

Science and Health and the Church Manual

Jesus: Pentecost: Mary Baker Eddy: Today

W. Gordon Brown

PART I SCIENCE AND HEALTH

5. Animal Magnetism Unmasked

The word "mask" is from the same root as "person, or persona, meaning 'to sound through' ". Masks were worn by actors when impersonating characters different from themselves. The metaphysical meaning is hypocrisy, veil, cover-up, signifying a distortion of the identity that is present behind the mask. As a result of what chapters 1 and 2 analyse and uncover in chapters 3 and 4, it is established in chapter 5 that man is not a mediatorial mask, or persona, through which Principle sounds in its revelation of Truth to humanity.

What the fifth chapter represents therefore is the annihilation of a distorted image in order that, in chapter 6, no deceptive falsification even seems to intervene between God and man. Principle sounds only through its own spiritual idea typified by "the woman" in the second section of "The Apocalypse" —that is, through man in the universal generic sense, or man as the indivisible Christ consciousness.

Note that at the point of this fifth chapter we enter upon the four "Christ" chapters, having first encompassed, in their divine order, the four "Word" chapters.

To believe that Principle actually sounds through human personalities cut off from God and from each other, is to be deceived by a serpentine mask. It is true that, to personal sense, Principle seems to do this very thing, but this is because the persons in question (outstandingly, the prophets, Jesus, the apostles, Mary Baker Eddy, and others) have yielded up the belief of having personal egos of their own for the one all-inclusive Ego —God.

In the fifth section of "The Apocalypse" the dragon seeks to devour this indivisible, spiritual idea of God by presenting for acceptance the mask-like appearance of a fragmented human race made up of discordant, self-indulgent mortals, in some cases egotistically believing they are personal sounding-boards for God, or that they have some kind of spiritual 'hot-line' to heaven.

But the body of Principle cannot be broken up and devoured in this way, and Christian Scientists grow to understand this when they eat up the little book in its integrity and wholeness, thus preventing the dragon from devouring it. As the "body of this Principle" (S & H 559:25) they find themselves coming forth together in harmony and unity from the same divine source, all reciprocally blest.

Jesus said, "the Father hath sent me". Likewise, in Christian Science, the Father-Mother God sends forth us, man in our schismless, scientific wholeness, to prove that He Himself is All-in-all and that suppositional evil is nothing. This is our identity as the birth-giving mother in the coming sixth chapter, whereby we constitute the one "whom God has appointed to voice His Word."

Nothing, in this case, separates man from God, or manhood from womanhood. No dam, no dragon, no priest, no "spiritual wickedness in high places", no mask, no hypocrisy, interposes itself between the human and the divine. Subject-object, here-there, inside-outside, I-thou, are divinely inseparable and therefore one in identity. As Jesus said, "Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21). Individual (indivisible) man, exemplified by Jesus and by Mary Baker Eddy, is one with the source of the whole world's being, and is himself its unceasing revelation.

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PART I SCIENCE AND HEALTH (cont.)

6. Science, Theology, Medicine

In the textbook's sixth chapter, Mrs Eddy records her discovery of Christian Science, and tells of the years of God's gracious preparation which alone made the discovery possible. In the case of the individual student, his fidelity to the demands of the first five chapters prepares him correspondingly to attain to the standpoint of the sixth.

The revelation of Truth, which comes at this point to the individual consciousness, is spontaneous and unobstructed, on account of there being no mask-like persona standing in between it and God.

Hence the author writes: "In the year 1866, I discovered the Christ Science or divine laws of Life, Truth, and Love, and named my discovery Christian Science." Correlatively, in the sixth section of "The Apocalypse," the woman gives birth to her man child. Note therefore how exactly parallel are the two texts.

Note also how the standpoint of the second chapter, "Atonement and Eucharist," where the accent is on the mission of the individual Jesus, and therefore on the first of the two Christly advents, becomes true for us all at the point of the sixth chapter, where the accent is on universal Christian Science, and therefore on the second Christly advent.

But this is possible only in the measure that the three intervening chapters, "Marriage", "Christian Science versus Spiritualism", and "Animal Magnetism Unmasked", have done their work of purging us of the belief that we are personally creative "sound-throughs" for God, channelling Truth egotistically.

Once we are free from this false sense of person then, in Bible language, the Holy Ghost descends. Revelation is immediate. The "scientific translation of immortal Mind", featured in the early pages of this sixth chapter, applies in the case of every inspired individual. Like leaven chemicalizing a lump of dough, it begins to raise him and all mankind from the deadness of mortality. That is to say, it puts into operation the "scientific translation of mortal mind" (S & H 115-116), and so medicines the world.

We could express it this way: the true understanding of body (or church) as the deathless Christ-embodiment begins at once to put into effect the scientific translation of the mortal, physiological misconception of body. And thus it is that when Science is truly divine Theology —when it is God Himself speaking (theos-logos), and not the voice of speculative human theory —this makes it the divine Medicine, which heals and resurrects the world.

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