

Seventeenth Church of Christ, Scientist – Chicago, IL
Readings for Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Subject: What is it about God that commands hope to stand in the face of hopelessness?

Holy Bible KJV

Ps. 42:1-5

As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God? My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say unto me, Where is thy God? When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday. Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance.

1 Kings 17:1,8-16

And Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word.

¶ And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah.

Ps. 42:11

Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.

Mark 5:25-34

And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years, And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse, When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment. For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole. And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague. And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes? And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing. But the woman fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth. And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

Heb. 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy

SH 265:23-5

Who that has felt the loss of human peace has not gained stronger desires for spiritual joy? The aspiration after heavenly good comes even before we discover what belongs to wisdom and Love. The loss of earthly

hopes and pleasures brightens the ascending path of many a heart. The pains of sense quickly inform us that the pleasures of sense are mortal and that joy is spiritual.

The pains of sense are salutary, if they wrench away false pleasurable beliefs and transplant the affections from sense to Soul, where the creations of God are good, "rejoicing the heart." Such is the sword of Science, with which Truth decapitates error, materiality giving place to man's higher individuality and destiny.

SH 394:17-14

Experience has proved to the author the fallacy of material systems in general, — that their theories are sometimes pernicious, and that their denials are better than their affirmations. Will you bid a man let evils overcome him, assuring him that all misfortunes are from God, against whom mortals should not contend? Will you tell the sick that their condition is hopeless, unless it can be aided by a drug or climate? Are material means the only refuge from fatal chances? Is there no divine permission to conquer discord of every kind with harmony, with Truth and Love?

We should remember that Life is God, and that God is omnipotent. Not understanding Christian Science, the sick usually have little faith in it till they feel its beneficent influence. This shows that faith is not the healer in such cases. The sick unconsciously argue for suffering, instead of against it. They admit its reality, whereas they should deny it. They should plead in opposition to the testimony of the deceitful senses, and maintain man's immortality and eternal likeness to God.

Like the great Exemplar, the healer should speak to disease as one having authority over it, leaving Soul to master the false evidences of the corporeal senses and to assert its claims over mortality and disease. The same Principle cures both sin and sickness. When divine Science overcomes faith in a carnal mind, and faith in God destroys all faith in sin and in material methods of healing, then sin, disease, and death will disappear.

SH 420:10-27

Instruct the sick that they are not helpless victims, for if they will only accept Truth, they can resist disease and ward it off, as positively as they can the temptation to sin. This fact of Christian Science should be explained to invalids when they are in a fit mood to receive it, — when they will not array themselves against it, but are ready to become receptive to the new idea. The fact that Truth overcomes both disease and sin reassures depressed hope. It imparts a healthy stimulus to the body, and regulates the system. It increases or diminishes the action, as the case may require, better than any drug, alterative, or tonic.

Mind is the natural stimulus of the body, but erroneous belief, taken at its best, is not promotive of health or happiness. Tell the sick that they can meet disease fearlessly, if they only realize that divine Love gives them all power over every physical action and condition.

SH 404:26-1

Healing the sick and reforming the sinner are one and the same thing in Christian Science. Both cures require the same method and are inseparable in Truth. Hatred, envy, dishonesty, fear, and so forth, make a man sick, and neither material medicine nor Mind can help him permanently, even in body, unless it makes him better mentally, and so delivers him from his destroyers.

405:5-11,22

Christian Science commands man to master the propensities, — to hold hatred in abeyance with kindness, to conquer lust with chastity, revenge with charity, and to overcome deceit with honesty. Choke these errors in their early stages, if you would not cherish an army of conspirators against health, happiness, and success. It were better to be exposed to every plague on earth than to endure the cumulative effects of a guilty conscience. The abiding consciousness of wrongdoing tends to destroy the ability to do right. If sin is not regretted and is not lessening, then it is hastening on to physical and moral doom. You are conquered by the moral penalties you incur and the ills they bring. The pains of sinful sense are less harmful than its pleasures. Belief in material suffering causes mortals to retreat from their error, to flee from body to Spirit, and to appeal to divine sources outside of themselves.

