

# Weekly Lesson Citations

DEAR FRIENDS: We plan to use this spot on our web page to bring you a different set of citations each week—expanding on specific citations from the “Weekly Lesson.” A paraphrase can so often open thought to new insights of familiar statements. In this way we hope to share with you some of the wonderful work that has been done in Christian Science over the past fifty years and in to the present by authors you may or may not have yet met.

Our only selection this week corresponds to the story of Esther given in the Lesson. It is from Gordon Brown's Book— FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION.

May 28, 2001

Subject: Ancient and Modern

Necromancy, alias Mesmerism and Hypnotism, Denounced

## FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION

### ESTHER

The idea of our spiritual centre having been established in Ezra, and its complementary circumference in Nehemiah, we come to Esther where the two are one—where we are each a “star” in the firmament of heaven, embodying by reflection all other stars. Because spiritual individuality reflects the oneness and wholeness of Being, it is simultaneously at the centre and circumference of its universe.

Israel's Esther is the positive fact of which Babylon's Ishtar and Phoenicia's Ashtaroth are negative fables. Both Ishtar and Ashtaroth are representatives of the same mother goddess of fertility. Esther is surely the spiritual idea of woman, the true queen of heaven, royally crowned with her circle of twelve stars, whereby the elimination of all Israel's enemies is accomplished.

Esther, as we have already noted, is the only book in the Bible which does not use the word God. Is this because, in its spiritual meaning, it concerns the infinite Science of ideas, which is God?

Understood metaphysically, the story is about Christ and his body, or bride, which is generic man. Christ, the universal head, rules over Christianity, his own universal body. As portrayed by queen Esther, “Christianity, with the crown of Love upon her brow,” must henceforth be Israel's “queen of life” (S & H 451:6).

The characters in the story are Ahasuerus the Persian king, Vashti his disobedient (Persian) queen, Esther his obedient (Jewish) queen, Mordecai, Esther's guardian, and Haman, an Amalekite descendant of king Agag, who is the enemy of all Israel.

In her relationship with mankind, Israel cannot possibly be the exclusive custodian of scientific truth. In the present story (as was the case with king Cyrus), Persia's Ahasuerus typifies the all-ruling, all-beneficent Christ, or Truth. Vashti, his Persian queen, is rebellious humanity—a body at variance with its governing head. Esther, his Jewish queen, is humanity as it really is—Christ's true body, or bride. Mordecai, whose name means “little man,” is every one of us individually constituting, individually caring for, not only the Christ-body but also its governing head. Haman is personal vanity and egotism, the sworn enemy of this truly integral idea of man.

There is evidence that the story unfolds in the Christianity order of the synonymous terms for God: Principle, Mind, Soul, Spirit, Life, Truth, Love. Opening on a note of Principle, with the statement of Ahasuerus' excellent majesty and glorious kingdom, it ends on a note of Principle, where Mordecai, each little man, is promoted to a position of such greatness and worth that he is one with the king himself. This indicates the cyclic nature of the Christianity order - that it ranges from Principle to Love and from Love back to Principle. Our present reading is that the text presents the following twelvefold circle of tones: Principle, Mind, Soul, Spirit, Life, Truth, Love, Truth, Life, Spirit, Soul, Mind. At this point of Mind thought has returned once more to the Principle where it originates.

## The flow from Principle to Love

Ahasuerus' glorious kingdom reaches "from India even unto Ethiopia" This description is more universal than anything we have heard of before. Having displayed to his subjects the marvellous riches of his kingdom, the king holds a feast for all the people, which lasts seven days. Arrangements are such that "none did compel." Except that Vashti is commanded to wear the crown royal, and to appear before the king, participation is voluntary- it is "according to every man's pleasure." But Vashti refuses to obey her husband the king. Interpreted spiritually, she refuses to accede to the demands of Principle regarding the crowning of generic man.

Disobedience to Principle implies that there is more than one mind. And here we arrive at the heart of the message. Ahasuerus says, in effect, 'This is a serious matter. If the queen disobeys the king, this means that at the centre of being the body is in revolt against its own unity. This will have disruptive repercussions throughout the circumference-wives everywhere will rise in revolt against their husbands.' Ahasuerus must therefore rid himself of Vashti, and find a queen who is loyal and obedient.

Paul writes in Ephesians, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body" (Eph 5:22). The spiritual wedlock of Christ and his church is according to the law that all men have one Mind. This law says that whatever happens at the centre of being is reflected in everything that takes place at the circumference.

