

Nature

Welcome to Fourth Church of New Orleans Wednesday Healing service. Today I will read selections from the Bible and from Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy. Later we will have time for testimonies or other thoughts you may have on Christian Science.

We will begin today with Hymn .

Hymns 165, 506, 317

THE BIBLE

(Genesis 8:1–22)

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged; The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained; And the waters returned from off the earth continually: and after the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters were abated. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month: in the tenth *month*, on the first *day* of the month, were the tops of the mountains seen. ¶ And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters *were* on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more. ¶ And it came to pass in the six hundredth and first year, in the first *month*, the first *day* of the month, the waters were dried up from off the earth: and Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dry. And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dried. ¶ And God spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that *is* with thee, of all flesh, *both* of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth. And Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him:

Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, *and* whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark. ¶ And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the LORD smelled a sweet savour; and the LORD said in his heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart *is* evil from his youth; neither will I again smite any more every thing living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.

(Genesis 9:12–17)

And God said, This *is* the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that *is* with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which *is* between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that *is* upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This *is* the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that *is* upon the earth.

(Psalms 8:1–9)

O Lord our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens. Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger. When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, *and whatsoever* passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent *is* thy name in all the earth!

(Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43)

¶ Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn. ...

Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked *one*; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 9:17–4)
Dost thou “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind”? This command includes much, even the surrender of all merely material sensation, affection, and worship. This is the El Dorado of Christianity. It involves the Science of Life, and recognizes only the divine control of Spirit, in which Soul is our master, and material sense and human will have no place.

Are you willing to leave all for Christ, for Truth, and so be counted among sinners? No! Do you really desire to attain this point? No! Then why make long prayers about it and ask to be Christians, since you do not care to tread in the footsteps of our dear Master?

If unwilling to follow his example, why pray with the lips that you may be partakers of his nature? Consistent prayer is the desire to do right. Prayer means that we desire to walk and will walk in the light so far as we receive it, even though with bleeding footsteps, and that waiting patiently on the Lord, we will leave our real desires to be rewarded by Him.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 18:13)

The atonement of Christ reconciles man to God, not God to man; for the divine Principle of Christ is God, and how can God propitiate Himself? Christ is Truth, which reaches no higher than itself. The fountain can rise no higher than its source. Christ, Truth, could conciliate no nature above his own, derived from the eternal Love. It was therefore Christ's purpose to reconcile man to God, not God to man. Love and Truth are not at war with God's image and likeness. Man cannot exceed divine Love, and so atone for himself. Even Christ cannot reconcile Truth to error, for Truth and error are irreconcilable. Jesus aided in reconciling man to God by giving man a truer sense of Love, the divine Principle of Jesus' teachings, and this truer sense of Love redeems man from the law of matter, sin, and death by the law of Spirit, — the law of divine Love.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 40:25–17 (to ,))

Our heavenly Father, divine Love, demands that all men should follow the example of our Master and his apostles and not merely worship his personality. It is sad that the phrase *divine service* has come so generally to mean public worship instead of daily deeds.

The nature of Christianity is peaceful and blessed, but in order to enter into the kingdom, the anchor of hope must be cast beyond the veil of matter into the Shekinah into which Jesus has passed before us; and this advance beyond matter must come through the joys and triumphs of the righteous as well as through their sorrows and afflictions. Like our Master, we must depart from material sense into the spiritual sense of being.

The God-inspired walk calmly on though it be with bleeding footprints, and in the

hereafter they will reap what they now sow. The pampered hypocrite may have a flowery pathway here, but he cannot forever break the Golden Rule and escape the penalty due.

The proofs of Truth, Life, and Love, which Jesus gave by casting out error and healing the sick, completed his earthly mission; but in the Christian Church this demonstration of healing was early lost, ...

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 118:13–32)

In their spiritual significance, Science, Theology, and Medicine are means of divine thought, which include spiritual laws emanating from the invisible and infinite power and grace. The parable may import that these spiritual laws, perverted by a perverse material sense of law, are metaphysically presented as three measures of meal, — that is, three modes of mortal thought. In all mortal forms of thought, dust is dignified as the natural status of men and things, and modes of material motion are honored with the name of *laws*. This continues until the leaven of Spirit changes the whole of mortal thought, as yeast changes the chemical properties of meal.

