

May 10 - Subject: Mortals And Immortals

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.

The selection this week is from John Sinton's HARROGATE SUMMER SCHOOL 1952 (Based on The Glossary Chapter, in SCIENCE AND HEALTH WITH KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES, by Mary Baker Eddy). Biographies on our contributing authors can be found [here](#).

The term "resurrection" represents a process in which we have already been taking part. It is defined in the Glossary as follows

"Resurrection, Spiritualization of thought; a new and higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence; material belief yielding to spiritual understanding" (593: 9-11).

I know, both from what you have said to me and how I feel about this unfoldment, that I have had your full co-operation, particularly in yesterday's work when we discussed Jacob; and when we find our thought responding like that, it is a clear sign of resurrection, of a spiritualization of thought. In the Jacob narrative, which we discussed yesterday, we considered one of the most complex narratives in the Old Testament, and through this Glossary we were able to understand it in greater measure. And the thought of us all has responded. This is what we need. This is a clear indication of the spiritualization of consciousness by which Mrs. Eddy laid such great store; she knew more than anyone the need for the Christianization and the spiritualization of consciousness, because she saw that only spiritualization of consciousness enables one to achieve demonstration. If we spiritualize consciousness, Principle will demonstrate itself spontaneously. The spoken or written word is but symbol, but spiritual consciousness enables us to come face to face with Principle, to attain one-to-one relationship; it enables us to enter the closet and shut the door on the material senses; to gain "audience with Spirit, the divine Principle, Love, which destroys all error" (S & H 15:12-13). There has been coming to all of us here a wonderful measure of spiritualized consciousness in the last few days; and such spiritualization does not remain static; it restores, it begins to fulfill the promise, "Behold, I make all things new."

Resurrection is also defined as "a new and higher idea of immortality." This new idea is not that we achieve immortality through the passage of death; rather is it that immortality begins from the moment we see that fundamentally our identity has never been born into matter. In the measure that we understand that we were never born into matter, in that same measure do we cease to die out of it. Think of the profundity of this; think what it really means. What is called the passage of three score years and ten, beginning from a moment of birth and appearing to finish with a moment of dissolution, is something into which real identity never enters. Mrs. Eddy explains it in terms of the dream and the dreamer being one, and in the same sense the sin and the sinner are one. The full answer to the question is found in the passage we read the other day from *Retrospection and Introspection* (page 67).

So that which appears to be born and then to flicker out in the passage of death is not identity; it is mortal mind's superimposed false sense of ourselves, or, to put it another way, mortal mind's inversion of ourselves. The moment we become conscious of ourselves as identity, we become increasingly conscious of never having been born into matter; and in the same measure we lose the fear that we have to die out of it. The culmination of that, of course, is translation.

Since we have said so much about translation, let me read Mrs. Eddy's wonderful answer to that question in *Miscellaneous Writings*, "Do you believe in translation?" This reads: "If your question refers to language, whereby one expresses the sense of words in one language by equivalent words in another, I do. If you refer to the removal of a person to heaven, without his subjection to death, I modify my affirmative answer. I believe in this removal being possible after all the footsteps requisite have been taken up to the very throne, up to the spiritual sense and fact of divine substance, intelligence, Life, and Love." Notice the terms Life and Love, denoting absolute Christianity. "This translation is not the work of moments; it requires both time and eternity." And here is the pith of our quotation: "It means more than mere disappearance to the human sense; it must include also man's changed appearance and diviner form visible to those beholding him here" (67:24-6). That is what Jesus presented at the transfiguration; to the disciples, through these uprising states and stages, he presented "man's changed appearance and diviner form visible to those beholding him here;" but had he been tempted by animal magnetism to believe that that was the fulfillment of his mission, he would have failed as the Way-shower. In order to be the perfect Way-shower, supplying the full concept of proof, he came down from the mountain and started by healing the epileptic boy (see Luke 9). From that point on, his demonstration took him figuratively right back to Jerusalem.

Jerusalem appears in the Glossary as follows:

"JERUSALEM. Mortal belief and knowledge obtained from the five corporeal senses; the pride of power and the power of pride; sensuality; envy; oppression; tyranny. Home, heaven" (598:12-15).

