

FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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SUBJECT: God —
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God's Blessing

“The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.” (Num. 6:24-26)

This benediction is so perfect this morning, the first day of a new year. It is God's blessing on this church and on this coming year of good that is unfolding to us all. When Mr. Evans read in our church, this is the benediction with which he *always* ended the service. This is the blessing he lovingly put upon the congregation; and it always made me feel embraced in God's healing love. Today, I feel it upon our church and every one of its members, and upon the whole world. God's face *is* shining upon us, keeping us safe, and giving us peace.

Thank you, Lesson-writer, for beginning this year with such a powerful benediction.

Matthew Henry on Haggai 1 — Focus on our Spiritual work

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary on Haggai 1 drove the verses home for me. Tying back to last week's Forum discussion, it is animal magnetism that pulls us away from our spiritual, God-given work. These verses specifically address that we must do God's work now and not “after I get something else done.” We must push through the animal magnetism and try to stay focused on prayer.

“Those employed for God may be driven from their work by a storm, yet they must go back to it.

“They did not say that they would not build a temple, but, Not yet. Thus men do not say they will never repent and reform, and be religious, but, Not yet. And so the great business we were sent into the world to do, is not done. There is a proneness in us to think wrongly of discouragements in our duty, as if they were a discharge from our duty, when they are only for the trial of our courage and faith. They neglected the building of God's house, that they might have more time and money for worldly affairs. That the punishment might answer to the sin, the poverty they thought to prevent by not building the temple, God brought upon them for not building it. Many good works have been intended, but not done, because men supposed the proper time was not come. Thus believers let slip opportunities of usefulness, and sinners delay the concerns of their souls, till too late. If we labour only for the meat that perishes, as the Jews here, we are in danger of losing our labour; but we are sure it shall not be in vain in the Lord, if we labour for the meat which lasts to eternal life.”

All Good is Possible to Spirit

“Security for the claims of harmonious and eternal being is found only in divine Science. Scripture informs us that ‘with God all things are possible,’ — all good is possible to Spirit;...” (*Science and Health* 232:7-10)

One day, during one of our Sunday School classes, a student when asked what he knew about God replied, “God is infinite so that means there are infinite possibilities.” I have kept his comment on my desk as a reminder of this Truth which he so naturally accepted. This stand for good is something my practitioner at Plainfield has been teaching me through healing. Before coming here, this pure teaching was not something I understood or could practice. I am grateful for all that I am witnessing here that is breaking walls of resistance

in my thinking to this practical Truth. I have been reminded to stay on the right side and not to leave anything in the negative. Another tool is to be grateful and sing hymns just as in the Lesson this week when Jehoshaphat, "...appointed singers unto the LORD, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army" and when they were obedient the enemy was defeated. (II Chronicles 20:21)

"Possible with God" by Parthens

"The things which are impossible with men are possible with God." (Luke 18:27)

"Thank you, and thanks to the lesson writer, for the reminder that whenever I find myself in especially challenging circumstances, I can follow Mrs. Eddy's example and recall the Bible's description of how Principle dealt with the problem of an earth seemingly engulfed in error, without form, waste and void, with darkness upon the face of deep, unruly waters. Principle does not magically wish difficult circumstances away, but is eternally telling its totally different story in spite of them. Thus, the Truth-story of "Let there be light" and creation silences the lying story of darkness and waste, as though it never were. The first chapter of Genesis, thanks to Mrs. Eddy's monumental revelation, tells us that the weapons of Principle are practical, always close-at-hand for me to use to decimate the strongholds of the enemies of Light."

Click here to read full post, ["Possible with God."](#)

"Turn From Their Wicked Ways"

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (II Chronicles 7:14)

I had been thinking that this applied to anyone else other than me, for I didn't think *my* ways were wicked. But I am realizing — thanks to help from practitioner — that *any* belief of life (pain or pleasure) in matter, is a *wicked way* and opens the door to all discord. Therefore, my only safety and

security, my only happiness and peace, is not, as it says in the lesson, to "run every man unto his own house (materiality)," but to dwell in the "house of the LORD," spiritual consciousness, the "understanding of God in the Science, which destroys human delusions about Him and reveals the grand realities of His allness." (*Science and Health*, 328:10-13) Then, any pain that would try to suggest itself to me, is not in my body, not in matter, but is merely the "opposition to spirituality" which would try to take me out of God's "house." Thus "the pains of sense are salutary," and become the "wholesome chastisements of Love."

What a wonderful awakening! Thank you, practitioner, for helping me see this, and thank you, lesson writer, for this magnificent and healing Lesson on God!

