

May 5, 2003 - Subject: Adam and Fallen Man

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—TALKS GIVEN BY JOHN DOORLY ON THE SCIENCE OF THE BIBLE—VOLUME ONE.

Truth Uncovers Error

This whole material universe is made up of mortal thought,—the thought of three thousand million years,—which seems to have become pretty definite and pretty concrete.

In that case of the girl who was having a baby, human thought said that everything was going wrong, but divine thought said that from everlasting to everlasting in the realm of reality there was never anything going on but God and God's idea—but divine Principle, Life, Truth, and Love, translating itself, developing itself, and manifesting itself—and so the human condition was changed. We must begin with “precept upon precept, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little” (Isa. 28:13).

The second record is to show us in the most inspired way the working of animal magnetism. Remember that evil's purpose is to hide itself. If humanity understood the devilishness that is hiding from men true values, and making them hate and despise and condemn each other, if humanity could trace it all back to animal magnetism, to a false sense of God and a false sense of man, think of the power and ability humanity would have to sweep away that devilishness and to establish the divine values!

Genesis 2: 4, 5

...The Jahweh document begins, “in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground” (Gen. 2: 4, 5). So in the first stage of this false account of creation you have the false-sense of God as the Lord God entering into the picture, but there is still some recognition of the truth. The plant of the field and the herb are symbols of the Word of God. And there hadn't yet come in that false sense of man, who was to till the ground.

All through this story you see the light of spiritual things fading, but every now and then you find that the light breaks through. The material record and the true account of things become more and more intertwined as the story proceeds.

Irresistible Evolution

There is one thing that none of us can evade, and that is salvation. “If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there” (Ps. 139: 8).

Salvation, or perfection, is coming to you some day, just as surely as the sun will rise tomorrow morning, and more surely. From everlasting to everlasting the decree of the infinite is I AM THAT I AM. “Truth, Life, and Love fill immensity and are ever-present” (S & H 504:13-14), and though the dream of mortality may seem to propound itself, to continue, and even to develop, it is inevitably bound to disappear in what we call civilization.

If you try to understand reality by looking at the material universe, you are hopelessly bogged. But if you try to understand the material universe by looking at reality, you will understand the material universe and all that happens in it. If a mathematician looks at a mistake, he can detect it and correct it. If he was ignorant, and tried to find mathematics through that mistake, he would be bogged. The material universe can tell you nothing about reality, except by reversal.

You can't draw any concept of the man who is idea from material man. Your true body is idea; it is consciousness, and it is ever-present. It would be absurd if man were God's image and likeness and his body were just in one place,—the most finite thing you can conceive,—and yet the substance of a note in music could be everywhere! A note of music would be greater than man! But man's body is consciousness. There is nothing to you but what you think—that's all there is to you. Your true body is what God knows about you. Your true body is your conscious selfhood as God's idea and so when you begin to realize that you are the man who is idea,—the likeness of Mind, and Spirit, and Soul, and Principle, and Life, and Truth, and Love,—then you begin to be man, and you begin to understand how it is possible to walk on the water, still the tempest, feed the multitude, cleanse the leper, and raise the dead. We are still children at it, but we have got to do those things some day. We see the answer in some measure, and so we are under a great obligation.

Humanity has changed more in the last fifty years than in the five hundred years before. We are on the verge of a great revolution or evolution. Spiritual values and reality are going to become the standard of mankind, little by little, but irresistibly, because the Christ is forever going on,—because divine Principle, Life, Truth, and Love, is forever translating its own ideal of itself as fatherhood, sonship, and motherhood. It translates it, it develops and gives birth to it, it manifests and creates it, and humanity can't resist it.

“But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground” (Gen. 2: 6). That is the mist of ignorance, darkness, chaos. How did the material universe begin three thousand million years ago? It began in mist, mud, chaos, and darkness, and then out of that there began to be little formations, little tendrils, little creepy things. Why did that mud and darkness and chaos become little tendrils and little creepy things? Why did it become man as we know him today? Why did it become civilization? Because inevitably darkness, ignorance, and chaos are bound to disappear before the infinite impulsion of the Christ-idea, forever going on. It may take time, according to mortal theories, but it doesn't take time if you understand that “one day”—one idea of Life, Truth, and Love—is with the Lord as a thousand years” (II Pet. 3:8).

