

Readings from the Wednesday Testimony Meeting

Subject: Spiritual Discernment

March 2, 2011

Hymns: 93, 12, 200

The Bible

Genesis 3:1-6

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

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

269:3-5

From first to last the supposed coexistence of Mind and matter and the mingling of good and evil have resulted from the philosophy of the serpent.

The Bible

Hebrews 4:12 the

the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Genesis 1:6, 7

¶And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so.

Science and Health

586:15

Firmament. Spiritual understanding; the scientific line of demarcation between Truth and error, between Spirit and so-called matter.

523:7

The creations of matter arise from a mist or false claim, or from mystification, and not from the firmament, or understanding, which God erects between the true and false. In error everything comes from beneath, not from above. All is material myth, instead of the reflection of Spirit.

505:29-2

The mortal, erring, and finite are human beliefs, which apportion to themselves a task impossible for them, that of distinguishing between the false and the true.

505:4-8, 16-17, 21

Genesis i. 6. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

Spiritual understanding, by which human conception, material sense, is separated from Truth, is the firmament.

Spirit imparts the understanding which uplifts consciousness and leads into all truth.

Understanding is the line of demarcation between the real and unreal. Spiritual understanding unfolds Mind, — Life, Truth, and Love, — and demonstrates the divine sense, giving the spiritual proof of the universe in Christian Science.

The Bible

Deuteronomy 30:15, 19

¶See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil; I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

Isaiah 7:14 the Lord, 15

the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good.

Matthew 3:1, 2, 10-12

In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose

shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Matthew 13:1, 2, 24-30, 47, 48

The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.

And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

¶Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

¶Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

Isaiah 41:13 I, 15, 16

I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not; I will help thee.

Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth: thou shalt thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and shalt make the hills as chaff.

Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the whirlwind shall scatter them: and thou shalt rejoice in the Lord, and shalt glory in the Holy One of Israel.

Science and Health

27:17-18

Jesus' parables explain Life as never mingling with sin and death.

539:19

It is false to say that Truth and error commingle in creation. In parable and argument, this falsity is exposed by our Master as self-evidently wrong. Disputing these points with the Pharisees and arguing for the Science of creation, Jesus said: "Do men gather grapes of thorns?" Paul asked: "What communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial?"

269:5

Jesus' demonstrations sift the chaff from the wheat, and unfold the unity and the reality of good, the unreality, the nothingness, of evil.

586:7

Fan. Separator of fable from fact; that which gives action to thought.

466:26-28

The Science of Christianity comes with fan in hand to separate the chaff from the wheat.

282:3-11, 14-17, 20

The real Life, or Mind, and its opposite, the so-called material life and mind, are figured by two geometrical symbols, a circle or sphere and a straight line. The circle represents the infinite without beginning or end; the straight line represents the finite, which has both beginning and end. The sphere represents good, the self-existent and eternal individuality or Mind; the straight line represents evil, a belief in a self-made and temporary material existence.

A straight line finds no abiding-place in a curve, and a curve finds no adjustment to a straight line. Similarly, matter has no place in Spirit, and Spirit has no place in matter.

At no point can these opposites mingle or unite. Even though they seem to touch, one is still a curve and the other a straight line.

300:13

The temporal and unreal never touch the eternal and real. The mutable and imperfect never touch the immutable and perfect. The inharmonious and self-destructive never touch the harmonious and self-existent. These opposite qualities are the tares and wheat, which never really mingle, though (to mortal sight) they grow side by side until the harvest; then, Science separates the wheat from the tares, through the realization of God as ever present and of man as reflecting the divine likeness.

480:29-2

If sin, sickness, and death were understood as nothingness, they would disappear. As vapor melts before the sun, so evil would vanish before the reality of good. One must hide the other. How important, then, to choose good as the reality!