Thanks for this post explaining this crucial insight. Denying God's Allness is the **sin/wicked way** that can be so subtle and not recognized for so long, and thus can keep any evil/claim/suggestion going for years. If anything denies God's Allness, is it not sinful and wicked as pointed out above? That is, anything that suggests imperfection in God's own child.

One who had been in severe pain for 35 years, only having temporary relief in other methods, finally found his "healing" when this very point was made clear to him and he accepted it.

This must be the reason for this question and its very direct answer: When a long-time sufferer asks, How Long? The answer is, "As long as you deny my Allness." Let's be awake and no longer be deceived by error which keeps us seeking a healing for a claim, instead of steadily realizing our perfection which has not a single element of error. We can be working in the wrong direction for so long, while the only correct direction is seeking God, patiently realizing our true being in Him and finding our rest in Love!

"... For God Gave Him Rest Round About"

The story of Jehoshaphat in this week's lesson reminded me how we are taught to go to God for all our needs, no matter how fearful things appear,

like the poor Judeans. (II Chronicles 20) They found themselves needing to confront an army of their enemies that was clearly much more numerous and powerful than they. As Spurgeon talks about this in one of his sermons, “their immediate resort was to God. They do not appear to have looked up to their armor and their swords with any particular anxiety. The fact was that the case appeared so hopeless, that it was no use looking to anything beneath the skies...as they were driven from all manifest earthly resorts, they were compelled to lift up their eyes to God.”

What did they do first? They asked for help, expressing their confidence in God, “And said, O LORD God of our fathers, *art* not thou God in heaven? ...and in thine hand *is there not* power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?” Then, they sought God, pleading His past acts. Next, they expressed their confidence in God, “If, *when* evil cometh upon us...thou wilt hear and help.”

They received a fresh assurance of God’s goodness from a new prophet, Jahaziel, who said “Be not afraid.... Ye shall not *need* to fight in this *battle*: set yourselves, stand *still*, and see the salvation of the LORD with you ... the LORD *will be* with you.” God was quieting His people’s fear through His Prophet.

Afterward, they worshipped; but why did they? They were not delivered, but they were sure they were going to be. Encouraged by Jehoshaphat, “...Believe in the LORD your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper.”

Then the people marched out toward their enemy, singing and praising God, only to find out that the enemy had destroyed themselves through their own distrust of each other and the confusion this created.

After that they had rest, “So the realm of Jehoshaphat was quiet: for his God gave him rest round about.”

What a wonderful lesson about the true peace one feels when spiritually understanding God! Thank you.

SUBJECT: Sacrament — January 10th, 2021

“Walk Humbly with Thy God”

“...what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly *with* thy God?” (Micah 6:8 *Emphasis added.*)

The word “with” is used over 20 times in the Bible section of this Lesson. Webster’s 1828 Dictionary partially defines “with” as “to unite in company or partnership, and often denotes an instrument.”

It got me to thinking that the only sacrifice or sacrament that God requires of me is to give up a personal sense of myself, to unite with God, to always know and practice my oneness with God, to let God use me as His instrument. It’s such a simple, but profound, requirement — the supreme sacrifice. Mark tells us that Simon, Andrew, James and John all “straightway forsook their nets.” Let my prayer be for God’s help so that I, too, may forsake any sense of self and not be entangled in its net.

“SENT” by Parthens

“SENT” by Parthens

“And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”

“‘SENT’ is one of the great themes of the Gospel of John, recurring everywhere, e.g.: ‘I don’t speak on my own authority. The Father who sent me has commanded me what to say and how to say it ... [T]he Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not ... As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me ... As the Father has sent me so send I you.’

“Jesus never went anywhere without being sent there. He never performed a single work without being sent to perform that work. He never spoke a

word to any audience, great or small, without being sent to speak that word.

“Whenever self commanded Jesus to look upon and study some material problem with his material eyes, he made himself blind to it. Whenever self commanded Jesus to bear witness of himself with words of self-aggrandizement or self-defense, he became dumb to it. Whenever self commanded Jesus to listen to words of hopelessness and helplessness like ‘My daughter is dead,’ he became deaf to those words, opening his spiritual ears to the voice of the Sender, ‘She is not dead, but sleepeth.’

“‘SENT’ presupposes the sent-one’s obedience to the Sender. The more willing I am to be sent by the Sender (the more obedient I am to hear and act upon the instructions of the Sender), the more disobedient I must be to the demands of self that would send me on self-serving errands and missions, all of which lead to nowhere. For to be self-sent is to walk in darkness and to immerse oneself in polluted waters, dulling spiritual sense while making material sense more acute. But the more obedient I am to the Sender’s orders, the more blind I am to the testimony of so-called material sight, the more my spiritual eyes are opened, cleansed in the unsullied waters of ‘Sent’ and thus, the more illuminated my path.

