

September 13, 2004 - Subject: Matter

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 WORKS ON CHRISTIAN SCIENCE VOLUME 1 — by Martha W. Wilcox. For a brief biography on our featured authors, click [here](#).

A WORLD OF THOUGHT NOT A WORLD OF THINGS

Our next paper is based on the paragraph from Miscellaneous Writings where Mrs. Eddy says: creation or idea of Spirit has its counterfeit in some matter belief. Every material belief hints the existence of spiritual reality; and if mortals are instructed in spiritual things, it will be seen that material belief, in all its manifestations, reversed, will be found the type and representative of verities priceless, eternal, and just at hand” (p 60:27).

Christ Jesus was a radical supporter of spiritual unfoldment and demanded that the material-mindedness of men should be changed. “Jesus taught us to walk over, not into or with the currents of matter, or mortal mind... He turned the water into wine, he commanded the winds, he healed the sick, — all in direct opposition to human philosophy and so-called natural science (Un 11:3).

Jesus knew that material sense objects were never external, nor outside, nor other than mortal mind; he knew that all material sense objects were the educated beliefs or the false interpretation of divine ideas that were just at hand and the only things at hand.

Since matter and evil were unthinkable and unbeable to God or Mind, Jesus knew that there was only the withinness – the Christ or the present reality of all so-called material things. Jesus “demanded a change of consciousness and evidence.” He “stooped not to human consciousness, nor to the evidence of the senses” (Un 11:10,14).

And today the Christ – the reality of all things – is demanding of us a change of consciousness and evidence. It demands of us that we stoop not to the evidence of the material senses. Jesus gave the proof that the world is not a world of material things, but is a world of thought-forms or divine ideas. Jesus proved that when we look beyond all material sense – beyond all limitations – to the facts of Mind, we express these facts instantly.

Jesus said, “The kingdom of God [meaning the kingdom of Mind] is at hand [within you]: repent ye” (Mark 1:15). And the Greek translation of the word ‘repent’ is to think differently or to have a change of viewpoint. These words of the Master are a continuing command to all of us to change the thought of ourselves and our world from a material sense to a spiritual sense.

Many persons believe that through physical science and invention we are entering an age of greater abundance of material things, better things, things that will come with little labor and less sweat of the brow. But these so-called things have always existed. They are divine ideas, even though still seen with material accompaniments. Our work as Christian Scientists is to see this infinitude of good without material accompaniments, through the translation of man and the universe back into Spirit.

Atomic Action

Our textbook tells us that “Mind creates His own likeness in ideas “(S&H 257:12). Therefore, every existing thing from a pin to an atomic bomb, when correctly understood, is, in its essence, substance and character, a form of thought or divine idea, an immediate object of Mind.

Listen to the emphatic statement from Mrs. Eddy on atomic action. She says, “Atomic action is Mind, not matter. It is neither the energy of matter, the result of organization, nor the outcome of life infused into matter: it is infinite Spirit, Truth, Life, defiant of error or matter” (Mis 190:1).

Are we, today, putting the power and might of God or Mind into its opposite, non-intelligent matter? Are we giving power and place and existence to so-called destructive forces? Is it energy in matter, is it the result of material organism, that forms a cancer or any other destructive forces? No. Many cases of cancer and many types of destructive forces are proved to be the self-destruction of error.

What was the reality of the seeming destructive force that we called the explosion of an atomic bomb? This seeming destructive force was the counterfeit of the might of omnipotence — the counterfeit of God’s spiritual movements. Mrs. Eddy says: “The manifestations of evil . . . show the self-destruction of error or matter and point to matter’s opposite, the strength and permanency of Spirit” (S&H 293:24). She also says, “The lens of Science magnifies the divine power to human sight; and we then see the supremacy of Spirit and the nothingness of matter” (Mis 194:16).

What to us seemed destruction from an atomic bomb, was, in fact, the power and might of Spirit, awakening the human race to its emancipation from the bondage of tyranny, ignorance and sin; and it was, in fact, a universal awakening to the certainty that war can be no more.

The hour has struck when we are being forced to understand the spiritual character, the universality, the omnipresence, the spacelessness, the timelessness, the instantaneity the weightlessness, the harmlessness of all so-called material things. Our world when viewed by the unilluminated mind is a vision of material things — all without and external to us. But this same world when viewed by the illumined mind — a mind illumined with the facts of divine Science — is found to be a world of thought-forms, or divine ideas, wholly mental and spiritual, wholly a world within.

Divine Ideas

When so-called material things are understood as divine ideas, then we have present, as divine ideas, the things which we need and desire, as readily as we have present the thought about the things which we need and desire. In the measure that our human thought is illumined with the divine ideas of God or Mind, we are conscious of the omnipresence, the availability, and the tangibility of these ideas, and we experience infinite good at hand, in the highest form that we can understand, and in the form that meets our human need.

