

March 8 — SUBJECT: Substance

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 first selection this week is from: **TALKS ON THE GOSPEL OF LUKE** — by John Morgan. Our second selection is from: **TALKS ON THE GOSPEL OF JOHN** — by John Morgan. [Click here for a brief biography on our contributing authors.](#)

CHAPTER 11**LIFE as MIND (Ch. 11:1-13)**

Fatherhood operates as infinite provision as we make demands upon it.

This is the section containing the Lord's Prayer the parable of the importunate friend who came to his neighbor at dead of night, and the parable of fatherhood. We get the tone of Life as Mind, fatherhood demonstrated through urgent, perpetual desire. It is the sense that fatherhood is infinite provision, which must be invoked through persistent seeking and yearning.

V. 1. How Luke loves that tone of prayer! In Matthew the Lord's Prayer occurs without any introduction in the middle of the Sermon on the Mount, but here in Luke it is given as a result of a request. This requesting and response is especially significant in the tone of Life as Mind.

V. 2. "come," in the Greek is, "thy kingdom is being come" which can't be translated easily into English; but/ Mrs. Eddy caught the "tone of" it when she said, "Thy kingdom is come; Thou art ever-present" (S. & H. 16:31).

"Thy will be done, as in heaven, so, earth." It is the opposite way around from Matthew.

V. 3. "day by day" — Life provides for our present needs.

V. 4. "for we also forgive..." — for there's a sense of actuality.. The Lord's Prayer is the prayer of affirmation, the prayer of thanking the Father for what already is;

S. and H. 586:9 "Father. Eternal Life; the one Mind; the divine Principal commonly called God." The Father Life operates as the parent Mind, to whom all our "needs" are known as already fulfilled ideas; a "need" is but the human, objective sense of an idea that is actually omnipresent and omniactive. "But," we say, "that is all very well, but I have to know that." And that recognition of our need to know is the whole story of Life as Mind, because we now get the parable of the importunate friend, representing this great desire to know that fatherhood is Infinite provision. We have to get to know that the Father Life is the parent Mind providing every idea, and we do so through importunity, and persistence, and through sticking to it.

INTERVAL

So this is the story of coming into accord with divine fatherhood through persistent prayer, seeking, and desire.

Vv, 5-8. Luke is showing the wisdom of persistent prayer, of making persistent demands upon Life. It is as though Life, through Mind, says, Make demands upon me! How often do we find that we yearn halfheartedly for something in life, when the divine answer is right within our reach, yet we don't stretch out our hands and take it! Life as Mind says, Make demands upon me, reach out your hands, open your heart, enlarge your consciousness! Prayer isn't God-bothering; the persistence isn't a matter of being persistent towards somebody called God but is bothering yourself until you know that the idea is within you, and you are convinced that Life operates as infinite fatherhood; it takes us closer. I think we come unstuck sometimes simply because we aren't persistent enough.

Vv, 9,10. Once again, the Greek won't translate easily into English; that "ask" should be, "be asking," and "seek" should be, "be in the habit of knocking." They are present imperatives with a continuity sense; not just knock once, wait for three minutes, then go away and say it's no good, but keep on knocking at the door of consciousness until we know the answer, After all, we say, "I reflect infinite fatherhood," but do we act as if it is so?

Then Luke goes on to show through this little parable of fatherhood that whatever you understand about God through persistent prayer brings into your experience the provision of fatherhood

V. 11. Asking bread of the Father is seeking day by day the substance of inspired thought, and if we yearn for that, it won't give us a stone. That is sometimes what we give ourselves: we want to grasp more than we can digest, and instead of finding bread in our stomach we find a great mass of undigested metaphysics, and then we wonder why the body feels congested and sluggish. Sometimes people think that there is a lump developing in the body when it isn't anything of the sort, but is just a lump of metaphysics which they haven't yet translated into living. Fatherhood feeds thought with the bread of Life, not with un-lived academic Christian Science.

"...or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?" That fish is the sense of abundance in quality; the serpent is the sense of multiplication in number. You remember that the original serpent said, "Ye shall be as gods..." and all evil is plurality because it would add some thing to the divine One. Therefore fatherhood feeds thought with the abundance of generic quality, not with a false sense of multiplication in terms of plural objects of sense. Maybe the "esses" on the end are the serpent's hissing!

V. 12. This one is a little obscure, but they say that when the scorpion is curled up it can look like an egg — though a pretty small egg. The egg is the symbol of fruitfulness, and the statement indicates that if you importune the Father for something of the fruitfulness of Life, He will not hand you something that turns out to have a sting in it. Life offers infinite promise, and there's no catch in it anywhere provided we are willing to lay down the mortal.

V. 13. Life perpetually gives support, provision, and abundance; but how do we know that unless we invoke it?

So that was the tone of Life as Mind, — coming into line with divine fatherhood through persistent mental effort

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