40:12-15,17-19,25

If the saying is true, "While there's life there's hope," its opposite is also true, While there's sin there's doom. Another's suffering cannot lessen our own liability.

Was it just for Jesus to suffer? No; but it was inevitable, for not otherwise could he show us the way and the power of Truth.

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.

SH 382:24

One whom I rescued from seeming spiritual oblivion, in which the senses had engulfed him, wrote to me: "I should have died, but for the glorious Principle you teach, — supporting the power of Mind over the body and showing me the nothingness of the so-called pleasures and pains of sense. The treatises I had read and the medicines I had taken only abandoned me to more hopeless suffering and despair. Adherence to hygiene was useless. Mortal mind needed to be set right. The ailment was not bodily, but mental, and I was cured when I learned my way in Christian Science."

SH 278:28

All that we term sin, sickness, and death is a mortal belief. We define matter as error, because it is the opposite of life, substance, and intelligence. Matter, with its mortality, cannot be substantial if Spirit is substantial and eternal. Which ought to be substance to us, — the erring, changing, and dying, the mutable and mortal, or the unerring, immutable, and immortal? A New Testament writer plainly describes faith, a quality of mind, as "the *substance* of things hoped for."

SH 468:16-24

Question. — What is substance?

Answer. — Substance is that which is eternal and incapable of discord and decay. Truth, Life, and Love are substance, as the Scriptures use this word in Hebrews: "The substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Spirit, the synonym of Mind, Soul, or God, is the only real substance. The spiritual universe, including individual man, is a compound idea, reflecting the divine substance of Spirit.

SH 66:6

Trials teach mortals not to lean on a material staff, — a broken reed, which pierces the heart. We do not half remember this in the sunshine of joy and prosperity. Sorrow is salutary. Through great tribulation we enter the kingdom. Trials are proofs of God's care. Spiritual development germinates not from seed sown in the soil of material hopes, but when these decay, Love propagates anew the higher joys of Spirit, which have no taint of earth. Each successive stage of experience unfolds new views of divine goodness and love.

SH 368:10

Against the fatal beliefs that error is as real as Truth, that evil is equal in power to good if not superior, and that discord is as normal as harmony, even the hope of freedom from the bondage of sickness and sin has little inspiration to nerve endeavor. When we come to have more faith in the truth of being than we have in error, more faith in Spirit than in matter, more faith in living than in dying, more faith in God than in man, then no material suppositions can prevent us from healing the sick and destroying error.

SH 428:30

The author has healed hopeless organic disease, and raised the dying to life and health through the understanding of God as the only Life. It is a sin to believe that aught can overpower omnipotent and eternal Life, and this Life must be brought to light by the understanding that there is no death, as well as by other graces of Spirit. We must begin, however, with the more simple demonstrations of control, and the sooner we begin the better. The final demonstration takes time for its accomplishment. When walking, we are guided by the eye. We look before our feet, and if we are wise, we look beyond a single step in the line of spiritual advancement.

SH 451:16

If our hopes and affections are spiritual, they come from above, not from beneath, and they bear as of old the fruits of the Spirit.

298:2,13

Life, Truth, and Love are the realities of divine Science. They dawn in faith and glow full-orbed in spiritual understanding. As a cloud hides the sun it cannot extinguish, so false belief silences for a while the voice of immutable harmony, but false belief cannot destroy Science armed with faith, hope, and fruition. Spiritual sense, contradicting the material senses, involves intuition, hope, faith, understanding, fruition, reality. Material sense expresses the belief that mind is in matter. This human belief, alternating between a sense of pleasure and pain, hope and fear, life and death, never reaches beyond the boundary of the

mortal or the unreal. When the real is attained, which is announced by Science, joy is no longer a trembler, nor is hope a cheat. Spiritual ideas, like numbers and notes, start from Principle, and admit no materialistic beliefs. Spiritual ideas lead up to their divine origin, God, and to the spiritual sense of being.