“‘And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind’ (John 9:39).”

“Sacrifice Everything for It”

“We know that a desire for holiness is requisite in order to gain holiness; but if we desire holiness above all else, we shall sacrifice everything for it.” (*Science and Health* 11:22-25)

“It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one.” (unknown author)

“The possibility of people being swayed by the thinking of the mass is lessened as individual and independent thinking is encouraged, since independent thinkers protest against mob mesmerism. Carlyle said, ‘Great is the combined voice of men: he who can resist that, has his

footing somewhere beyond time.’” (From *Mary Baker Eddy, Her Spiritual Precepts*, Vol. 3 by Gilbert Carpenter)

I am grateful for all that is taught and lived at Plainfield church to help us become independent thinkers under God. As was pointed out recently, it is written, “Christian Scientists must live under the constant pressure of the apostolic command to come out from the material world and be separate.” (*Science and Health* 451:2-4) There is no way to serve God and not protest against mob mesmerism. Thank you for this Lesson on living this Science in our daily lives.

SHEMA — Deut. 6:4-9; Mark 12:28-31

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one Lord: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” (Deuteronomy 6:4-5)

“...Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; the Lord our God is one Lord: ...And the second is like, *namely* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:28-29, 31)

On page 24 of *Science & Health*, Mrs. Eddy writes, “Acquaintance with the original texts, and willingness to give up human beliefs ... open the way for Christian Science to be understood...” Shema Yisrael A-do-nai Elo-hay-nu A-do-nai Echad — The Hebrew word “Shema” can mean to “hear, listen, obey, heed, pay attention,” so Deuteronomy 6:4-9 is known as “the Shema.” According to Chris Nye, “The Jewish tradition and particularly the Old Testament culture, did not differentiate between ‘hearing’ and ‘doing’ or between ‘listening’ and ‘obeying.’...God wants a heart where the listening is inextricably linked to the obeying ...To Jesus, listening without obedience is foolish ... Maybe ... we are only truly listening to God when we are obeying Him. This seems to be what it means to Shema.”

Services in the synagogues during Jesus’ time always began with the Shema. One source says that it is the “equivalent of the Lord’s prayer in Christian

tradition,” being “one of the most influential traditions in Jewish history, and functioned both as the Jewish pledge of allegiance and a hymn of praise” (Bible Project). The *Benson Commentary* points out that to the Jews, the Shema was/is “one of their choicest portions of Scripture,” and they thought “not only obliged to repeat it twice every day, but very happy in being so obliged; having this saying among them, ‘Blessed are we who, every morning and evening, say, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord!’”

According to Thomas L. Leishman, “The training of a Jewish child would begin from infancy with verses from the Old Testament. At his mother’s knee he would learn the famous watchword of loyalty to the one God, called the Shema ... As early as the age of five, he [Jesus] would join Joseph and Mary in the study of the Hebrew Bible.”

Story told of John, the Beloved Disciple, in *Jerome’s Commentary*: “John was very advanced in years and would stand up at every Agape feast and repeat the same testimony, ‘Little children, love one another.’ And then he would sit down. They held the Agape feasts at this time, nightly, so this same word was frustrating to the early listeners. Finally someone asked him, ‘John, why do you repeat the same instruction every single night, don’t you have something new to tell us?’ John remarked, ‘Little children, if you will love one another, that will fulfill it all, you will have done everything.’”

“‘Love one another’ (I John, iii. 23), is the most simple and profound counsel of the inspired writer.” (*Science and Health* 572:6-8)

Hymn 105

*From The Christian Science Hymnal,
1932 Edition*

Help us to help each other, Lord,
Each other’s cross to bear;
Let each his friendly aid afford,
And feel his brother’s care.

Help us to build each other up,
Our little stock improve;

Increase our faith, confirm our hope,
And perfect us in love.

Up unto Thee, our living Head,
Let us in all things grow;
Till Thou hast made us free indeed,
And spotless here below.

Hymn 108

*From The Christian Science Hymnal,
1932 Edition*

Here, O my Lord, I’d see Thee face to face;
Here would I touch and handle things unseen;
Here grasp with firmer hand th’ eternal grace,
And all my weariness upon Thee lean.

Here would I feed upon the bread of God;
Here drink anew the royal wine of heaven;
Here would I lay aside each earthly load,
Here taste afresh the calm of sin forgiven.

And as we rise, the symbols disappear;
The feast, though not the love, is past and gone;
The bread and wine remove, but Thou art here,
Nearer than ever, still my shield and sun.

Feast after feast thus comes and passes by;
Yet passing, points to the glad feast above,
Giving sweet foretaste of the festal joy,
The Lamb’s great bridal feast of bliss and love.

Seek With Consecration Whole

