

January 31st, 2005 — Subject: Spirit

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 John Doorly's Talks on the Science of the Bible Volume VII. For a brief biography on our featured authors, click [here](#).

Separating Between Spirit and Matter

I now want to consider with you a very important question. I notice these days that there is a great tendency to mix the divine metaphysics of the Bible with human philosophy. But the metaphysics of the Bible teaches clearly that as Jesus said, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Until you have understood the firmament, which is the essential symbol of the second day of creation, you are not able to separate between the flesh and the Spirit. Right at the beginning of your study of metaphysics, in the second day of creation, you have to learn to do that. Anybody who tries to find Spirit in matter, even beautiful matter, is a pantheist. Also, without knowing it, he is a Buddhist, because the Buddhist says that all is Mind, that the lamp is Mind, the book is Mind, the table is Mind, and so on. That is not the teaching of Christian Science, which states categorically that the attempt to draw any conclusions whatsoever from the testimony of the *five* physical senses is pantheism pure and simple. Moreover, the Bible and "Science and Health" don't just teach us that evil is unreal and leave it at that, but they teach us how to prove in infinite detail the unreality of evil. They don't take a chunk of God, as it were, and try to destroy a chunk of evil. But they teach us how, through the infinite categories of divine metaphysics, to use definitely and specifically the ideas of Life, Truth, and Love, to destroy the myriad beliefs of sin, disease, and death.

As I told you last week, there is a great deal of nonsense being talked about God's allness and oneness, considered in an emotional and religious way, being a sufficient answer to the problem of evil. If you just say that there is only one creator and that therefore everything that exists must be His creation, and if you leave the matter there, very

soon you will find yourself believing that such things as germs and disease are realities. Your premise will lead to the conclusion that if you think in any other way about them, you will be accepting two creations. Well, Mrs. Eddy calls such things “dark images of mortal thought” (S. & H. 418: 31), and she shows perfectly clearly that it is essential to learn to separate between Spirit and matter, because you can’t draw any conclusions whatever about reality except from Principle. As you understand God as divine Mind, you know that His creation consists of ideas; as you understand God as Spirit, you know that ideas are spiritual; as you understand God as Soul, you know that those ideas are definite and they are identified with God; as you understand God as Principle, you know that those ideas demonstrate Principle; as you understand God as Life, you know that those ideas are eternal and indestructible; as you understand God as Truth, you know that those ideas are of the nature of true manhood; and as you understand God as Love, you know that those ideas are forever fulfilled in divine Love. But to draw any conclusions whatsoever from mortality is hopeless, it is pantheism. Moreover, just to say that materiality is unreal and leave it at that by going off into what is supposed to be a highly exalted state of spiritual sense, and call that divine Science, is just the doctrine of Buddhism, of what is termed Nirvana.

Our civilization is face to face with very real issues, and what we need is something, which will enable us to meet those issues and prove the unreality in every detail of sin, disease, and death. We don’t want something, which is so abstract that it doesn’t deal with the mortal. If you just say that all there is is reality, and you don’t recognize anything else, the devil will agree with you. He will say, “Very well, all there is is spiritual reality, but meanwhile here is a so-called material universe going through hell, and you are doing nothing about it. You are simply shutting it out and saying that it doesn’t exist.” But the purpose of Christian Science is to save mankind from the hell of materiality. Mrs. Eddy writes: “I shall not forget the cost of investigating, for this age, the methods and power of error” (Mis. 222:29-30); and she also says: “I never knew a student who fully understood my instructions on this point of handling evil” (Mis. 292:28-30).

But what do we know about that process today? We handle evil through our ordered and scientific understanding of the divine infinite calculus, and we handle it with intelligence and authority. The Word of God is that aspect or category of divine metaphysics which disperses the

darkness; then the Christ is that category which “comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error,” which is a very different thing. The Word says, “Let there be light,” and it shows you how that light will develop, and disperse the darkness to some extent; but the Christ is the “divine manifestation of God, which comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error” (S. & H. 583:10-11) — organic life, or life in the flesh. Then Christianity is that category which scientifically obliterates the mortal concept.

