

SUNDAY APRIL 28, 2024

SUBJECT—PROBATION AFTER DEATH

GOLDEN TEXT: REVELATION 22 : 14

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”

RESPONSIVE READING: John 5 : 24-26, 28, 29

- 24. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.
- 25. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.
- 26. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself.
- 28. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,
- 29. And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life.

This Bible Lesson was prepared by Plainfield Christian Science Church, Independent. It is composed of Scriptural Quotations from the King James Bible and Correlative Passages from the Christian Science textbook, Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, by Mary Baker Eddy.

LESSON SERMON

The Bible

1. **Isaiah 25 : 1, 6-8**

- ¹ O LORD, thou *art* my God; I will exalt thee, I will praise thy name; for thou hast done wonderful *things*; thy counsels of old *are* faithfulness *and* truth.
- ⁶ And in this mountain shall the LORD of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined.
- ⁷ And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.
- ⁸ He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken *it*.

2. **John 11 : 1, 4 (to 4th), 7, 11 (Our), 15, 17, 21-27, 32-34 (to ?), 38-44**

- ¹ Now a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.
- ⁴ When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God,
- ⁷ Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judæa again.
- ¹¹ Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.
- ¹⁵ And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.
- ¹⁷ Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.
- ²¹ Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
- ²² But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee.
- ²³ Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.
- ²⁴ Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

- 25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:
- 26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?
- 27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.
- 32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.
- 33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,
- 34 And said, Where have ye laid him?
- 38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.
- 39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.
- 40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?
- 41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.
- 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.
- 43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.
- 44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

3. John 12 : 35, 46

- 35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

4. Romans 13 : 11 (now it is)-14

11 ...now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

13 Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying.

14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

5. Revelation 1 : 1 (to ;)

1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass;

6. Revelation 2 : 7

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

7. Revelation 3 : 19-21

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

8. I Corinthians 15 : 26, 55-58

26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

- 55 O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory?
- 56 The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law.
- 57 But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.

Science and Health

1. 246 : 27 (Life)-28 (to 2nd .)

Life is eternal. We should find this out, and begin the demonstration thereof. Life and goodness are immortal.

2. 303 : 28-30

Spiritual man is the image or idea of God, an idea which cannot be lost nor separated from its divine Principle.

3. 203 : 31-2

God, divine good, does not kill a man in order to give him eternal Life, for God alone is man's life. God is at once the centre and circumference of being. It is evil that dies; good dies not.

4. 324 : 32-7

Jesus said substantially, "He that believeth in me shall not see death." That is, he who perceives the true idea of Life loses his belief in death. He who has the true idea of good loses all sense of evil, and by reason of this is being ushered into the undying realities of Spirit. Such a one abideth in Life, — life obtained not of the body incapable of supporting life, but of Truth, unfolding its own immortal idea.

5. 90 : 24-32

The admission to one's self that man is God's own likeness sets man free to master the infinite idea. This conviction shuts the door on death, and opens it wide towards immortality. The understanding and recognition of Spirit must finally come, and we may as well improve our time in solving the mysteries of being through an apprehension of divine Principle. At present we know not what man is, but we certainly shall know this when man reflects God.

6. 75 : 12-20

Jesus said of Lazarus: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." Jesus restored Lazarus by the understanding that Lazarus had never died, not by an admission that his body had died and then lived again. Had Jesus believed that Lazarus had lived or died in his body, the Master would have stood on the same plane of belief as those who buried the body, and he could not have resuscitated it.

7. 302 : 3-13, 19-24

The material body and mind are temporal, but the real man is spiritual and eternal. The identity of the real man is not lost, but found through this explanation; for the conscious infinitude of existence and of all identity is thereby discerned and remains unchanged. It is impossible that man should lose aught that is real, when God is all and eternally his. The notion that mind is in matter, and that the so-called pleasures and pains, the birth, sin, sickness, and death of matter, are real, is a mortal belief; and this belief is all that will ever be lost.

The Science of being reveals man as perfect, even as the Father is perfect, because the Soul, or Mind, of the spiritual man is God, the divine Principle of all being, and because this real man is governed by Soul instead of sense, by the law of Spirit, not by the so-called laws of matter.

