

October 27, 2003 - Subject: Everlasting Punishment

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: "TALKS given by John W. Dooly on the SCIENCE OF THE BIBLE —Volume three. Our second selection is from: TALKS given by John W. Dooly on the SCIENCE OF THE BIBLE —Volume four.

We must see this story in its symbolism. If you present the Bible to men historically, they won't have anything to do with it. So don't get this story of Moses and Pharaoh merely historically. Historically it is of little value, but what Moses represents spiritually and how he illustrates the way to deal with various phases of error is another proposition altogether, and concerns every one of us. There had arisen a Pharaoh who "knew not Joseph," and that imply meant that the Israelites in their own thinking had accepted the beliefs of Egypt—ignorance, superstition, false gods. This becomes evident as we go on. The Pharaoh who "knew not Joseph" was in their own thinking. That is what Moses had to deal with.

Woman Saves the Situation

And then you remember that the Pharaoh told the midwives that they were to kill every man-child (Ex. 1:15, 16). Mrs. Eddy once wrote in a message that the Christian Science movement needed the man thought very much. One of the dangers to Christian Science always has been that it is considered a woman's religion; it *is* the religion of *woman*, but *not* of *females*. And so the Pharaoh always sees just as later on Herod saw—that if you can destroy the man-child you destroy the beginning of everything. The man-child represents the creative sense, "Let there be light," so if you can destroy the man-child you will destroy everything. Eventually it is the woman sense that conceives and gives birth, but if you can destroy the man-child, the creative sense, then there is no beginning whatever. The Pharaoh always sees that. Well, what saved the situation? The midwives—that is, the woman sense—saved the situation.

Immediately after that, you get the story of the birth of and how his mother saved him. "And there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi. And the women conceived, and bare a son: and when she saw him that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months" (Ex. 2:12)—she resurrected her whole sense of him. The father of Moses doesn't come into the picture at all. Later on they say who he was in a record of generation (Ex. 6:20), but he doesn't count very much. His mother put Moses in an ark (Ex. 2: 3); the word for "ark" is the same word as is used for Noah's ark. His sister watched to see what would happen, and then Pharaoh's daughter saved him (Ex. 2: 4, 5). So that woman sense which Joseph had established came to the rescue again. You see how the three women—his mother, his sister, and Pharaoh's daughter—all saved the situation.

We are considering Soul as Soul, and the minute you touch that, you begin to get not only the creative sense but also the sense of that which is identified with its Principle; immediately, you touch the Christ sense—Soul, Principle, and Life. Then Moses was driven out of Egypt, according to the record. He had to leave it.

He just couldn't stay there. You also come to A point where you can't stay in Egypt. In any subject where you have to think, you come to a point where your thinking goes past a certain point, and then you can't stay there and you have to go on. And so Moses went on, and he went to Midian, and again the situation was taken care of for him by the womanhood sense—the seven daughters of the priest of Midian.

What we must see is this: the important thing isn't Moses, it isn't Jacob, it isn't Abraham, but it is the development of the spiritualized idea. "Christ's Christianity is the chain of scientific being reappearing in all ages, maintaining it's obvious correspondence with the Scriptures and uniting all periods in the design of God" (S&H 271:1-5) Now, that order which we call the operation of the Christ is going on all the time. Divine Principle is forever declaring, "I am Life, I am Truth, I am Love" and through Soul, Spirit, and Mind is forever translating itself in the only way it can translate itself—from the Word to the Christ, from the Christ to Christianity and from Christianity to Science. It is forever translating itself through Soul; diversifying, classifying, and individualizing that translation as Spirit; and manifesting it infinitely as infinite idea in Mind. That is going on irresistibly all the time, and that is the Christ-idea forever reappearing, and in Christianity it is demonstrated. So "Christ's Christianity is the chain of scientific being reappearing in all ages.

So the time came when Moses went into Midian, and there he came upon the seven daughters of the priest; they were just a type of perfect womanhood. They found a home for him at once.

Moses Keeps the Flock

Well then, you remember that Moses "kept the flock of Jethro his father in law." There seems to be a feeling that Jethro knew something about God, and that Moses got some sense of God from him and he was tending it—he was watching his flock. You know we can learn so much from this.

"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb" (Ex. 3:1). You see the Christ-idea is forever operating. You don't have to use it: you have only to let it use you, if you are watching. "Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law." The shepherds were "keeping watch over their flock by night" (Luke 2: 8). Jesus said, "What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch" (Mark 13: 37). What does "watching" mean? It means thinking intelligently, and seeing that we use that thinking.

And so you see how the time came when Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law. And the time has come when we must all think coherently, we must think intelligently, we must think persistently in the realm of reality, and we must always be thinking—praying "without ceasing" (I Thess. 5:17)—because there is no real prayer but spiritual thinking. And so in ever thing we do in our lives we want exactness we want Science. We want the Science of reality that is always with us. Mathematics is always with us. If you are a musician, music is always with you. We want the Science of reality that is always with us and that is absolutely natural to us. Think what life will be when the Science of reality becomes perfectly natural to us, when it just hums in our thought, as mathematics and music and engineering do in the thought of the people who really love them and consecrate their time to them. Only when that happens shall we have real demonstration. At that point we won't use it, but it will use us, and that is the descent of the Holy Ghost.