A tone of Soul comes when the true wife, Esther, is identified. Ahasuerus weds Esther, and sets the crown royal upon her head. At the same time Mordecai makes his appearance. Mordecai is not only Esther's legal guardian, but to ensure that no harm comes to Ahasuerus either, he also sits in the gate of the king. As "a dewdrop reflects the sun," so each of Christ's "little ones," in reflecting the "infinite One," permits neither his sense of Christ, the head, to be violated, nor his sense of Christianity, the body (Pul 4:14). Clearly it is impossible to guard the queen without, at the same time, guarding the king.

In a tone of Spirit, it becomes imperative to separate between all that the selfless Mordecai represents, and the selfishness, vanity, and egotism which is Haman. Mordecai will have no dealings with Haman. He seems not even to acknowledge Haman's presence. This is such a blow to Haman's pride that Haman plots revenge. The textbook teaches: "This thought of human, material nothingness, which Science inculcates, enrages the carnal mind and is the main cause of the carnal mind's antagonism" (S&H 345:28).

Haman's rage and antagonism is such that he seeks the destruction of all Jews everywhere - all those who are "scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of [Ahasuerus'] kingdom." What he seeks, in the tone of Life, is the destruction of all the little individual Mordecais who, in reflecting the central unity of the king and queen, make up the universal circumference of being, and look upon Haman as human, material nothingness.

So long as Israel is scattered and dispersed she is vulnerable. Whereas, when parts are held together by the whole of which they are the parts, these parts are invulnerable. In a tone of Truth, Mordecai explains to Esther how she must intercede with the king on behalf of all the Jews whom Haman seeks to destroy. Unless she thus becomes their saviour, she herself will not escape destruction, Unless the body works together as one whole body, the body itself is in danger.

In a tone of Love, it is brought to the king's notice how, on account of his constant watchfulness, Mordecai once saved the king's life. For this the king decides to honour Mordecai. Haman thinks it is himself, Haman, whom the king delighteth to honour. The opposite is the case. Haman is compelled to array Mordecai in royal apparel, to set on his head the crown royal, and to lead him in triumph through the streets.

## The flow from Love to Principle

From the tone of Love, in which Mordecai is triumphant and Haman is humiliated, we return to Truth again. At a banquet given by Esther, Haman seeks even to violate the majesty of the queen. He is the exact opposite of the faithful Mordecai who would preserve her body whole and intact. For his treachery, Ahasuerus hangs Haman on the very gallows which Haman had erected for Mordecai. Thus, "The only power of evil is to destroy itself. It can never destroy one iota of good" (S & H 186:19). This self-destruction of evil suggests an underlying tone of Life.

On a note of Spirit, the king decrees that Israel shall destroy all her enemies everywhere instead of herself being destroyed. This is the opposite of everything Haman intended. The king says to Esther and to Mordecai: "Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse." Evil cannot reverse the dictum of Spirit that good (represented by Israel) is all, and evil (represented by Haman) is naught. The decree is published in every language of the king's province, so that all may understand.

Soul thus reverses the testimony of the senses. Everything Haman sought to do is turned to the contrary, for "the king granted the Jews which were in every city to gather themselves together. . . to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them."

The feast of Purim, or feast of lots, that follows, indicates a Mind tone. Every generation, every family, every province, every city, is commanded to remember forever their victory over their enemy, Haman, who had cast Pur, that is, the lot, to consume them, and to destroy them." Israel is indestructible only to the extent that she is of one Mind. Haman was steeped in superstition. He drew lots in order to discover the propitious moment for destroying the Jews. This is no part of the intelligent activity of Israel's all-comprehending parent Mind.

Returning again to Principle, the greatness of Mordecai, the little man, is established next to the king. "And all the acts of his power and of his might, and the declaration of the greatness of Mordecai, whereunto the king advanced him, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Media and Persia? For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews."

Jews, in the spiritual sense, are not a God-chosen nation superior to other nations; a "Jew" is that spiritual quality in .individual man (Mordecai) which chooses Principle instead of person to govern him.

Mordecai, who is every little man, and Esther the queen, who is the whole body of little men, are one with king Ahasuerus, the body's governing head. The conclusion which emerges from these symbols is that "each of Christ's little ones reflects the infinite One, and therefore is the seer's declaration true, that 'one on God's side is a majority' "(Pul 4:14). The I, or Ego, of each little one is the infinite One itself, as Jesus will fully demonstrate.

As far as the Scriptural narrative is concerned, the next recorded happening following the triumph of Mordecai, is the nativity of Christ Jesus at the opening of the New Testament. But before we reach this epoch-making event there are the Wisdom books and the Prophets to be considered. Surely Esther, the star, is the "daystar of divine Science" (S&H vii:11), on which Israel's Sages, the authors of her Wisdom literature, orient their spiritual position, and which, in the form of the teachings of the sixteen Prophets, guides them at last to the manger of Jesus.