8. 427 : 13-21

Death is but another phase of the dream that existence can be material. Nothing can interfere with the harmony of being nor end the existence of man in Science. Man is the same after as before a bone is broken or the body guillotined. If man is never to overcome death, why do the Scriptures say, "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death"? The tenor of the Word shows that we shall obtain the victory over death in proportion as we overcome sin.

9. 46 : 20-24

Jesus' unchanged physical condition after what seemed to be death was followed by his exaltation above all material conditions; and this exaltation explained his ascension, and revealed unmistakably a probationary and progressive state beyond the grave.

10. 290 : 16-18 *next page*

If the change called *death* destroyed the belief in sin, sickness, and death, happiness would be won at the moment of dissolution, and be forever permanent; but this is not so. Perfection is gained only by perfection. They who are unrighteous shall be unrighteous still, until in divine Science Christ, Truth, removes all ignorance and sin.

The sin and error which possess us at the instant of death do not cease at that moment, but endure until the death of these errors. To be wholly spiritual, man must be sinless, and he becomes thus only when he reaches perfection. The murderer, though slain in the act, does not thereby forsake sin. He is no more spiritual for believing that his body died and learning that his cruel mind died not. His thoughts are no purer until evil is disarmed by good. His body is as material as his mind, and *vice versa*.

The suppositions that sin is pardoned while unforsaken, that happiness can be genuine in the midst of sin, that the so-called death of the body frees from sin, and that God's pardon is aught but the destruction of sin, — these are grave mistakes. We know that all will be changed "in the twinkling of an eye," when the last trump shall sound; but this last call of wisdom cannot come till mortals have already yielded to each lesser call in the growth of Christian character. Mortals need not fancy that belief in the experience of death will awaken them to glorified being.

Universal salvation rests on progression and probation, and is unattainable without them. Heaven is not a locality, but a divine state of Mind in which all the manifestations of Mind are harmonious and immortal, because sin is not there and man is found having no righteousness of his own, but in possession of "the mind of the Lord," as the Scripture says.

11. 254 : 10-15

When we wait patiently on God and seek Truth righteously, He directs our path. Imperfect mortals grasp the ultimate of spiritual perfection slowly; but to *begin* aright and to continue the strife of demonstrating the great problem of being, is doing much.

12. 426 : 16-22

When it is learned that disease cannot destroy life, and that mortals are not saved from sin or sickness by death, this understanding will quicken into newness of life. It will master either a desire to die or a dread of the grave, and thus destroy the great fear that besets mortal existence.

13. 428 : 3 *only*, 6-14

Life is real, and death is the illusion. ... Man's privilege at this supreme moment is to prove the words of our Master: "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." To divest thought of false trusts and material evidences in order that the spiritual facts of being may appear, — this is the great attainment by means of which we shall sweep away the false and give place to the true. Thus we may establish in truth the temple, or body, "whose builder and maker is God."

THE DAILY DUTIES

by Mary Baker Eddy

Daily Prayer

It shall be the duty of every member of this Church to pray each day: "Thy kingdom come;" let the reign of divine Truth, Life, and Love be established in me, and rule out of me all sin; and may Thy Word enrich the affections of all mankind, and govern them!

Church Manual, Article VIII, Sect. 4

A Rule for Motives and Acts

Neither animosity nor mere personal attachment should impel the motives or acts of the members of The Mother Church. In Science, divine Love alone governs man; and a Christian Scientist reflects the sweet amenities of Love, in rebuking sin, in true brotherliness, charitableness, and forgiveness. The members of this Church should daily watch and pray to be delivered from all evil, from prophesying, judging, condemning, counseling, influencing or being influenced erroneously.

Church Manual, Article VIII, Sect. 1

Alertness to Duty

It shall be the duty of every member of this Church to defend himself daily against aggressive mental suggestion, and not be made to forget nor to neglect his duty to God, to his Leader, and to mankind. By his works he shall be judged, — and justified or condemned.

Church Manual, Article VIII, Sect. 6

Take Notice

“Christian Scientists, be a law to yourselves that mental malpractice cannot harm you either when asleep or when awake.”

(S&H, p. 442)