You and I have seen over and over again that the truth has nothing to do with time. I have seen a Christian Science treatment given in London heal a man in India the moment it was given. There was no time-lag, because Truth is ever-present and operates everywhere.

Those ideas of Truth that you know about yourself or anyone else are God's ideas from everlasting to everlasting, and they are ever-operative in every part of existence. When you use an idea that is based on God, you are using an idea that is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and omniactive. When you use a divine idea about yourself, or about someone you love, or about humanity, that is Immanuel, "God with us."

The Opposite of Spirit as Spirit

Spirit as Spirit in the true creation was symbolized by "And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were underneath the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: an it was so" (Gen. 1: 7). We epitomized that as the infinite substance of being, coming to you and me as understanding. Understanding always enables you to separate "the waters . . . under the firmament from the waters . . . above the firmament," the real from the unreal. The counterfeit of this in the false record is: "And out of the ground"—nothingness—"made the Lord God to grow every tree that pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (Gen. 2: 9). Remember that to the Hebrews the tree was typical of a state of thought. They worshipped trees, and there were trees on all their high places Abraham, Jacob, and so on all worshipped at those high places and in fact, it was not until the time of Josiah that that was stopped and all worship was concentrated in Jerusalem.

In this verse, the trees of the garden are typical of thought, and they are symbols of the five physical senses and what they declare. Then you have one of those gleams of light in this false record: "the tree of life also in the midst of the garden,"—signifying reality,—and the tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Gen. 2: 9)—the hell of humanity today is that it believes in both good and evil, in both Spirit and matter, and it doesn't know how to get out of that hell. It is amazing to read some of the opinions of great thinkers in physical science world, and see how clearly they recognize that the material is based wholly on sense-testimony, that the physical universe is a thing of sense-testimony, and that fundamentally reality must be of the nature of Spirit and idea. But how to symbolize it, how to bring it down to a system that could be used, not one of them seems to know. The Hebrew prophets did know how to do this, and Christ Jesus demonstrated the divine system which they had symbolized, and in our age, the scientific age, that system is coming to light so that men can use it just as they can use mathematics or engineering or music, but with more certainty.

In the physical universe, all we know is derived from the evidence of the physical senses. What the universe will be like when we draw conclusions from the one spiritual cause and not from something that is in the universe,—that is, not from the five physical senses, we don't know. You and I refuse to accept our physical selves our real selves. You and I are using spiritual sense, not the physical senses, and we know that our true self hood is idea,—everpresent idea, intelligent idea, omni-active idea, substantial, real, forever defined, forever proved, forever demonstrated, forever basic and foundational, forever as eternal as God, forever of the nature of consciousness, forever an idea abiding in God, fulfilled and perfect. As we know that, you and I are beginning to think with something that is not in the material universe, something outside sense-testimony; we are beginning to think, with that which we call the Mind of Christ, the Mind of Truth, and as we begin to think with that, we shall get rid of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

The Importance of the Individual

There is nothing in the world more metaphysical, more accurate, more detailed, and more scientific than this story, which was written in about 550 B.C. If today the physical scientists and the theologians would only turn away from human intelligence,—from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil,—from the mingling of Spirit and matter, and if they would only turn unreservedly to spiritual things, as the prophets did, and begin to form their concept of God and man from a spiritual basis, and even begin to see what is happening in the material universe from a spiritual basis, then they would be able to exchange “the objects of sense for the ideas of Soul” (S. & H. 269: 15-16); they would be able to translate things into thought and then out of the realm of thought into the realm of spiritual idea.

That is the spiritually educational process which you and I are hoping to establish in the individual. We can't do it as a whole all at once. We have got to get it to the individual, and let him develop it individually. There is no other basis but the individual. Organized religion is over. Jesus pointed that out so clearly when Peter asked him about John, and Jesus said, “If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me” (John 21: 22). It is always a matter for the individual. The individual must become a lively “stone,” thinking in the realm of reality. Don't believe that thinking in the realm of reality takes anything away—it gives a whole lot that is worth having and takes away a whole lot of hell. I have been trying to think in the realm of reality for forty years, and it hasn't taken anything away but a lot of hell and rottenness and materiality and a whole lot of baggage that weighed me down. If you think individually in the realm of reality, you will find yourself to be God's idea, one with God, eternally reflecting God, perfect as the Father Himself is perfect.