When we try to use Science, it is objective, but when we let it use us it is subjective, the descent of the Holy Ghost, “the development of eternal Life, Truth, and Love” (S&H 588:7-8).

The Rod

All the way through this story you notice so much about the rod, and I want you to consider it carefully.

The rod comes in a great Deal in connection with Moses, and it is a means of measurement and everything must measure up to it. Mrs. Eddy gives a beautiful sense of the rod when she says, “Sweet, indeed, are these uses of rod! Well it is that the Shepherd of Israel passes all His flock under His rod into His fold; thereby numbering them, and giving them refuge at last from the elements of earth” (Mis 9:4-8). You will see that at first, during the plagues of Egypt, Aaron used the rod, and then later Moses used it. That rod rises higher and higher as a symbol for each one of us, as we understand more and more. Its purpose is to make things measure up. It is able to analyze the physical as the physical; it is able to lead you into the second degree the moral; and then it is able to lead you even further—into the third degree, annihilation—because it makes everything measure up. It deals intelligently with the carnal mind. If you are not watching your thought doesn’t measure up.

When one stresses the scientific aspect of Christian Science, one sometimes hears people say, “Oh it is making it so difficult, because it’s making it so exact.” Is it intelligent to believe that you must spend a lifetime consistently, persistently, and meticulously studying any human subject, such mathematics or music, but that you can gush and be emotional about the Science of infinite reality, the vastest thing in the world? It is pathetic and childish to believe such a thing. That is the belief that must be broken down, and it is the rod that is going to break it down. “Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me” (Ps. 23:4); as you use the rod, that measuring rod, it will become to you a staff, and it will comfort you.

The Three Signs

And then you remember how Moses was given three signs. He was first told to cast his rod on the ground, and it became a serpent and he fled before it (see Ex. 4: 2, 3). When you begin to cast the rod of material sense, the rod which involves sin and penalty, on the ground, you see the enormity of physical belief and so you flee before it. But wisdom bids you come back and handle that belief, and nothing will tell you to do that but wisdom; evil wouldn’t tell you to come back and handle it, because evil is always saying, “Let us alone.”

Next, Moses put his hand into his bosom and it came out white with leprosy, and then he put it back and it was restored to its normal condition (Ex. 4:6, 7). You begin to see that sickness and disease are just mental propositions. And then you come to the third proof, the wonderful third proof, where you take the water of life, and you pour it on the dry state of consciousness, and it becomes blood—it becomes vital (see Ex. 4: 9). “Yet in my flesh shall I see God” (Job 19: 26).

Someone asked me the other day why Mrs. Eddy didn’t say anything about the third proof in her statement about this story. Well, as a matter of fact, she does. She gives a wonderful interpretation of it. Let’s see what she says about all three signs. “The Hebrew Lawgiver, slow of speech, despaired of making the people understand what should be revealed to him.

When, led by wisdom to cast down his rod, he saw it become a serpent, Moses fled before it” —we all do. When we begin to see the physical as the physical, we begin to see the enormity of it, the hideousness of it, and how it must be got rid of, and then we are apt to flee before it. “. . .but wisdom bade him come back and handle the serpent, and then Moses’ fear departed. In this incident was seen the actuality of Science. Matter was shown to be a belief only.

The serpent, evil, under wisdom’s bidding, was destroyed through understanding divine Science, and this proof was a staff upon which to lean. The illusion of Moses lost its power to alarm him when he discovered that what he apparently saw was really but a phase of mortal belief.” The rod, which Moses had at that point, was just beginning to be a measuring rod. The rod of mortal mind is that which beats us, that which is penalty and cruelty and so on, but the rod of God is the measuring rod that makes everything come up to standard. As Moses began to see that, he cast on the ground his *old* sense of the rod—”dust to dust, ashes to ashes”—and then he saw that it was a serpent. He saw that it was the first degree of mortal mind, the physical, and he fled before it, but you don’t get rid of the physical by fleeing before it or by casting it on the ground: you get rid of it through analysis, and then you must go on to uncover and annihilate it.

“It was scientifically demonstrated that leprosy was a creation of mortal mind and not a condition of matter, when Moses first put his hand into his bosom and drew it forth white as snow with the dread disease, and presently restored his hand to its natural condition by the same simple process. God had lessened Moses’ fear by this proof in divine Science, and the inward voice became to him the voice of God, which said: ‘It shall come to pass, if they will not believe thee, neither hearken to the voice of the first sign, that they will believe the voice of the latter sign.’ And so it was in the coming centuries, when the Science of being was demonstrated by Jesus, who showed his students the power of Mind by changing water into wine and taught them how to handle serpents unharmed, to heal the sick and cast out evils in proof of the supremacy of Mind” (S&H 321:6-2). “*By changing water into wine*”—that was the third sign shown to Moses. Moses saw that he was to take the water of the river and pour it on the dry state of consciousness till it became inspiration. Jesus changed the water into wine, which is also a symbol of Life, of inspiration.

