

## Science and Health and the Church Manual

*Jesus: Pentecost: Mary Baker Eddy: Today*

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### ***PART I SCIENCE AND HEALTH***

#### **Corresponding Design of The Mother Church Manual**

In the light of these discoveries relative to Science and Health, let us turn to the Church Manual, inspired as this was from the same divine source.

Can it be by chance one asks, that, in the Manual's Table of Contents, and throughout the major part of the book, the Church By-laws are presented under precisely sixteen main headings which (when thoroughly examined and translated out of what appears to be merely a code of instructions for running a religious organization) relate in essence with the eternal spiritual realities taught in the first sixteen chapters of the textbook. Surely this cannot be mere coincidence.

For, in this case, both Science and Health and the Manual conform to the same pattern of the holy mother city, signifying the true idea of church, or body. In the first instance the emphasis is on the appearing of the divine reality itself, and, in the second, the disappearing, the dissolution, in consequence, of organic unreality, in accordance with the two complementary phases of scientific translation (already referred to) and outlined in the textbook on pages 115-116.

#### **"Eternity awaits our Church Manual"**

We are approaching surely the resolution of an apparent contradiction between what seems to be the temporal nature of the By-laws detailed in the Manual, and Mary Baker Eddy's estimation of them (recorded in My 230) that in fact "eternity awaits our Church Manual."

Mrs Eddy made this statement in an article entitled "Mental Digestion" which she wrote in 1903 the year following the publication of the textbook in its final matrix form - the form in which it is to be digested in accordance with the angel's instructions in Revelation 10 to "take the little book . . . Take it, and eat it up."

Writing in this article of the "twentieth century Church Manual," she says: "Heaps upon heaps of praise confront me, and for what? That which I said in my heart would never be needed, - namely, laws of limitation for a Christian Scientist. Thy ways are not as ours. Thou knowest best what we need most . . ." Then follows the spiritually compensating declaration that "notwithstanding the sacrilegious moth of time ["organization and time" which "have nothing to do with Life" - S & H 249:19] eternity awaits our Church Manual" (emphasis added).

Concerning "mental digestion" itself we read: "Scientific pathology illustrates the digestion of spiritual nutriment as both sweet and bitter, - sweet in expectancy and bitter in experience or during the senses' assimilation thereof, and digested only when Soul silences the dyspepsia of sense."

How immediately correlative this passage is with the instructions given in Science and Health (p 559) when the angel bids: "Go and take the little book . . . and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

To this the textbook itself responds "Take divine Science. Read this book from beginning to end. Study it, ponder it. It will be indeed sweet at its first taste, when it heals you; but murmur not over Truth, if you find its digestion bitter. When you approach nearer and nearer to this divine Principle, when you eat the divine body of this Principle, -thus partaking of the nature, or primal elements, of Truth and Love, - do not be surprised nor discontented because you must share the hemlock cup and eat the bitter herbs; for the Israelites of old at the Paschal meal thus prefigured this perilous passage out of bondage into the El Dorado of faith and hope" - that is, into God's (Elohim's) Golden City, which is mankind's eternal Promised Land.

To be released from Egyptian bondage is to be released from the dictates of "organization and time," with its "laws of limitation," and to enter upon the "eternity" which "awaits our Church Manual." As Paul puts it in his epistle to the Galatians, it is to be no longer the "son of the bondwoman" but the "son of the freewoman." Hence his plea: "Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

And therefore it is that "mental digestion".regarding the Passover meal applies equally in the case of Science and Health as it does in the case of the Church Manual. Both books are concerned with the assimilation, or understanding, on the part of humanity, of the allness of what body (church) is and the nothingness of what it is not. They are concerned, that is, with the meaning behind Jesus' words at his own Passover meal, when he bade his disciples "Take, eat; this is my body."

'Be my body,' he entreats them, 'understand, digest, make your own subjectively, what you, man, are as the deathless Christ-embodiment, for this alone will free you from the binding limitations and death-dealing restrictions of mortal body.' Incidentally, the word "bitter," in Hebrew, is from the same root as "Mary." The names Mary, Meribah, Midian, and so on, are all from the same root. Let us be like Mary Baker Eddy, therefore, and not find it bitter to sacrifice the personal "Mary" sense of motherhood, for in so doing we shall rise to the point where we reflect individually within our own being the motherhood of God. We shall, like Jesus the Lamb of Love, pass over from death to life: or rather, our eternal deathless life, revealed by Science and Health, will pass over the "interval of death" (our supposed captivity in organic body), as promised by the Church Manual.

As in the case of the children of Israel, the mortal birth- death cycle, dating symbolically from the time of their original hard labour in Egypt to the destruction of Jerusalem by the king of Babylon, will have been bridged over for evermore.

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