The second phase of Jesus' career, when his mission took him right up to Jerusalem, was the journey, not geographical, in which he was handling as never before "mortal belief and knowledge obtained from the five corporeal senses; the pride of power and the power of pride; sensuality; envy; oppression; tyranny." The interesting thing to observe—and we see it most clearly in Matthew—is that while his mission was leading him up to the transfiguration, the people followed him in crowds; but from the moment he commenced the second phase, the journey that took him to Jerusalem, the people progressively forsook him; until this closing phase of proof or demonstration brought him to Gethsemane, when he was with his disciples only, and they, in turn, deserted him and he was left alone with his Principle.

What a wonderful lesson there is there. As long as we love the verities of Principle and our demonstration goes no further, there is no challenge; but there comes a time when our life-work must begin to face the same challenge, and we must have the love, the courage, and the selflessness which will undertake that second phase of demonstration.

It was because Jesus with his utter selflessness was willing and able to do this, even to the point of standing alone, that the malice that would destroy him through the crucifixion collapsed, and that which was indestructible emerged from the crucifixion to go on to the ultimate ascension. If we can see how his life work falls naturally into those two periods, we shall see clearly what is meant by the two concepts of demonstration, which I have so often mentioned, and the second is complementary to the first. We shall see, too, why when we consider Christ Jesus, this wonderful and supreme demonstrator; we cannot disassociate his definition in the Glossary from Jerusalem, nor from Gethsemane. Gethsemane is defined in the Glossary as follows:

“**GETHSEMANE.** Patient woe; the human yielding to the divine; love meeting no response, but still remaining love” (586: 23-25).

Why “meeting no response”? Because the disciples were not yet able to watch. They fled under pressure. So his watching was alone with Principle. You notice the use of the term “love” with a small “I,” denoting the complete and utter selflessness that lays down the mortal concept. It was because of this that the malice which would destroy him failed utterly, and that which was indestructible emerged into the resurrection and continued this ascending concept of demonstration until finally there was no material evidence left, and Jesus was no longer cognizant to the senses.

I should have mentioned that there is a positive side to the definition of Jerusalem in two words, “Home, heaven.” But the first portion of the definition, which is entirely negative, is so important to understand; and once we see the significance of the closing phase of Jesus’ career, —namely, the journey up to Jerusalem, —we see why this term appears in the Glossary as it does. It is the laying off of the mortal selfhood which takes one from Jerusalem to Gethsemane, and finally to the resurrection. And resurrection, we saw, is defined as “Spiritualization of thought; a new and higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence...” What was it that came to light in the resurrection? It was the great fact that man as identity is never born into matter and does not have to die out of it. From the moment we begin to Christianize consciousness in accordance with this concept of resurrection, we are beginning to overcome the claim of death. The claim of death is not a question to be faced when we are seventy or eighty years old; the claim of death is hypnotism, mesmerism, and sleep. You remember the Psalmist’s prayer: “lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death” (Ps.13: 3). So from our first moment of spiritual enlightenment, if we will only keep spiritual sense active and patiently push on to higher concepts of understanding and demonstration, from that very moment we begin to overcome death. Let us see that the time to cope with it is now, not thirty or so years hence.

This “higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence” that comes to light is hinted at in another passage in *Miscellaneous Writings*, where it is linked with Jesus’ nativity: “Christ Jesus’ sense of matter was the opposite of that which mortals entertain: his nativity was a spiritual and immortal sense of the ideal world” (74:13-15).

There we have the idea of pre-existence, an idea of which Jesus never lost consciousness for one moment of his human career. It was this consciousness of his pre-existence that was the source of his power. We have two parallel references, again in *Miscellaneous*

Writings. First: “Mortals will lose their sense of mortality—disease, sickness, sin, and death—in the proportion that they gain the sense of man’s spiritual pre-existence as God’s child; as the offspring of good, and not of God’s opposite,—evil, or a fallen man” (181:25-30). Through this continuous process of spiritualization, we become increasingly conscious of ourselves as identity, as idea; and as we take up that position and refuse to let it go, as we watch that we hold it, so little by little we gain the sense of man’s spiritual pre-existence” and correspondingly we lose our sense of mortality. This is the only way we shall ever overcome “the sleep of death,” the hypnotism of it.

It is not a violent mental struggle years ahead; the time is now, through the spiritualization of consciousness.

The second reference reads: “The meek Nazarene’s steadfast and true knowledge of pre-existence, of the nature and the inseparability of God and man, -made him mighty”(189:8-10). So we see that resurrection is a continuous process, that from the moment of the quickening of our spiritual sense we begin to resurrect ourselves. From this comes the ultimate translation, “material belief yielding to spiritual understanding.”

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