

FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

Hymns 163, 178, 49

THE BIBLE

Psalms 34:13-15, 17-19

13Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile.

14Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

15The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

17The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.

18The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.

19Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

Psalms 64:2-4 (to :), 5 (to :), 6-10

2Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked; from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity:

3Who whet their tongue like a sword, and bend their bows to shoot their arrows, even bitter words:

4That they may shoot in secret at the perfect:

5They encourage themselves in an evil matter:

6They search out iniquities; they accomplish a diligent search: both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart, is deep.

7But God shall shoot at them with an arrow; suddenly shall they be wounded.

8So they shall make their own tongue to fall upon themselves: all that see them shall flee away.

9And all men shall fear, and shall declare the work of God; for they shall wisely consider his doing.

10The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

Numbers 12:1 (to :), 2-15

1And Miriam and Aaron spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married:

2And they said, Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us? And the Lord heard it.

3(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.)

4And the Lord spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out.

5And the Lord came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth.

6And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

7My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house.

8With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the Lord shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?

9And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them; and he departed.

10And the cloud departed from off the tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow: and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and, behold, she was leprous.

11And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned.

12Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb.

13And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee.

14¶And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again.

15And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again.

James 3:2 If, 3-5, 13

2If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.

3Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body.

4Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth.

5Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

13Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom.

Matthew 4:23, 24

23¶ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

Matthew 5:1, 2, 17, 18, 33, 34, 37 let, 38-45 (to :)

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

17¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

33¶ Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

37 let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.

38¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

43¶ Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven:

Matthew 6:14, 15

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Matthew 7:12

12Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

II Corinthians 5:18 all, 19-21

18all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

20Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

21For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

SCIENCE AND HEALTH with Key to the Scriptures

497:9

We acknowledge God's forgiveness of sin in the destruction of sin and the spiritual understanding that casts out evil as unreal. But the belief in sin is punished so long as the belief lasts.

30:26

If we have triumphed sufficiently over the errors of material sense to allow Soul to hold the control, we shall loathe sin and rebuke it under every mask. Only in this way can we bless our enemies, though they may not so construe our words. We cannot choose for ourselves, but must work out our salvation in the way Jesus taught. In meekness and might, he was found preaching the gospel to the poor. Pride and fear are unfit to bear the standard of Truth, and God will never place it in such hands.

30:14-21

Rabbi and priest taught the Mosaic law, which said: "An eye for an eye," and "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." Not so did Jesus, the new executor for God, present the divine law of Love, which blesses even those that curse it.

As the individual ideal of Truth, Christ Jesus came to rebuke rabbinical error and all sin, sickness, and death, — to point out the way of Truth and Life.

6:23-24

Jesus uncovered and rebuked sin before he cast it out.

6:18

To suppose that God forgives or punishes sin according as His mercy is sought or unsought, is to misunderstand Love and to make prayer the safety-valve for wrong-doing.

7:32

Hypocrisy is fatal to religion.

339:1-19

XXX. The destruction of sin is the divine method of pardon. Divine Life destroys death, Truth destroys error, and Love destroys hate. Being destroyed, sin needs no other form of forgiveness. Does not God's pardon, destroying any one sin, prophesy and involve the final destruction of all sin?

XXXI. Since God is All, there is no room for His unlikeness. God, Spirit, alone created all, and called it good. Therefore evil, being contrary to good, is unreal, and cannot be the product of God. A sinner can receive no encouragement from the fact that Science demonstrates the unreality of evil, for the sinner would make a reality of sin, — would make that real which is unreal, and thus heap up "wrath against the day of wrath." He is joining in a conspiracy against himself, — against his own awakening to the awful unreality by which he has been deceived. Only those, who repent of sin and forsake the unreal, can fully understand the unreality of evil.

362:1-7

It is related in the seventh chapter of Luke's Gospel that Jesus was once the honored guest of a certain Pharisee, by name Simon, though he was quite unlike Simon the disciple. While they were at meat, an unusual incident occurred, as if to interrupt the scene of Oriental festivity. A "strange woman" came in.

363:1-23

She bore an alabaster jar containing costly and fragrant oil, — sandal oil perhaps, which is in such common use in the East. Breaking the sealed jar, she perfumed Jesus' feet with the oil, wiping them with her long hair, which hung loosely about her shoulders, as was customary with women of her grade.

