through the coming of the impartial, impersonal Science of Christianity human life-values will become spiritual instead of material, infinite rather than finite, resources will not be expendable but inexhaustible, they will not be localized physically but will be everywhere available mentally and spiritually.

The institutional gods, which humanity has raised up over the centuries and worshipped, and to which it has turned for the solution of its problems, will be found one and all to have let man down. Material methods will no longer work in the way they seemed to in the past. The unprecedented upheavals in human circumstances that challenge the twentieth century will be such that a totally new system of ideas and laws - new in science, in religion, in politics, in economics, in government, and in education generally - will gradually become imperative for the survival of the race. These ideas will not be thought up humanly by clever intellectuals; divinely and intelligibly they will reveal themselves to unbiased thought, and through their acceptance and implementation, humanity will be born again. Such revolutionary changes in human thinking and behavior herald the second coming of the Son of man. Little by little, unto us (humanity) a "Son" is being born in this present epoch, which is our own indestructible, integral identity in Christ, the Son of God.

Eventually, not one stone of the old materialistic temple state of thought will be left standing upon another, Jesus told them. The word temple is from the Latin root tempus, meaning time. "I saw no temple [time] therein," says John the Revelator of his vision of the world-city, the goal of civilization. "Let the Word have free course and be glorified. The people clamor to leave cradle and swaddling-clothes. The spiritual status is urging its highest demands

on mortals, and material history is drawing to a close,” wrote Mary Baker Eddy (No 45:24).

Foreseeing the coming of our present incisive, scientific era, and the beginnings of the end of the old way of life, Jesus said: “Many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled... For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places... And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”

The “elect,” called also in the Old Testament the “remnant,” are signified by the state of thought, which is Noah, and by the ark-like structure of his spiritual understanding which mothers the embryo of a completely new kind of world. Hence, as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

“Only through time time is conquered,” wrote T. S. Eliot. Time, the measuring and organizing of which played so important a part in launching our present civilization movement some 6000 years ago, is transfigured and replaced in Revelation’s holy city by ideas of Life, of Truth, and of Love which are timeless, indestructible, self existent, infinite. There shall be “time no longer”, says the angel in Revelation 10, when he brings the little open book, Science and Health, from heaven.

Not, then, a tumultuous sea, typical of the collective unconscious (preoccupied as this is with mythological origins and primordial time), but what is meant by heaven must be found the source and origin of mankind’s earthly existence. Indeed, when the Revelator sees a “new heaven and a new earth” (identical with the coming of the holy city) there is “no more sea.” That earth and heaven, humanity and divinity, are one and indivisible; that “earth” is born divinely of “heaven,” and does not come up myth logically out of a deep unconscious “sea,” will prove to be the solvent of all the frightening forces of division and disruption that have, down the ages, sought to torture and abuse the human race, and are today nearing their self-destruction. Jesus could comfort his disciples and rescue them

from drowning because, in understanding his own true origin, and therefore the true idea of time he understood the harmony and indestructibility of man.

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