

ILLUSION

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 131, 359, 94

THE BIBLE

(Genesis 2:6–8)

But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground. And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. ¶ And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

(Genesis 11:1–9)

And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded. And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

(I Kings 13:1–10)

And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against the altar in the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD; Behold, a child shall be born unto the house of David,

Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he offer the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee. And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This *is* the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that *are* upon it shall be poured out. And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, which had cried against the altar in Beth-el, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not pull it in again to him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Entreat now the face of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God besought the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as *it was* before. And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.

(Mark 6:14–29)

And king Herod heard *of him*; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead. For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee; And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee. And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother. And when his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

(Matthew 15:1–20)

Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying, Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your

tradition? For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is a gift*, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; And honour not his father or his mother, *he shall be free*. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition. Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men. ¶ And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man. Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable. And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding? Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught? But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

SCIENCE AND HEALTH

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 91:16–10)

Absorbed in material selfhood we discern and reflect but faintly the substance of Life or Mind. The denial of material selfhood aids the discernment of man's spiritual and eternal individuality, and destroys the erroneous knowledge gained from matter or through what are termed the material senses.

Certain erroneous postulates should be here considered in order that the spiritual facts may be better apprehended.

The first erroneous postulate of belief is, that substance, life, and intelligence are something apart from God.

The second erroneous postulate is, that man is both mental and material.

The third erroneous postulate is, that mind is both evil and good; whereas the real Mind cannot be evil nor the medium of evil, for Mind is God.

The fourth erroneous postulate is, that matter is intelligent, and that man has a material body which

is part of himself.

The fifth erroneous postulate is, that matter holds in itself the issues of life and death, — that matter is not only capable of experiencing pleasure and pain, but also capable of imparting these sensations. From the illusion implied in this last postulate arises the decomposition of mortal bodies in what is termed death.

Mind is not an entity within the cranium with the power of sinning now and forever.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 97:5–3)

In reality, the more closely error simulates truth and so-called matter resembles its essence, mortal mind, the more impotent error becomes as a belief. According to human belief, the lightning is fierce and the electric current swift, yet in Christian Science the flight of one and the blow of the other will become harmless. The more destructive matter becomes, the more its nothingness will appear, until matter reaches its mortal zenith in illusion and forever disappears. The nearer a false belief approaches truth without passing the boundary where, having been destroyed by divine Love, it ceases to be even an illusion, the riper it becomes for destruction. The more material the belief, the more obvious its error, until divine Spirit, supreme in its domain, dominates all matter, and man is found in the likeness of Spirit, his original being.

The broadest facts array the most falsities against themselves, for they bring error from under cover. It requires courage to utter truth; for the higher Truth lifts her voice, the louder will error scream, until its inarticulate sound is forever silenced in oblivion.

“He uttered His voice, the earth melted.” This Scripture indicates that all matter will disappear before the supremacy of Spirit.

Christianity is again demonstrating the Life that is Truth, and the Truth that is Life, by the apostolic work of casting out error and healing the sick. Earth has no repayment for the persecutions which attend a new step in Christianity; but the spiritual recompense of the persecuted is assured in the elevation of existence above mortal discord and in the gift of divine Love.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, p. 129:11–29)

Pantheism may be defined as a belief in the intelligence of matter, — a belief which Science overthrows. In those days there will be “great tribulation such as was not since the beginning of the world;” and earth will echo the cry, “Art thou [Truth] come hither to torment us before the time?” Animal magnetism, hypnotism, spiritualism, theosophy, agnosticism, pantheism, and infidelity are antagonistic to true being and fatal to its demonstration; and so are some other systems.

We must abandon pharmaceuticals, and take up ontology, — “the science of real being.” We must look deep into realism instead of accepting only the outward sense of things. Can we gather peaches from a pine-tree, or learn from discord the concord of being? Yet quite as rational are some of the leading illusions along the path which Science must tread in its reformatory mission among mortals. The very name, *illusion*, points to nothingness.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 243:25–12)

Truth has no consciousness of error. Love has no sense of hatred. Life has no partnership with death. Truth, Life, and Love are a law of annihilation to everything unlike themselves, because they declare nothing except God.

Sickness, sin, and death are not the fruits of Life. They are inharmonies which Truth destroys. Perfection does not animate imperfection. Inasmuch as God is good and the fount of all being, He does not produce moral or physical deformity; therefore such deformity is not real, but is illusion, the mirage of error. Divine Science reveals these grand facts. On their basis Jesus demonstrated Life, never fearing nor obeying error in any form.