Did Jesus spurn the woman? Did he repel her adoration? No! He regarded her compassionately. Nor was this all. Knowing what those around him were saying in their hearts, especially his host, — that they were wondering why, being a

prophet, the exalted guest did not at once detect the woman's immoral status and bid her depart, — knowing this, Jesus rebuked them with a short story or parable. He described two debtors, one for a large sum and one for a smaller, who were released from their obligations by their common creditor. "Which of them will love him most?" was the Master's question to Simon the Pharisee; and Simon replied, "He to whom he forgave most." Jesus approved the answer, and so brought home the lesson to all, following it with that remarkable declaration to the woman, "Thy sins are forgiven."

364:3-31

Her reverence was unfeigned, and it was manifested towards one who was soon, though they knew it not, to lay down his mortal existence in behalf of all sinners, that through his word and works they might be redeemed from sensuality and sin. Which was the higher tribute to such ineffable affection, the hospitality of the Pharisee or the contrition of the Magdalen? This query Jesus answered by rebuking self-righteousness and declaring the absolution of the penitent. He even said that this poor woman had done what his rich entertainer had neglected to do, — wash and anoint his guest's feet, a special sign of Oriental courtesy.

Here is suggested a solemn question, a question indicated by one of the needs of this age. Do Christian Scientists seek Truth as Simon sought the Saviour, through material conservatism and for personal homage? Jesus told Simon that such seekers as he gave small reward in return for the spiritual purgation which came through the Messiah. If Christian Scientists are like Simon, then it must be said of them also that they love little.

On the other hand, do they show their regard for Truth, or Christ, by their genuine repentance, by their broken hearts, expressed by meekness and human affection, as did this woman? If so, then it may be said of them, as Jesus said of the unwelcome visitor, that they indeed love much, because much is forgiven them.

8:28-16

We should examine ourselves and learn what is the affection and purpose of the heart, for in this way only can we learn what we honestly are. If a friend informs us of a fault, do we listen patiently to the rebuke and credit what is said? Do we not rather give thanks that we are "not as other men"? During many years the author has been most grateful for merited rebuke. The wrong lies in unmerited censure, — in the falsehood which does no one any good.

The test of all prayer lies in the answer to these questions: Do we love our neighbor better because of this asking? Do we pursue the old selfishness, satisfied with having prayed for something better, though we give no evidence of the sincerity of our requests by living consistently with our prayer? If selfishness

has given place to kindness, we shall regard our neighbor unselfishly, and bless them that curse us; but we shall never meet this great duty simply by asking that it may be done. There is a cross to be taken up before we can enjoy the fruition of our hope and faith.

SH 264:21-27 Sin

Sin is unsustained by Truth, and sickness and death were overcome by Jesus, who proved them to be forms of error. Spiritual living and blessedness are the only evidences, by which we can recognize true existence and feel the unspeakable peace which comes from an all-absorbing spiritual love.

4:3-16

What we most need is the prayer of fervent desire for growth in grace, expressed in patience, meekness, love, and good deeds. To keep the commandments of our Master and follow his example, is our proper debt to him and the only worthy evidence of our gratitude for all that he has done. Outward worship is not of itself sufficient to express loyal and heartfelt gratitude, since he has said: "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

The habitual struggle to be always good is unceasing prayer. Its motives are made manifest in the blessings they bring, — blessings which, even if not acknowledged in audible words, attest our worthiness to be partakers of Love.

18:3-12

Jesus of Nazareth taught and demonstrated man's oneness with the Father, and for this we owe him endless homage. His mission was both individual and collective. He did life's work aright not only in justice to himself, but in mercy to mortals, — to show them how to do theirs, but not to do it for them nor to relieve them of a single responsibility. Jesus acted boldly, against the accredited evidence of the senses, against Pharisaical creeds and practices, and he refuted all opponents with his healing power.

497:13

We acknowledge Jesus' atonement as the evidence of divine, efficacious Love, unfolding man's unity with God through Christ Jesus the Way-shower; and we acknowledge that man is saved through Christ, through Truth, Life, and Love as demonstrated by the Galilean Prophet in healing the sick and overcoming sin and death.

19:1

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.