

Science and Health and the Church Manual

Jesus: Pentecost: Mary Baker Eddy: Today

W. Gordon Brown

PART I SCIENCE AND HEALTH

Spiritual Translation not Material Death

Science and Health and the Church Manual, in their complementary relationship, thus relate to the two phases of scientific translation given in the textbook on pages 115-116, under the titles, "scientific translation of immortal Mind" (corresponding to the God-revealed textbook), and "scientific translation of mortal mind" (corresponding to liberation from organic life taught by the Manual).

"Enoch was translated that he should not see death," wrote Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews. Likewise, following the resurrection, the body of the individual Jesus was divinely translated. And so, at last, will the universal body of the human race be, in Christian Science.

The purpose of Science and Health and the Manual is thus to put before the people the way of translation and life as against continuing submission to the dictates of materialism and death.

The same dual purpose is seen in Jesus' twofold baptism: his baptism from heaven by the Holy Ghost, and his baptism by John the Baptist in the waters of Jordan. John's water baptism signifies "repentance" on the part of humanity for believing that man has ever been born of the flesh. The two baptisms unfold simultaneously in the consciousness of each individual member of the one Christ-body.

The Holy Ghost baptism stands for submergence in the understanding of what life and body truly are, and corresponds to the eternal truths taught in Science and Health; the John baptism stands, in consequence, for emergence from the belief in what life and body are not, as provided for in the Church Manual.

Hence the realization on the part of John: "He [the idea of eternal divine reality] must increase, but I [the temporal, preparatory symbol of this reality] must decrease" (John 3:30). And hence, again, Jesus' own words to John: "Suffer it [the baptism of repentance for organic life] to be so now: for thus is becometh us to fulfil all righteousness" (Matt 3:15) for thus it becometh us to be the Christ-idea itself instead of its preparatory, self-dissolving symbol..

But it is imperative also to bear in mind those other words of Jesus regarding his relationship with John, when he declared: "Among those that are born of woman there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he" (Luke 7:28).

Even so, Mary Baker Eddy's demonstration of church organization is, in its profoundly spiritual meaning and import, greater than any comparable human organization there has ever been. Nevertheless, the least idea of the absolute Science of her discovery is greater than the whole of the teaching symbol which thus prepares the way for its own living Science to appear.

And therefore it was that Mary Baker Eddy, in turn, echoed Jesus' words to John ("Suffer it to be so now") regarding her own necessity for forming a Mother Church organization with a Manual of Rules and By-laws. "It is not indispensable to organize materially Christ's church," she wrote, "but if this be done, let it be in concession to the period, and not as a perpetual or indispensable ceremonial of the church. If our church is organized, it is to meet the demand, 'Suffer it to be so now'" (Mis 91:4 - italics added).

Suffering material organization "to be so now" - suffering Christian Science to be apparently confined, even temporarily, within a restrictive human institution - had two essential purposes: first, to teach the nature of the reality by means of a human symbol ("Spiritual teaching must always be by symbols"- S & H 575:13), and, secondly, to prove that the Science of the unity of God and man cannot possibly be organically confined. Just as Joseph took Mary and the infant Jesus down into Egypt, so, in Christian Science, the mother's purpose was to protect her child from outside hostility, until it had grown to stand on its own two feet. Once her child becomes a man, as he does at the end of the mother's career, he necessarily puts away childish things.

What the man Jesus was suffered to "repent" of in order to solve for humanity the great life-problem, was that of being born organically of Mary, instead of inorganically of the motherhood of God. Being, in this way, "made of a woman, made under the law," he was able to "redeem them that were under the law, that [they] might receive the adoption of Sons" (Gal 4:4-5). Correlatively, Mrs Eddy rescued her church "from the grasp of legal power" and put it "back into the arms of Love" (Mis 140:22 - See page 1 of this booklet).

Once Jesus had proved at the resurrection that he was not born materially "under the law" of mortal procreation, but under the law of "the woman in the Apocalypse" (S & H 561:22) in her eternal wedlock with God, the human was restored to its original divinity, and the problem of apparent life in matter was scientifically solved.

The release of Christian Science thus to carry out, unobstructed and unrestricted, its great world-mission as the redemptive Science and system of universal man, is the point at which all righteousness begins to be fulfilled.

Clearly, the purpose behind the church symbol is to prove that man himself is not imprisoned, even temporarily, within the confines of organic body. Remember how, after seventy years, Israel was released from her captivity in Babylon, and bidden to rebuild (resurrect) Jerusalem.

Rightly understood, both church and body, are teaching symbols preparing the way (like John the Baptist) for the release of mankind from organic limitations, and for the experience instead of man's eternal, abundant, ever-multiplying life.

The "divine body of this Principle" (S & H 559:25) is the way Science and Health defines its own identity. But the body of Principle is man himself in the spiritually generic sense: it is church as the "structure of Truth and Love" - body as the foursquare holy city of the 21st chapter of Revelation,

described by Paul in his epistle to the Galatians as the "mother of us all" This world-wide "city" as the "mother" of all real being is indeed the divine reality behind the symbol of Mary Baker Eddy's Mother Church.

The organic symbol must therefore "decrease" and the divine idea "increase" even as they are designed to do under Mrs Eddy's leadership, in accordance with the two phases of scientific translation taught in the Christian Science textbook.

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