

October 20, 2003 - Subject: Probation After Death

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 MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS by Mary Baker Eddy.

PROSPECTUS

The ancient Greek looked longingly for the Olympiad. The Chaldee watched the appearing of a star; to him, no higher destiny dawned on the dome of being than that foreshadowed by signs in the heavens. The meek Nazarene, the scoffed of all scoffers, said, "Ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?" — for he forefelt and foresaw the ordeal of a perfect Christianity, hated by sinners.

To kindle all minds with a gleam of gratitude, the new idea that comes welling up from infinite Truth needs to be understood. The seer of this age should be a sage.

Humility is the stepping-stone to a higher recognition of Deity. The mounting sense gathers fresh forms and strange fire from the ashes of dissolving self, and drops the world. Meekness heightens immortal attributes only by removing the dust that dims them. Goodness reveals another scene and another self seemingly rolled up in shades, but brought to light by the evolutions of advancing thought, whereby we discern the power of Truth and Love to heal the sick.

Pride is ignorance; those assume most who have the least wisdom or experience; and they steal from their neighbor, because they have so little of their own.

The signs of these times portend a long and strong determination of mankind to cleave to the world, the flesh, and evil, causing great obscuration of Spirit.

When we remember that God is just, and admit the total depravity of mortals, alias mortal mind, — and that this Adam legacy must first be seen, and then must be subdued and recompensed by justice, the eternal attribute of Truth, — the outlook demands labor, and the laborers seem few. Today we behold but the first faint view of a more spiritual Christianity, that embraces a deeper and broader philosophy and a more rational and divine healing. The time approaches when divine Life, Truth, and Love will be found alone the remedy for sin, sickness, and death; when God, man's saving Principle, and Christ, the spiritual idea of God, will be revealed.

Man's probation after death is the necessity of his immortality; for good dies not and evil is self-destructive, therefore evil must be mortal and self-destroyed. If man should not progress after death, but should remain in error, he would be inevitably selfannihilated. Those upon whom "the second death hath no power" are those who progress here and hereafter out of evil, their mortal element, and into good that is immortal; thus laying off the material beliefs that war against Spirit, and putting on the spiritual elements in divine Science.

While we entertain decided views as to the best method for elevating the race physically, morally, and spiritually, and shall express these views as duty demands, we shall claim no especial gift from our divine origin, no supernatural power. If we regard good as more natural than evil, and spiritual understanding — the true knowledge of God — as imparting the only power to heal the sick and the sinner, we shall demonstrate in our lives the power of Truth and Love.

The lessons we learn in divine Science are applicable to all the needs of man. Jesus taught them for this very purpose; and his demonstration hath taught us that “through his stripes” — his life-experience — and divine Science, brought to the understanding through Christ, the Spirit-revelator, is man healed and saved.

No opinions of mortals nor human hypotheses enter this line of thought or action. Drugs, inert matter, never are needed to aid spiritual power. Hygiene, manipulation, and mesmerism are not Mind’s medicine. The Principle of all cure is God, unerring and immortal Mind. We have learned that the erring or mortal thought holds in itself all sin, sickness, and death, and imparts these states to the body; while the supreme and perfect Mind, as seen in the truth of being, antidotes and destroys these material elements of sin and death.

Because God is supreme and omnipotent, materia medica, hygiene, and animal magnetism are impotent; and their only supposed efficacy is in apparently deluding reason, denying revelation, and dethroning Deity. The tendency of mental healing is to uplift mankind; but this method perverted, is “Satan let loose.” Hence the deep demand for the Science of psychology to meet sin, and uncover it; thus to annihilate hallucination.

Thought imbued with purity, Truth, and Love, instructed in the Science of metaphysical healing, is the most potent and desirable remedial agent on the earth.

At this period there is a marked tendency of mortal mind to plant mental healing on the basis of hypnotism, calling this method “mental science.” All Science is Christian Science; the Science of the Mind that is God, and of the universe as His idea, and their relation to each other. Its only power to heal is its power to do good, not evil.

Our other selection is from— [John Lawrence Sinton’s — HARROGATE SUMMER SCHOOL— 1952](#). For a short biography of Mr. Sinton please [click here](#).

Let us consider it [the twenty-third Psalm] according to Mrs. Eddy’s elucidation on page 578 of Science and Health. “[DIVINE LOVE] is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Why? Cause every thought is under the guidance and direction of one controlling Mind.

“[LOVE] maketh me to lie down in green pastures: [LOVE] leadeth me beside the still waters” -the still waters of reflection. “As in water face answereth to face” (Pro. 27:19), so is there the same correspondence between Principle and idea. So the tone of Love reflecting Spirit enables one to “lie down in green pastures,” it provides one effortlessly with true substance, it brings one to the waters of quiet reflection.

Then, reflecting the tone of Soul: “[LOVE] restoreth my soul [spiritual sense].”

And reflecting the tone of Principle: “[LOVE] leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.” Those “paths of righteousness” denote integrity, uprightness. Then reflecting the tone of Life: “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for [LOVE is with me; [LOVE’s] rod and [LOVE’S] staff they comfort me.” There is no fear there. We have not yet read the definition of “valley” in the Glossary, which is as follows:

“VALLEY. Depression; meekness; darkness.”

You see it is a mixed state of thought. Then the definition quotes this verse and continues:

“Though the way is dark in mortal sense, divine Life and Love illumine it, destroy the unrest of mortal thought, the fear of death, and the supposed reality of error. Christian Science, contradicting sense, maketh the valley to bud and blossom as the rose” (596:20-27).

So divine Love reflecting Life enables one to walk through the valley of the shadow of death and to fear no evil.

And now we come to the tone of Love reflecting Truth:

“[LOVE] prepareth a table before me in the presence of mine enemies:” —the awakening to the full significance of this shows that we have no enemies; the only possible enemies are either the creations of personal sense in our own thought, or they are infiltrations from involuntary mortal mind:— “[LOVE] anointeth my head with oil; my cup runneth over.”

Finally we have fulfilment, the closing tone of Love reflecting Love: “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life;” —those days are not measured by the calendar; they are days of ascendant consciousness;— “ and I will dwell in the house [the consciousness] of [LOVE] for ever.”

We see how in this lovely Psalm divine Love is the governing term, but the development of it is according to the tones of the days of Genesis, or, if we prefer, according to the tones of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, and Love, Once we see that, we find that Mrs. Eddy employs the same method of presentation throughout her writings. We find that this is true in the first chapter of the textbook, “Prayer,” in the second, “Atonement and Eucharist,” indeed, in every chapter. Sometimes there are variations, sometimes the pattern is exactly as we see it in the twenty-third Psalm; but basically it is the same idea or method.’

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