

**September 19, 2005 – 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 selection this week is from PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE by Doris Grekel, C.S.

**PRINCIPLE AND PRACTICE  
FACT AND FANTASY  
WHAT IS REAL? II**

ONCE upon a time there was a handsome young prince who was the son of a great and glorious king. Now this king was exceedingly great and good, and he had the gift of eternal life. He wanted his son to grow up to rule with him, but to do that he must be as great and good as his father, so the king told his son the secret of eternal life: you may do anything you want freely with but one exception; if you touch the knowledge of good and evil, you will die.

A wicked hypnotist tried to usurp the king's throne, but he could not begin to unseat the king. In fact, he could not even get anywhere near him, because the king's great goodness repelled evil automatically as a magnet repels the wrong pole, and this surrounded him with an impenetrable armor of light. So the pretender started whispering to the young prince and his young wife.

Once he had their ear, the rest was easy. He told them that the prince was already as great as his father, and that a taste of the knowledge of good and evil would prove it. The young couple thought they might just examine it to see for themselves, but the minute they touched it they were in the power of the wicked one who was a master hypnotist. They began to see the suggestions he planted and thought they were real. Not only they, but their children after them became servants of this wicked usurper, and, under his enchantment, they all saw wickedness and sickness and evil and death which did not exist in all the king's domain.

Now the king had a second son who saw what the usurper had done to his brethren, and he said to his father, "I will go to save our people."

This second prince came to the king's children who were completely hypnotized and told them that the usurper was a liar and that all he said and did was a lie. He said to them, "Just believe my words and you will know the truth. The truth will break the trance and set you free."

But the people were still hypnotized and under the power of the wicked one, so they took the king's son and killed him. But this second son had not lost eternal life, because he had obeyed his Father and had not partaken of the knowledge of good and evil. So, even though they thought they had killed his body, he had the power to resurrect it. When he did this, the spell was broken, and the king's children began to remember the everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

They began to believe again in eternal life and in the kingdom and power and glory of the king. And they began seeking to regain this lost kingdom. But all this time the usurper kept whispering to them, and they didn't know it because he was invisible. He kept feeding them the knowledge of both good and evil, and, because he was invisible, they thought his suggestions were their own thoughts. So they went on seeing the things the hypnotist suggested to them, and because they thought these illusions were real, the glorious king and the everlasting kingdom seemed like a myth.

The truth seemed almost too good to believe, but they loved to tell the story. They told one another that the king's son came that they might have life and have it more abundantly, even eternally, so they would no more see death. Then the usurper whispered, "That is right, but that is not this life. That is another life in the hereafter. This life is mortal."

So the king's immortal children talked about eternal life, but they still believed they had to die before they could find it; and they talked about the king, but they still did not remember that they were his family.

Now the king's youngest child was a beautiful daughter, and she said, "Father, let me go to teach our people the truth. Let me tell them again the great secret, that they may choose the tree of life and refuse to touch the knowledge of good and evil. I will tell them who they are. I will tell them about the usurper and his lies, and the hypnotic trance they have been in. I will tell them what is illusion and what is real. And, Father, let me take them the sword of the kingdom."

So the king's daughter came to her brethren and said, "This is Life eternal. There is no other life some place else. This is my father's kingdom. He will not come back to retake it, because he has never lost it. You have been hypnotized by a lie and have been seeing illusions. But I bring you the great sword of the kingdom which is the Spirit of Truth. Take this weapon and keep it with you, always, for it will bring all things to your remembrance, and with it you can dispel all illusions. You need but touch its point to any appearance and instantly you will know whether it is real or illusion. And as you use this sword, you will begin to remember. You will remember that life is eternal and stop counting the number of times this planet circles its sun. You will remember who you are; you will remember that you are the royal family on this planet and the rightful heirs to the kingdom."