Now Moses was given those three signs because he was tending his thoughts, and because he was tending his thoughts his rod became a measuring rod, and as his rod became a measuring rod —he was not only able to cast the rod of material sense on the ground, but he was able to heal the sick, and to show signs—that is, give proof of his understanding. All the way through it was the rod, which enabled him to show signs, but when we rise to the highest sense of the rod, it is the third sign—a sense of Science, that so measures things that there is nothing left but Science. If you have a measuring rod that is accurate, you can get rid of everything that is not accurate.

“A Copy of the Law of Moses”: Life as Principle

Then you come to the tone of Life as Principle: “Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel in mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the Lord commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones,” -the tone of Principle,—”over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the Lord, and sacrificed peace offerings”—the laying down of the mortal concept. And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel” (Josh. 8:30-32) Well, of course, it is very questionable whether at that time they had any alphabet at all, but it is simply a symbol. What does the law of Moses symbolize to you and me? We saw that the Ten Commandments of Moses were a perfect symbolization of the Word and the Christ. We have just seen how through Life as Spirit the wall of Jericho—the Jericho in you and me and in all the world—fell down, and how in Life as Soul the tares were burnt and the wheat gathered into the barn, and now we come to this one of Life as Principle with the writing upon the stones—a symbol of the divine infinite calculus—of the Commandments of Moses which tell the story of the Word and the Christ.

When we look at the seven days of creation from the focal point of Life, you have the climax of the Word, but it is developing into the tone of the Christ. When you look at the seven days of creation from the focal point of Truth, you have the tone of the Christ, but it is developing into Christianity. When you look at the seven days of creation from the focal point of Love, you have the tone of Christianity, but it is developing into Science. And so here at this focal point of Life you have the Commandments, the law of Moses, which are the perfect tale of the Word and the Christ written on the stones. “There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them” (Josh. 8: 35)...

...The Spiritual Significance of the BOOK of JOSHUA

Now, what does this Book of Joshua mean to you and me? To take it as actual history is just ridiculous, because none of it is accurate, and it was not written for that purpose. It was written, probably about 900 or 800 years after the incidents recorded, by the great inspired prophets of Israel, who used them as symbols of the spiritual tones which permeate the whole Bible, just as the notes in music are used in sonatas and oratorios and so on to express the system of music in beauty and harmony.

The Book of Joshua means to you and me and all mankind the crossing of the Jordan in every detail of human experience, and the crossing of the Jordan symbolizes that point in Soul where translation takes place in some degree from the “wilderness” to the Promised Land sense of things, and we begin to gain an even clearer sense of the Christ.

That’s what Joshua means to you and me in every detail of human experience, and its symbols are ordered and definite. You and I, every minute of our lives, have to use this sense of crossing the Jordan and entering the Promised Land. We have to use it intelligently in times of sickness, sin, poverty, world trouble, and we have to use it morning, noon, and night.

As we do, we are using the nature of God as Soul, —some measure of the nature of Soul reflecting Principle and some measure of the nature of Soul reflecting Life.

What we are really doing, as we have often seen, is learning in infinite detail and through infinite symbols the nature of the “incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle. Life.

Truth. Love” (S&H 465: 9-10), and we are learning of it in order to think in the realm of the calculus of divine ideas —ideas which are power, intelligence, wisdom, law, being, and so on, and which are the very presence and power of the Christ-idea. The Bible illustrates those ideas in manifold ways. Taken historically, it is of no practical value to us, but when we know our tools, we can *use* the spiritual ideas symbolized in the Bible.

We’ve got to know our tools if we are going to present the Science of the Bible intelligently to mankind. To give them “high-brow” metaphysics is a waste of time. The “platoons of Christian Science must be “thoroughly drilled in the plainer manual of their spiritual armament” (Un. 6:25-27). They must understand the days of creation, and see them swell into the numerals of inspired thought, and see those numerals of inspired thought become embosomed in the synonymous terms for God: they must learn how the synonymous terms combine and reflect each other infinitely. Then they will have an intelligent sense of their tools.

It is that cultured sense of the fundamental “root-notions of reality which has enabled us to consider the six books of the Hexateuch intelligently, because the Bible is laid out according to the “seed-plot” in the first chapter of Genesis. Remember, you can’t understand these things unless you love Truth and are willing to consecrate your life to Truth, and unless you desire not only to *get* Truth but also to *give* it to your fellow man, because Truth is individual, collective, and universal. Unless you have that sense which Paul had,— that he was under bonds to preach Christ —the world won’t listen.

Of course, we need to go over and over these six books at the beginning of the Bible, because we have only had time just to touch them. We need to go over them and ponder them and dwell with them and think about them until our thought becomes so enriched that in our daily experience we see the crossing of the Jordan and the entrance into the Promised Land. The spiritual ideas symbolized in the Bible are scientific, and they are irresistible. They are Immanuel, “God with us,” and they operate infinitely.

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