

September 1, 2003—Subject: Man

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 JOHN LAWRENCE SINTON'S—HARROGATE SUMMER SCHOOL—1952. For a brief biography of John Lawrence Sinton, [click here](#).

“GETHSEMANE. Patient woe; the human yielding to the divine; love meeting no response, but still remaining love” (586:23-25).

Why “meeting no response”? Because the disciples were not yet able to watch. They fled under pressure. So his watching was alone with Principle. You notice the use of the term “love” with a small “l,” denoting the complete and utter selflessness that lays down the mortal concept. It was because of this that the malice which would destroy him failed utterly, and that which was indestructible emerged into the resurrection and continued this ascending concept of demonstration until finally there was no material evidence left, and Jesus was no longer cognizant to the senses.

I should have mentioned that there is a positive side to the definition of Jerusalem in two words, “Home, heaven.” But the first portion of the definition, which is entirely negative, is so important to understand; and once we see the significance of the closing phase of Jesus’ career, —namely, the journey up to Jerusalem, —we see why this term appears in the Glossary as it does. It is the laying off of the mortal selfhood which takes one from Jerusalem to Gethsemane, and finally to the resurrection. And resurrection, we saw, is defined as “Spiritualization of thought; a new and higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence.” What was it that came to light in the resurrection? It was the great fact that man as identity is never born into matter and does not have to die out of it. From the moment we begin to Christianize consciousness in accordance with this concept of resurrection, we are beginning to overcome the claim of death. The claim of death is not a question to be faced when we are seventy or eighty years old the claim of death is hypnotism, mesmerism, sleep. You remember the Psalmist’s prayer: “lighten mine eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death” (Ps.13:3). So from our first moment of spiritual enlightenment, if we will only keep spiritual sense active and patiently push on to higher concepts of understanding and demonstration, from that very moment we begin to overcome death. Let us see that the time to cope with it is now, not thirty or so years hence.

This “higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence” that comes to light is hinted at in another passage in *Miscellaneous Writings*, where it is linked with Jesus’ nativity: “Christ Jesus’ sense of matter was the opposite of that which mortals entertain: his nativity was a spiritual and immortal sense of the ideal world” (74:13-15). There we have the idea of pre-existence, an idea of which Jesus never lost consciousness for one moment of his human career. It was this consciousness of his pre-existence that was the source of his power. We have two parallel references, again in *Miscellaneous Writings*. First: “Mortals will lose their sense of mortality—disease, sickness, sin, and death—in the proportion that they gain the sense of man’s spiritual pre-existence as God’s child; as the offspring of good, and not of God’s opposite,—evil, or a fallen man” (181:25-30).

Through this continuous process of spiritualization, we become increasingly conscious of ourselves as identity idea; and as we take up that position and refuse to let it go, as we watch that we hold it, so little by little we “gain the sense of man’s spiritual pre-existence,” and correspondingly we lose our sense of mortality. This is the only way we shall ever overcome “the sleep of death,” the hypnotism of it. It is not a violent mental struggle years ahead; the time is now through the spiritualization of consciousness.

The second reference reads: “The meek Nazarene’s steadfast and true knowledge of pre-existence, of the nature and the inseparability of God and man,—made him mighty” (189:8-10). So we see that resurrection is a continuous process, that from the moment of the quickening of our sense, we begin to resurrect ourselves. From this comes this ultimate translation “material belief yielding to spiritual understanding.”

In the same category we have the term “rock” as a type of Truth. It is defined in the Glossary as follows:

“Rock. Spiritual foundation; Truth. Coldness and stubbornness” (593:18-19).

Throughout the Psalms we have examples of the Christ as the rock. In Numbers 20 we have the example of Moses bringing forth water from the rock. Mrs. Eddy says in *Miscellaneous Writings*: “These two words in Scripture suggest the sweetest similes to be found in any language—rock and *feathers*: ‘Upon this rock I will build my church;’ ‘He shall cover thee with His feathers.’ How blessed it is to think of you as ‘beneath the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,’ safe in His strength, building on His foundation, and covered from the devourer by divine protection and affection. Always bear in mind that His presence, power, and peace meet all human need and reflect all bliss” (263:5-14).



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