This is where we come into the story. Does this sound like a fairy tale? It is, but it comes closer to world history than can be found in history books. When we touch history with the sword of truth, it is seen to be a recitation of the lies of the usurper to the throne of God together with stories of what hypnotized people have done. It is the story of the knowledge of good and evil, the belief of material life, which begins with a lie and ends in death.

Though a lie has no substance nor reality, it is perpetuated as long as someone believes it. As long as we continue to believe in material death, we are perpetuating the lie of material life.

If we touch the Spirit of Truth to occultism and witchcraft, we come closer to the supposed throne of the usurper. The founder of theosophy wrote: "There would be no life possible (in our world of illusions) without death, nor regeneration and reconstruction without destruction." This is a succinct statement of all that opposes God: first, it is a world of illusion; secondly, it has no possibility of life; thirdly, it is based upon death and destruction. Evil has nothing of its own, so it preys upon the structures of good, first to destroy them, then to reconstruct from the rubble its own perversions.

The children of God who have been hypnotized into believing in death and destruction have given their life, which is eternal to the usurper, thus giving a semblance of life to the world of illusions. When these children waken to their identity, denounce death, and reclaim their eternal life here and now as a present reality, the world of illusions will collapse

In the light of the foregoing fairy tale, let us consider the following questions:

1. Who is the usurper? On page 16 of our textbook we read, "In the phrase, 'Deliver us from evil,' the original properly reads, 'Deliver us from the evil one.' This reading strengthens our scientific apprehension of the petition, for Christian Science teaches us that 'the evil one,' or one evil, is but another name for the first lie and all liars."

2. Is the evil one a hypnotist? Mrs. Eddy tells us in Prose Works that the name of all evil is malicious animal magnetism, which she reiterates in Science and Health: "Animal magnetism is the voluntary or involuntary action of error in all its forms." In the chapter, Animal Magnetism Unmasked, we find this phrase: "animal magnetism, recently called hypnotism."

3. How do we combat hypnotism? Mrs. Eddy has given us the first step in a lesson sermon read twice each year by Scientists around the globe: "Ancient and Modern Necromancy alias Mesmerism and Hypnotism Denounced." Our second step is to start differentiating between what is real and what is illusion "In no instance is the effect of animal magnetism, recently called hypnotism, other than the effect of illusion." We have two lesson sermon topics which specifically help us with this step; namely, "Reality," and "Unreality."

4. Is death real? We have all read the lesson sermon, "Are Sin, Disease, and Death Real?" and I am sure that we have answered in the negative. But do we always believe the correct answer? In considering the question is death real? let us start with the fact of eternal life as in the fairy tale. Anyone who is hypnotized sees, and acts upon, the suggestions of the hypnotist, although the audience knows there is nothing there. If the immortal children of the immortal king are hypnotized into believing that they are mortals, they will see death, because the word mortal means destined to die. But here Christian Science states the fact that mortal existence is a dream. "Life is real, and death is the illusion."

This leads us to the question, What is real? The student of the science of mathematics who commits arithmetical facts to memory and practices them regularly, applying his knowledge earnestly and consistently, solves problems with ease and seeks higher knowledge with which to solve

greater problems. The more he learns and practices, the more glaring and obvious all errors become.

The Science of being is no different. Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures contains the complete answer to the question, What is real?, and, as we commit the facts to memory and apply them earnestly and consistently, we solve problems with greater and greater ease. Errors become increasingly glaring, and as in the practice of mathematics, just as obviously illusion, – nothing more than a miscalculation with no substance nor reality.

As we earnestly study to learn what is real, we must learn the great fact “that man *is*, not *shall be*, perfect and immortal.” The facts we make our own lead to greater understanding, and the question, What is real? becomes Who is real? The king’s children are waking to their identity. Mrs. Eddy tells us that the chief cornerstone is that Christian Science casts out error, heals the sick, and restores the lost Israel.”

The purpose of the Hebrew Allegory, representing error as assuming a divine character, is to teach mortals never to believe a lie.

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