

October 23, 2006 – Subject: Everlasting Punishment.

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: FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION – by W. Gordon Brown.

JOB

Job's patience in tribulation, and his yearning for solace, comfort and healing, is the dominant theme of his book. Are we not shown what is the wrong attitude and what is the right attitude in Christian Science practice towards the suffering patient? The entreaty wrung from the depths of Job's very soul is that his zealous comforters shall stop talking! He is sick unto death of their torrents of words. He asks only that he may be aware of the presence of God. "Miserable comforters are ye all," he cries out to the four of them in his agony.

But the arguments go on and on and on. The attempts to find a cause for error, to rationalize the evidence of the senses, to blame persons, the condemnation implicit in assuring Job that his suffering is only in his own thinking, etc., are void of healing. Indeed there can be no real healing until the philosophical, psychological, sectarian attitudes of the four comforters yield to the fourfold Comforter itself.

"If hypocrisy, stolidity, inhumanity, or vice finds its way into the chambers of disease through the would-be healer, it would, if it were possible, convert into a den of thieves the temple of the Holy Ghost, - the patient's spiritual power to resuscitate himself" (S & H 365:25). Job's body is, in truth, the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in him, which he has of God. His only real body is the body of God, which belongs not to himself but to God. Self-resuscitating spiritual power liberated from within him, not theory superimposed from outside, is the Love-practice that heals.

The “tender word and Christian encouragement of an invalid, pitiful patience with his fears and the removal of them, are better than hecatombs of gushing theories, stereotyped borrowed speeches, and the doling of arguments, which are but so many parodies on legitimate Christian Science, aflame with divine Love” (S & H 367:3).

Job’s four comforters are the elderly Eliphaz, the elderly Bildad, the elderly Zophar, and the youthful Elihu. They counterfeit the one fourfold comforter of the Word, Christ, Christianity, Science. They are four capable and erudite religionists, four intellectual dogmatists, well versed in the dialectic of theology and philosophy, but with no comfort in them. In fact there is no lasting comfort anywhere but in the unarguable Word of divine Science- the divine theology of the Theos-Logos, which is God Himself speaking.

Job sees the utter futility of trying to interpret human happenings with the sensuous reason of the intellect. Only the divine Principle of the universe can rightly interpret the universe; and when divine Principle does this, it explains the nature of both Truth and error. The flood of lifeless words reaches saturation point, and Job cries out in his anguish: “I know that my redeemer liveth. . . yet in my flesh shall I see God.”

At the end of the book, this proves to be true. Divine Love comforts, heals, and blesses him abundantly. For Job there is “full compensation in the law of Love” (S & H 574: 18). Thus “the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.”

Job exclaims in his joy: “I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself [as mortality], and I repent in dust and ashes.” He has turned forever away from mortal egotism and mere human goodness to union with divine Principle, Love. Commenting on these words of Job, the textbook teaches: “Starting from a higher standpoint, one rises spontaneously, even as light emits light without effort; for ‘where your treasure is, there will your heart be also’ “ (S & H 262:24). Job’s heart finds its treasure when, like the children of Israel reaching the promised land, he understands God for himself.



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