When we are conscious of divine ideas and actively expressing them, we are substantially-minded, and this substantial dynamic thinking will appear as an abundance of what the human mind calls substance. We read that Job was the greatest of all men in the East, because his substance consisted of sheep and camels, oxen and asses. This material sense of substance was taken away from Job and he was miserable indeed. But when Job changed his materially-minded thinking to a spiritual viewpoint, and actively acknowledged God, Spirit, as the source and substance of his good, this change in Job's mentality excluded the sense of loss. And we read that "the Lord [or true consciousness] gave Job twice as much as he had before" (Job 42: 10).

Infinite Ideas Reproduces After Its Own Kind

Any divine idea is forever an infinite idea. It can never increase nor diminish. There is but one infinite idea that false sense interprets as material oil; but one infinite idea that false sense interprets as material meal; and so with fish and loaf. There is but one infinite idea to anything that we know humanly and materially.

At times, false sense may tell us there is a lessening, or a loss, or an absence of some certain thing. If we understand that this so-called thing is — not shall be — an infinite divine idea, and if we understand that the resuscitating law of Life is the seed within this idea, then this idea will reproduce, or bring forth, or exhibit anew after its own kind. And this increase, even though it may appear external to us, is wholly within our consciousness.

In the first chapter of Genesis, this fact is stated in this manner: "And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good" (Gen 1:12).

This principle — that everything is an infinite idea and reproduces after its own kind — is one of the most important principles set forth in the Bible. It is so vital that God or Mind is said to have used it on three of the six days of creation, and it is repeated six times in the first chapter of Genesis.

Elijah proves the infinitude of idea:

Oil and meal, when considered as material things, took on the qualities of materiality and failed. But oil and meal when considered as the ever-conscious, infinite ideas of Mind, reproduced after their own kind. This reproduction, even though these ideas had never ceased being full and complete, appeared to the human sense as an increased supply. To Elijah, whose mind was illumined with

spiritual divine ideas, all so-called material things as oil and meal were spiritual substance, they were infinite unfolding divine ideas. To the widow of Zarephath — an unilluminated mind — meal and oil were material and external to her thought, and she saw them as meager and spent. But when she changed her thought, and viewed meal and oil in their reality, what did she receive? Not gold and riches, but increase after his kind. (See I Kings 17:10-16). She received oil and meal, which was her highest sense of need and was the form she could understand.

Elisha proves the infinitude of idea:

The prophet Elisha was another illumined mentality who beheld all so-called material things as infinite divine ideas. When begged by the widow to save her sons from bondage, he asked: "What hast thou in the house?" And when told, nothing but a pot of oil, it was the oil that was increased, and her sons were saved. (II Kings 4:1-7).

Jesus proves the infinitude of idea:

When the multitude lacked for bread and the apostles asked Jesus what they should do, Jesus did not turn stones into bread, neither did he bring forth gold with which to buy bread. He asked: "How many loaves have ye?" And when told five loaves and two fishes, he based his increase upon their human sense of good at hand, and upon their human sense of need, which was something to eat — but wholly within their consciousness. Jesus did not take away from the unilluminated mind its meager sense and leave it with no sense of things. Jesus gave them a higher sense, or perception, of the everpresence, the availability, the tangibility and the instantaneity of infinite good, which was present all the time as divine ideas. (Mark 6: 34-44).

Christian Scientists prove the infinitude of idea:

Someone may say: "But *I* do not have even a meager sense of good." But students, since our world is the thoughts or ideas that constitute our consciousness, then it is our privilege to think the thoughts and ideas which we need or desire. And if we base these thoughts or ideas on divine Mind, and think them actively and vigorously, they have the seed within themselves which will reproduce as an abundance of what the human mind calls substance. The time is at hand when Christian Scientists by the thousands are thinking with the profundity of the divine Mind, without process, and are acquiring the objects of their thinking without delay and with the certainty of the divine Mind. Let us not limit or minimize our God-given ability to think and to receive the increase after its kind.

The Christian Science teacher, Mr. Bicknell Young, once said, "A table, an automobile, a house and all other things which appear to meet the needs of humanity today, are but a material limited sense of what is actually present as ideas of completeness, wholeness, satisfaction, ease — ideas which contribute to a perfect state of being. When understood as Mind manifested as ideas, and not as the material things they appear to be, these things will always bless us, always add to our comfort and well-being, and will always satisfy us.

Changing Our Viewpoint — Not Our World

Sir Arthur Eddington, the great physicist says, “Our senses make the world appear to us as it does. If we had different senses we would find ourselves in a different world.” Our world remains forever the same — the immediate expression of Mind. It is our viewpoint that needs to be changed. Our viewpoint colors our world and all that makes up our world. The whole tone of world conditions is affected accordingly as we view these seeming conditions through the lens of material sense or through the lens of spiritual sense.