The definitions of material law, as given by natural science, represent a kingdom necessarily divided against itself, because these definitions portray law as physical, not spiritual. Therefore they contradict the divine decrees and violate the law of Love, in which nature and God are one and the natural order of heaven comes down to earth.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 94:1)

Jesus taught but one God, one Spirit, who makes man in the image and likeness of Himself, — of Spirit, not of matter. Man reflects infinite Truth, Life, and Love. The nature of man, thus understood, includes all that is implied by the terms “image” and “likeness” as used in Scripture. The truly Christian and scientific statement of personality and of the relation of man to God, with the demonstration which accompanied it, incensed the rabbis, and they said: “Crucify him, crucify him . . . by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.”

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 119:1–24)

When we endow matter with vague spiritual power, — that is, when we do so in our theories, for of course we cannot really endow matter with what it does not and cannot possess, — we disown the Almighty, for such theories lead to one of two things. They either presuppose the self-evolution and self-government of matter, or else they assume that matter is the product of Spirit. To seize the first horn of this dilemma and consider matter as a power in and of itself, is to leave the creator out of His own universe; while to grasp the other horn of the dilemma and regard God as the creator of matter, is not only to make Him responsible for all disasters, physical and moral, but to announce Him as their source, thereby making Him guilty of maintaining perpetual misrule in the form and under the name of natural law.

In one sense God is identical with nature, but this nature is spiritual and is not expressed in matter. The lawgiver, whose lightning palsies or prostrates in death the child at prayer, is not the divine ideal of omnipresent Love. God is natural good, and is represented only by the idea of goodness; while evil should be regarded as unnatural, because it is opposed to the nature of Spirit, God.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 175:32–16)

“Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise,” says the English poet, and there is truth in his sentiment. The action of mortal mind on the body was not so injurious before inquisitive modern Eves took up the study of medical works and unmanly Adams attributed their own downfall and the fate of their offspring to the weakness of their wives.

The primitive custom of taking no thought about food left the stomach and bowels free to act in obedience to nature, and gave the gospel a chance to be seen in its glorious effects upon the body. A ghastly array of diseases was not paraded before the imagination. There were fewer books on digestion and more “sermons in stones, and good in everything.” When the mechanism of the human mind gives place to the divine Mind, selfishness and sin, disease and death, will lose their foothold.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 276:29–32 (np))

Nature and revelation inform us that like produces like. Divine Science does not gather grapes from thorns nor figs from thistles. Intelligence never produces non-intelligence; but matter is ever non-intelligent and therefore cannot spring from intelligence. To all

that is unlike unerring and eternal Mind, this Mind saith, “Thou shalt surely die;” and elsewhere the Scripture says that dust returns to dust. The non-intelligent relapses into its own unreality. Matter never produces mind. The immortal never produces the mortal. Good cannot result in evil. As God Himself is good and is Spirit, goodness and spirituality must be immortal. Their opposites, evil and matter, are mortal error, and error has no creator. If goodness and spirituality are real, evil and materiality are unreal and cannot be the outcome of an infinite God, good.

Natural history presents vegetables and animals as preserving their original species, — like reproducing like. A mineral is not produced by a vegetable nor the man by the brute. In reproduction, the order of genus and species is preserved throughout the entire round of nature. This points to the spiritual truth and Science of being. Error relies upon a reversal of this order, asserts that Spirit produces matter and matter produces all the ills of flesh, and therefore that good is the origin of evil. These suppositions contradict even the order of material so-called science.

The realm of the real is Spirit. The unlikeness of Spirit is matter, and the opposite of the real is not divine, — it is a human concept. Matter is an error of statement. This error in the premise leads to errors in the conclusion in every statement into which it enters. Nothing we can say or believe regarding matter is immortal, for matter is temporal and is therefore a mortal phenomenon, a human concept, sometimes beautiful, always erroneous.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 57:22)

Human affection is not poured forth vainly, even though it meet no return. Love enriches the nature, enlarging, purifying, and elevating it. The wintry blasts of earth may uproot the flowers of affection, and scatter them to the winds; but this severance of fleshly ties serves to unite thought more closely to God, for Love supports the struggling heart until it ceases to sigh over the world and begins to unfold its wings for heaven.

We will now have a moment of silent prayer to be followed by the audible repetition of the Lord’s Prayer.

Fourth Church of New Orleans is a branch of The Mother Church of Christ, Scientist, in Boston, MA. This church is committed to understanding and practicing the works of Christ Jesus and his disciples. Our church is a healing church and all mankind is included in the blessing this service imparts.

In addition to this Wednesday Service on Zoom, we have Sunday in person Service and also right here on Zoom at 10:30 am and our Sunday School for young people up to the age of 20 is back in church.

Information for all these Church Services can be found on the Church website:

CHRISTIANSOURCE4NEWORLEANS.COM

