

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 11, 2024

SUBJECT—SPIRIT

GOLDEN TEXT: ACTS 27 : 23

*“For there stood by me this night the angel of God,
whose I am, and whom I serve.”*

RESPONSIVE READING: **Psalm 91 : 1, 2, 9-11**
Isaiah 63 : 7-9

1. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.
2. I will say of the LORD, *He is* my refuge and my fortress: my God; in him will I trust.
9. Because thou hast made the LORD, *which is* my refuge, *even* the most High, thy habitation;
10. There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.
11. For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways.
7. I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, *and* the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses.
8. For he said, Surely they *are* my people, children *that* will not lie: so he was their Saviour.
9. In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.

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. Psalm 68 : 17 (to :)

¹⁷ The chariots of God *are* twenty thousand, *even* thousands of angels:

2. Psalm 34 : 1, 4, 7

¹ I will bless the LORD at all times: his praise *shall* continually *be* in my mouth.

⁴ I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.

⁷ The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

3. Acts 5 : 12, 14-23, 25-29, 33-35 (to 1st), 38 (Refrain), 39, 42

¹² And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

¹⁴ And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.)

¹⁵ Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

¹⁶ There came also a multitude *out* of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folks, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed every one.

¹⁷ Then the high priest rose up, and all they that were with him, (which is the sect of the Sadducees,) and were filled with indignation,

¹⁸ And laid their hands on the apostles, and put them in the common prison.

¹⁹ But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said,

²⁰ Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.

²¹ And when they heard *that*, they entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught. But the high priest came, and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

- 22 But when the officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned, and told,
23 Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors: but when we had opened, we found no man within.
25 Then came one and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple, and teaching the people.
26 Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned.
27 And when they had brought them, they set *them* before the council: and the high priest asked them,
28 Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.
29 Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.
33 When they heard *that*, they were cut *to the heart*, and took counsel to slay them.
34 Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space;
35 And said unto them,
38 Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought:
39 But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.
42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

4. Acts 12 : 1-3 (to 1st .), 4, 5, 7-11

- 1 Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth *his* hands to vex certain of the church.
2 And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

- 3 And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also.
- 4 And when he had apprehended him, he put *him* in prison, and delivered *him* to four quaternions of soldiers to keep him; intending after Easter to bring him forth to the people.
- 5 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.
- 7 And, behold, the angel of the Lord came upon *him*, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying, Arise up quickly. And his chains fell off from *his* hands.
- 8 And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast thy garment about thee, and follow me.
- 9 And he went out, and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was done by the angel; but thought he saw a vision.
- 10 When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord: and they went out, and passed on through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.
- 11 And when Peter was come to himself, he said, Now I know of a surety, that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and *from* all the expectation of the people of the Jews.

5. II Corinthians 3 : 4-6, 17

- 4 And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward:
- 5 Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God;
- 6 Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.
- 17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.

Science and Health

1. 512 : 8-16

Spirit is symbolized by strength, presence, and power, and also by holy thoughts, winged with Love. These angels of His presence, which have the holiest charge, abound in the spiritual atmosphere of Mind, and consequently reproduce their own characteristics. Their individual forms we know not, but we do know that their natures are allied to God's nature; and spiritual blessings, thus typified, are the externalized, yet subjective, states of faith and spiritual understanding.

2. 581 : 4-7

ANGELS. God's thoughts passing to man; spiritual intuitions, pure and perfect; the inspiration of goodness, purity, and immortality, counteracting all evil, sensuality, and mortality.

3. 298 : 25-30

Angels are not etherealized human beings, evolving animal qualities in their wings; but they are celestial visitants, flying on spiritual, not material, pinions. Angels are pure thoughts from God, winged with Truth and Love, no matter what their individualism may be.

4. 299 : 7-17

My angels are exalted thoughts, appearing at the door of some sepulchre, in which human belief has buried its fondest earthly hopes. With white fingers they point upward to a new and glorified trust, to higher ideals of life and its joys. Angels are God's representatives. These upward-soaring beings never lead towards self, sin, or materiality, but guide to the divine Principle of all good, whither every real individuality, image, or likeness of God, gathers. By giving earnest heed to these spiritual guides they tarry with us, and we entertain "angels unawares."

5. 566 : 29-8

The Old Testament assigns to the angels, God's divine messages, different offices. Michael's characteristic is spiritual strength. He leads the hosts of heaven against the power of sin, Satan, and fights the holy wars. Gabriel has the more quiet task of imparting a sense of the ever-presence of ministering Love. These angels deliver us from the depths. Truth and Love come nearer in the hour of woe, when strong faith or spiritual strength wrestles and prevails through the understanding of God. The Gabriel of His presence has no contests. To infinite, ever-present Love, all is Love, and there is no error, no sin, sickness, nor death.

6. 548 : 9-13

How little light or heat reach our earth when clouds cover the sun's face! So Christian Science can be seen only as the clouds of corporeal sense roll away. Earth has little light or joy for mortals before Life is spiritually learned.

7. viii : 3 (to)-8

...to reach the heights of Christian Science, man must live in obedience to its divine Principle. To develop the full might of this Science, the discords of corporeal sense must yield to the harmony of spiritual sense, even as the science of music corrects false tones and gives sweet concord to sound.

8. 298 : 8-24

What is termed material sense can report only a mortal temporary sense of things, whereas spiritual sense can bear witness only to Truth. To material sense, the unreal is the real until this sense is corrected by Christian Science.

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.

9. 505 : 16-21

Spirit imparts the understanding which uplifts consciousness and leads into all truth. The Psalmist saith: "The Lord on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea." Spiritual sense is the discernment of spiritual good.

10. 224 : 22-4

A higher and more practical Christianity, demonstrating justice and meeting the needs of mortals in sickness and in health, stands at the door of this age, knocking for admission. Will you open or close the door upon this angel visitant, who cometh in the quiet of meekness, as he came of old to the patriarch at noonday?

Truth brings the elements of liberty. On its banner is the Soul-inspired motto, "Slavery is abolished." The power of God brings deliverance to the captive. No power can withstand divine Love. What is this supposed power, which opposes itself to God? Whence cometh it? What is it that binds man with iron shackles to sin, sickness, and death? Whatever enslaves man is opposed to the divine government. Truth makes man free.

11. 227 : 14-26

Discerning the rights of man, we cannot fail to foresee the doom of all oppression. Slavery is not the legitimate state of man. God made man free. Paul said, "I was free born." All men should be free. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Love and Truth make free, but evil and error lead into captivity.

Christian Science raises the standard of liberty and cries: "Follow me! Escape from the bondage of sickness, sin, and death!" Jesus marked out the way. Citizens of the world, accept the "glorious liberty of the children of God," and be free! This is your divine right.

12. 223 : 2-6

Paul said, "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh." Sooner or later we shall learn that the fetters of man's finite capacity are forged by the illusion that he lives in body instead of in Soul, in matter instead of in Spirit.

13. 481 : 2-6

Man is tributary to God, Spirit, and to nothing else. God's being is infinity, freedom, harmony, and boundless bliss. "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Like the archpriests of yore, man is free "to enter into the holiest," — the realm of God.

14. 521 : 12-17

The harmony and immortality of man are intact. We should look away from the opposite supposition that man is created materially, and turn our gaze to the spiritual record of creation, to that which should be engraved on the understanding and heart "with the point of a diamond" and the pen of an angel.

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)