The Hebrew prophets saw how you can systematically and scientifically deliver yourself from the false sense of God and man and the material universe, and find that the kingdom of God is within you, and that it is at hand.

...When we are learning Science, we begin with this story of the days of creation, which is the story of human history. It existed before the Hebrew prophets took it and developed it. It was meat and drink to them, and they developed it. Then it was developed and demonstrated by Jesus, John, Paul, and so on.

This story is the vastest story in the world, the most important story in the world; it is the story of all stories, it is the “old, old story,” but it has got to be learnt, because it is infinite and it is about infinity. And so we begin to learn it, and then what happens? Reality begins to operate for us. Well, what is reality? Reality is your true Christ selfhood. The Christ in you is what begins to operate—“the hope of glory” (Col. 1: 27), spiritual understanding, spiritual vision, inspiration. That is the Christ in you, your true selfhood, beginning to operate, and that process must go on in each one of us, till eventually we put off the mortal and we “put on immortality” (I Cor. 15: 54),—we find reality, and the dream of mortality just disappears. The prophets show you how you can destroy this dream of mortality through analysis, exposure, and annihilation. They first analyze mortality, and then they expose the error of it in all its nakedness in the story of the serpent. Then our mortal concepts cry “We are naked,” and the mortal hides itself in its physical senses. Finally, it goes out into darkness, nothingness, the land of Nod—it annihilates itself.

The True Tones Destroy the False Tones

I believe that Mrs. Eddy meant us to take the definite facts of metaphysics—the ideas of God, man, and the universe—intelligently, consecratedly, and scientifically, and use them to handle the claims of animal magnetism through analysis, uncovering, and annihilation. That is, she meant us to use metaphysics as we would use any other science—both in its purity and in its application to the human. There is no doubt whatever but that the great Hebrew writers and thinkers did exactly that: they first of all showed exactly how to lay hold on the ideas of God, as you lay hold on the ideas of mathematics or music, but more definitely, and then they used the story of Adam to show how to analyze, uncover, and annihilate the dream of mortality. Whether the writers of the Jahweh document, who first introduced the Adam story, used it for that purpose, or whether they really thought that it was a true record of creation, is not known. I don't see how they could have intended it as a true account of material creation, for they were writing in about the time of Hosea, and Hosea was certainly a most spiritually-minded prophet. But the Priestly writers in about 550 B.C. took that Adam story and regarded it wholly as a symbol showing how the dream of mortality arose, how it developed, what it is, and how you can analyze it and deal with it.

If we can get the tones of the first record of creation, if we can learn them and welcome them and love them and understand intelligently how they operate, then we can take those tones use them to destroy the false tones of mortality, as given in the second record, and we shall get somewhere. We shall do what humanity must do, if it is to survive. Humanity is eating, and eating its fill of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It believes in matter, in the power of good and the power of evil. There have been only two great teachers who have taught that there is only one reality,—Spirit,—and those teachers are Christ Jesus and Mary Baker Eddy. Many have shown the effect of Spirit on matter, but these two alone said, "There is no matter: there is only Spirit, and as you understand Spirit, matter disappears."

How would you deal with a mistake in music? By learning facts of music. How would you deal with a mistake in mathematics? By learning the facts of mathematics. Well, that is the only way you can deal with the human problem —by learning the facts of Spirit. The theories of hundreds of millions of years are climaxing before our eyes on a so-called materially scientific basis. Nothing can deal with them but spiritual Science, the system of which is symbolized in the first chapter of Genesis. The record of materiality and all that it means is given in the second, third, and fourth chapters of Genesis. It was put there by those inspired writers in the prophetic age so that men could learn from it how to deal with materiality.

Let this story of the true creation and the false creation become to you warm and living and vital. Let it become One story. Let it become impersonal. Evil isn't person, place, or thing. Evil is nothing. It is a sham. It is a liar and it is a lie. It is nobody and nothing. God never made it. Our job, if we are honest, is scientifically and Christianly, through understanding the ideas of reality in the their infinite system and calculus, to analyze, expose, and destroy evil in every phase, and to replace it with the divine fact, both for ourselves and for humanity.

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