Remember that all three processes are essentially ordered. The Word as the breaking of the light must operate in a divinely ordered way, and surely the intelligent approach to any subject must always be ordered. If it were disordered, how could you learn it? The breaking of the light in mathematics is ordered, and you can learn and grasp mathematical values, because they are ordered. If there were no order, there could be no values.

As the light of the Word breaks and you gain some sense of God as the divine Principle, Life, Truth, and Love, that begins to operate in your thought in an equally ordered way as the coming of the Christ, which is subjective. Moreover, that Christ irresistibly “comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error”— it doesn’t just remain in the realm of metaphysical abstractions, which ignore the claims of error. It shows you how scientifically and systematically to prove in every detail the nothingness of sin, disease, and death. All error ever asks is to be let alone; it doesn’t ask anything else of any Christian but that. But Christian Science shows you how to handle it with authority as soon as you touch the Christ.

Then as you reach Christianity, which is the demonstration of Principle, you begin little by little, detail after detail, to obliterate the mortal concept altogether. You don’t obliterate it all at once, but little by little, until eventually you arrive at the pure demonstration of spiritual *values*, which leads you to the basis or the platform of Science.

The Significance of the Firmament

Before we go any further, I want to remind you of what Mrs. Eddy says about the second day in Genesis and the symbol of the firmament. To me this is super-important, and it shows so clearly the futility of so-called higher metaphysics, which says that because God is all there is only one universe, and that therefore the material universe is a dim

sense of that one universe. It isn't anything of the kind. It is no more our dim sense of the divine universe than $2+2=5$ is a dim sense of mathematics. $2+2=5$ is no sense of mathematics; it is "nonsense." Unless we people get this question clear in our thought we won't go anywhere at all; we shall just have mingling, and mingling is the curse of metaphysics.

So Mrs. Eddy writes of this second day: "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.' Spiritual understanding, by which human conception, material sense, is separated from Truth, is the firmament. The divine Mind, not matter, creates all identities, and they are forms of Mind, the ideas of Spirit apparent only as Mind, never as mindless matter nor the so-called material senses.

"And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.' Spirit imparts the understanding, which uplifts consciousness and leads into all truth. The Psalmist saith:

'The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.' Spiritual sense is the discernment of spiritual good. Understanding is the line of demarcation between the real and unreal. Spiritual understanding unfolds Mind, — Life, Truth, and Love, — and demonstrates the divine sense, giving the spiritual proof of the universe in Christian Science... God's ideas reflect the immortal, unerring, and infinite. The mortal, erring, and finite are human beliefs, which apportion to themselves a task impossible for them, that of distinguishing between the false and the true." Only Spirit can discern between the false and the true, nothing else can. "Objects utterly unlike the original do not reflect that original. Therefore matter, not being the reflection of Spirit, has no real entity" (S. & H. 505:4-25, 28-5).

If the carnal mind could have made a universe more unlike God's universe than the material universe, it would have done so. Mrs. Eddy says that "from first to last, the body is a sensuous, human concept" (S. & H. 177:13-14). God's man is idea, the mortal man is belief. God's idea is infinite; the mortal man is finite. God's idea is spiritual; the mortal man is material. God's idea is from everlasting to everlasting; mortal man begins, gets sick, and dies. And so in every way "human conception, material sense," is as unlike reality as it can be. So for goodness' sake

don't let's try to draw conclusions about reality from the material universe, because if we do, we shall be drawing our conceptions of reality from the only hell there is, the hell of materiality. Unless we have a firmament, unless we have that spiritual understanding which separates human conception, material sense, from Truth, we shall never go anywhere.