If we were to derive all our conceptions of man from what is seen between the cradle and the grave, happiness and goodness would have no abiding-place in man, and the worms would rob him of the flesh; but Paul writes: “The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 270:31–25)

The life of Christ Jesus was not miraculous, but it was indigenous to his spirituality, — the good soil wherein the seed of Truth springs up and bears much fruit. Christ's Christianity is the chain of scientific being reappearing in all ages, maintaining its obvious correspondence with the Scriptures and uniting all periods in the design of God. Neither emasculation, illusion, nor insubordination exists in divine Science.

Jesus instructed his disciples whereby to heal the sick through Mind instead of matter. He knew that the philosophy, Science, and proof of Christianity were in Truth, casting out all inharmony.

In Latin the word rendered *disciple* signifies student; and the word indicates that the power of healing was not a supernatural gift to those learners, but the result of their cultivated spiritual understanding of the divine Science, which their Master demonstrated by healing the sick and sinning. Hence the universal application of his saying: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me [understand me] through their word."

Our Master said, "But the Comforter . . . shall teach you all things." When the Science of Christianity appears, it will lead you into all truth. The Sermon on the Mount is the essence of this Science, and the eternal life, not the death of Jesus, is its outcome.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 287:9–2)

We call the absence of Truth, *error*. Truth and error are unlike. In Science, Truth is divine, and the *infinite* God can have no unlikeness. Did God, Truth, create error? No! "Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" God being everywhere and all-inclusive, how can He be absent or suggest the absence of omnipresence and omnipotence? How can there be more than *all*?

Neither understanding nor truth accompanies error, nor is error the offshoot of Mind. Evil calls itself something, when it is nothing. It saith, "I am man, but I am not the image and likeness of God;" whereas the Scriptures declare that man was made in God's likeness.

Error is false, mortal belief; it is illusion, without spiritual identity or foundation, and it has no real existence. The supposition that life, substance, and intelligence are *in* matter, or *of* it, is an error. Matter is neither a thing nor a person, but merely the objective supposition of Spirit's opposite. The

five material senses testify to truth and error as united in a mind both good and evil. Their false evidence will finally yield to Truth, — to the recognition of Spirit and of the spiritual creation.

Truth cannot be contaminated by error. The statement that *Truth is real* necessarily includes the correlated statement, that *error, Truth's unlikeness, is unreal*.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 293:3–5 (np))

Electricity is not a vital fluid, but the least material form of illusive consciousness, — the material mindlessness, which forms no link between matter and Mind, and which destroys itself. Matter and mortal mind are but different strata of human belief. The grosser substratum is named matter or body; the more ethereal is called mind. This so-called mind and body is the illusion called a mortal, a mind in matter. In reality and in Science, both strata, mortal mind and mortal body, are false representatives of man.

The material so-called gases and forces are counterfeits of the spiritual forces of divine Mind, whose potency is Truth, whose attraction is Love, whose adhesion and cohesion are Life, perpetuating the eternal facts of being. Electricity is the sharp surplus of materiality which counterfeits the true essence of spirituality or truth, — the great difference being that electricity is not intelligent, while spiritual truth is Mind.

There is no vapid fury of mortal mind — expressed in earthquake, wind, wave, lightning, fire, bestial ferocity — and this so-called mind is self-destroyed. The manifestations of evil, which counterfeit divine justice, are called in the Scriptures, “The anger of the Lord.” In reality, they show the self-destruction of error or matter and point to matter's opposite, the strength and permanency of Spirit. Christian Science brings to light Truth and its supremacy, universal harmony, the entireness of God, good, and the nothingness of evil.

The five physical senses are the avenues and instruments of human error, and they correspond with error. These senses indicate the common human belief, that life, substance, and intelligence are a unison of matter with Spirit. This is pantheism, and carries within itself the seeds of all error.

(Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, Mary Baker Eddy, pp. 347:26–7)

The dream that matter and error are something must yield to reason and revelation. Then mortals will behold the nothingness of sickness and sin, and sin and sickness will disappear from consciousness. The harmonious will appear real, and the inharmonious unreal. These critics will then see that error is indeed the nothingness, which they chide us for naming nothing and which we desire neither to honor nor to fear.

Medical theories virtually admit the nothingness of hallucinations, even while treating them as disease; and who objects to this? Ought we not, then, to approve any cure, which is effected by making the disease appear to be — what it really is — an illusion?

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:

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