Our textbook tells us, “Material sense defines all things materially, and has a finite sense of the infinite.”(S&H 208:2). It does seem that we are slow in putting off the material finite limited sense of the divine ideas that are appearing on the horizon of our present-day world — divine ideas that are substantial and eliminate time and space. These divine ideas symbolize the fourth dimension of thought, and express the universality, the weightlessness, the harmlessness, the immediateness of the infinite ideas of divine Mind.

When the hour struck, the human mind recognized these experiences as present possibilities. At the appointed time, the one Mind — expressed as the mind of the Wright brothers — unfolded in a degree these divine ideas in concrete visible tangible form that limited understanding called air transportation.

The completeness of these divine ideas that appeared then through the mists of material sense, is now appearing infinitely and universally. Each and every mentality is now awake to the fact that it is possible to be immediately at the shore. The hour has struck when the human manifestation of reality, or the Son of man, is seen coming in great power and glory without material accompaniments.

A short time ago, our most used air-route was not between New York and Chicago, nor between New York and Washington, but was over the highest mountain range in the world — the Himalayas. Here, the presence and activity of the divine Mind was expressing so much of divine substance that four traffic routes were in use over these mountains. The planes traveled at different altitudes to prevent collision and carried 50,000 tons per month. Students, this immediateness, and weightlessness, and universality are the divinely natural phenomena of divine Science.

Now another wonder is appearing on the world's horizon of thought — a weekly round-the-world air service. A flight of 23,431 miles in 6 1/2 days. What timelessness and weightlessness and immediateness is this! A short time ago, a pilot of many years' experience in air-service returned to our city having completed an advanced course in air science. A friend met this pilot and exclaimed: “Jack, with all your experience in air service, why should you be taking further training?” Jack replied: “Well, never before have been asked to lift the Commerce Trust Building into the air!” He was comparing the new super-plane to the Commerce Trust Building in size, weight and resistance.

It almost takes our breath away, until we remember that both the plane and the

building are within consciousness; both have the substance of Mind; both are weightless and without resistance and can be immediately where Mind wishes them to be. This is true, since matter only appears to have the qualities of weight, solidity and resistance. Nothing seems to have greater weight and solidity and resistance than a mountain, yet Jesus, speaking from the standpoint of Mind, said: “whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt . . . but shall believe . . . he shall have whatsoever he saith” (Mark 11:23).

The hour has struck when the human mind is saying “Timelessness, weightlessness, harmlessness and immediateness are at hand.” Those experiences are a present possibility, since they are qualities within our consciousness. The plane is wholly within our consciousness therefore accidents are an impossibility.

In all these things we are to turn from our limited material sense of things to divine Mind, to find all as ideas. Regardless of how useful and satisfying an airplane may be, we are to turn from this false limited appearance to Mind. Why? Because the qualities of usefulness and satisfaction and existence of what we call an airplane, are not out there not external to us — but are here, in our mentality as ideas — the immediate objects of Mind.

Mrs. Eddy says: “Science, understood, translates matter into Mind” (Mis 25:12). And again she says: “all must give place to the spiritual fact by the translation of man and the universe back into Spirit” (S&H 209:21). Translation does not mean to change matter into Mind. There is no matter; all is Mind. But it does mean to change our viewpoint; it means that we are to recognize that what we have been educated to call matter, is, instead, false thinking — beliefs that misstate Mind. This false thinking is nothing, is illusion, is supposition — like a mirage. And we are to translate this mistaken sense into a true spiritual sense of our universe.

Tangibility of Divine Ideas.

If, hitherto, we have devoted much time and effort towards attaining so-called material things that have appeared external to us, we may not be inclined to appreciate the value of divine ideas. We may think that since we cannot see an idea with our eyes, and feel it with our hands, that it is too transcendental for us. But, more and more, as we deal with divine ideas, we shall find that tangibility and visibility are qualities of divine Mind, and that the usefulness and beauty of the transcendental — the reality of God, man, nature, and the universe — are far beyond what our present limited view can comprehend.

When we say this material world will pass away, we do not mean that anything will pass away. Only the wrong, distorted, heavy sense of our world will pass away, and the true sense of our world will take its place. There will be no vacuum. For out of the true sense will spring forms of beauty and perfection all around us, and we shall see the world as God sees it — absolutely good. When we realize that inharmony is unreal, this will bring objects and things into human view in their true light and reveal them as harmonious and eternal.

“Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him” (I Cor 2:9). And with a confidence that comes with our present understanding of divine Science, we can say with our beloved Longfellow:

*“Out of the darkness and night,
The world moves into light;
It is daybreak everywhere.”*

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