The Firmament: Some New Testament Illustrations

I have been reading a good deal in the New Testament recently, and I have been very much struck by some of the things, which are said there about this same question. For example, Matthew writes: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy *field*? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Matt. 13:24-30). You cannot gather the wheat until you are able to destroy the tares, and you have to destroy those tares scientifically and metaphysically. Until you have gained that sense of metaphysics which is not only subjective, but has authority and dominion, so that it enables you through the Christ translation to analyze, uncover, and annihilate error in its various phases, you can't demonstrate reality, you can't gather the wheat into the barn.

Mrs. Eddy says exactly the same thing in "Retrospection and Introspection." She writes: "Since there is in belief an illusion termed sin, which must be met and mastered, we classify sin, sickness, and death as illusions. They are supposititious claims of error; and error being a false claim; they are no claims at all. It is scientific to abide in conscious harmony, in health-giving, deathless Truth and Love.

To do this, mortals must first open their eyes to all the illusive forms, methods, and subtlety of error, in order that the illusion, error, may be destroyed; if this is not done, mortals will become the victims of error" (Ret. 64:20-29).

The same thought is also expressed by Paul in his Epistle to the Thessalonians, where he writes: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come,”— the day of the Christ, — “except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let,”— that is, “he who hinders will hinder,”—“until he be taken out of the way.” How are you going to take the belief of evil in its myriad manifestations “out of the way?” You must take it out of the way just as you take mistakes out of mathematics, or inharmonies out of music. You must do it scientifically, systematically, little by little, “precept upon precept,” and you can’t side step it, it’s impossible. The Science of divine metaphysics comes to show you how, through “line upon line; here a little, and there a little,” to analyze, uncover, and annihilate the myriad claims of the human mind, and nobody has any chance of demonstrating reality until he learns to do that. Time and time again in my own humble experience I have proved the truth of that. For instance, the other day I had to help a case in which the governing error was a claim of heredity. That case was healed, but I couldn’t have touched it if I hadn’t known what the claim was. Because it was a claim of heredity, it could only be healed through an understanding of the one parent Mind; nothing could touch it but that.

And so until we learn through Christ to analyze, uncover, and annihilate evil, we shall not be able to demonstrate Christianity, to use the firmament. Now, the people who are straining at what they call higher metaphysics, are trying to do without Christ as the “divine manifestation of God, which comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error,” and to do without Christianity as that which obliterates the mortal concept. Consequently they are not proving the unreality of sin, disease, and death — they are just *saying* that these are unreal, which doesn’t prove it at all. What proves the unreality of mistakes in mathematics is an *understanding* of the categories of mathematics. What proves the unreality of discords in music is an *understanding* of the harmonies of music. And so what disproves the errors of the human mind, which we call sin, disease, and death, materiality, is an *understanding* of the divine infinite calculus of God’s ideas in divine metaphysics, and nothing else will.

Moreover, until we come to the point where we are willing to face the

fact that “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;” until we see that that which is born of the Spirit in our thinking or anybody else’s thinking, or in the world’s thinking, must eradicate scientifically that which is born of the flesh, we won’t go anywhere. Just saying that materiality isn’t real doesn’t mean a thing. It is the ability to understand the system of divine metaphysics, by which we prove that “infinite space is peopled with God’s ideas, reflecting Him in countless spiritual forms (S. & H. 503:15-17) — that is the operation of Christianity — which will enable us scientifically and systematically to destroy him who “letteth,” “until he be taken out of the way.” You must gather the tares first, and then you will be able to gather the wheat; but the attempt to draw any conclusion whatever from the flesh, the material sense of things, is utterly and completely hopeless, so why try? You have Principle to draw your conclusions from, and Mrs. Eddy say “The divine Principle of the universe must interpret the universe (S. & H. 272:28-29), because nothing else can. The principle of mathematics must interpret mathematics, and no one would try to interpret mathematics through mistakes. It is true that “by reversal errors serve as waymarks to the one Mind” (S. & H. 267:24), but only by *reversal*.

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