



O Lord, I would
delight in THEE,

And on Thy CARE
depend.

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE HYMNAL, 224

FERN Lodge Focus - May 1993

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COVER PICTURE by BERTHE MORISOT, *THE CRADLE*, 1872

... AND ON Thy CARE depend • Nola A. Cook

These articles are excerpts of talks by Nola A. Cook, C.S.B., of Chagrin Falls, OH

*Oh Lord, I would delight in Thee, and on Thy care depend.*¹ We delight in our God. We delight in our relationship with our God. We delight in the word of our God which feeds us and sustains us and always accomplishes that for which it was sent forth. We delight in our Wayshower, Christ Jesus, and what he has taught us about God's wonderful, loving, never-failing care. When we delight in what we understand about God, and delight in what that teaches us about man, then we have a wonderful assurance that enables us to depend always on His care.

We find in the teachings of Christ Jesus and of Mary Baker Eddy wonderful fountains of inspiration to help us in making the demonstration of care. Those who understand that divine Love meets every need experience every need being met by divine Love. And the measure we find all through the Bible, God's measure, is the measure of abundance.

Because we are metaphysicians, especially in this age of outrageous materiality, it is important to know what real supply is. The world would say that it is tied into numbers — numbers of dollars we count as our riches, or our lack. We count our money. We plan and save. And we worry over those numbers.

But Mrs. Eddy's wonderful little essay, *Angels*, says, *God gives you His spiritual ideas, and in turn, they give you daily supplies.*² When we understand that supply is always coming to us in the form of right ideas, we can see how Mrs. Eddy could write with such confidence, *Giving does not impoverish us,*³ because ideas can be given away, and yet we still can have them.

Just look at the two terms, supply and money. These words should no more be used interchangeably than the words substance and matter. We know that matter is the counter-

feit, the unreal. Money is the counterfeit that equates to matter. On the other hand, the counter fact, or spiritual idea, is supply, and it is an idea, not a thing. We can run out of things, but we never run out of right ideas.

Let's ask, "Do we cherish healthy matter, or accept sick matter as real?" We know that matter, sick or healthy, is unreal. Likewise we should not think that a big bank account gives us more substance, or supply, than a small bank account. Numbers in an account never tell us anything about the real man.

We have to be so alert. Don't we love to buy our homes and cars with a low interest rate, but we hate to see that low interest applied to our savings or other investments. It's all numbers, not supply! As long as we are watching numbers, we are not working out the problem of supply in Christian Science. Supply has nothing to do with numbers; it has everything to do with right ideas.

In Hymn 224 we find the wonderful promise, *When all material streams are dry, Thy fullness is the same.* Here again is the measure of abundance. And the hymn continues, *May I with this be satisfied, and glory in Thy name.* The very extremity of one's experience gives us the opportunity to witness God's abundant outpouring of good.

What does this have to do with benevolence? If we would give, we first have to recognize that we already have all we need. Then it is easy to give. The scientific understanding that God meets our every need is the basis on which we can obey Mrs. Eddy's statement, *The rich in spirit help the poor in one grand brotherhood, all having the same Principle, or Father; and blessed is that man who seeth his brother's need and supplieth it, seeking his own in another's good.*⁴

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given at the Conference on Benevolence in San Francisco, September 28 & 29, 1992.

Assurance not insurance — think about the difference between these words. Assurance is that quality of thought that is fearless, radically relying on the promises in the Bible and the Christian Science textbook, which assure us that God is the most incredible Love that our human thought can comprehend, and more; that this love is ever-present, available to meet every human need.

And what is our need? Christian Science assures us that we don't need things; we never need matter or money. Our need is always for greater understanding of the eternal fact that man already has all he will ever need. The real man is not at the standpoint of "I want," but rather always at the standpoint of "I have."

Health insurance on the other hand, comes of the fear that we won't have enough, that something catastrophic can happen to us, and we will find our resources depleted. So we may feel we must have a plan of some kind to meet the unexpected devastation which could possibly happen to man.

Frequently insurance is sold with the question, asked or implied, "What if something bad happens?" I've given that question, "What if ...?" some thought, and I realized that it is used to engender fear, and then reliance on material means. I asked instead, "What if all the promises and assurances in the Bible and Mrs. Eddy's writings are true, and man really is the child of God — loved, cared for, watched over, protected?" If this is true, we need no other insurance plan.

It comes back to one of the teachings of Christian Science that is so simple our pre-school classes in Sunday School can glimpse and grasp it. Yet it is so profound that some of the most advanced students of Christian Science fail to see its utter importance and follow it fully.

Mrs. Eddy says, *Stand porter at the door of thought. Admitting only such conclusions as you wish realized in bodily results, you will control yourself harmoniously.*¹ What we let into consciousness will determine our experience. As porters do we let pass by the door of consciousness these suggestions: that we could have a terrible accident, or an unhealed physical problem; that we'll be old and vulnerable; that someday we are going to need health insurance? If so, we've let those possibilities into consciousness, and we then can experience them. The question is "What are we to admit?" and the answer is — only those conclusions that we really wish realized in our own experience.

One may say, "but I have a friend who did experience a devastating loss or catastrophic illness." Are we going to admit as possible, that which is unreal about man? Our friends may have experienced a bad dream of sickness and loss, but we must remember it is their dream. And we don't have to get into their dream by classifying such experiences as possibilities.

We have talked about the need for each of us to be at the standpoint of giving rather than at the standpoint of wanting. And now we need to consider the other side of the coin. Yes, we must always be willing to give. But as we address the need for greater assurance rather than more insurance, we need to be planting ourselves 100% on the expectancy that every promise of God is fulfilled.

As I was praying about this discussion, a thought came that may have merit. To those struggling with the issue of whether or not to invest in an insurance plan, I would suggest investing in the assurance plan instead.

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THE THREE ISAIAHS • CONSTANCE STRICKLIN

These are excerpts from a Bible talk Mrs. Stricklin gave

The purpose of prophecy is to meet a present need. Prophecy is concerned not only with events in the future, but for all time. It looks back over history, addresses present problems, and then looks ahead to the future. Every prophecy is God's word, God's message. A prophet is one who speaks for God.

Prophecy always has two aspects, judgment and restoration — condemnation for rebellion against God, for transgression of His laws; and the reward of restoration, healing and salvation for being right with God. Prophecy is concerned with the spiritual welfare of the prophet's own contemporaries and with events in his own time.

The book of Isaiah includes the work of at least three different authors, and the events recorded took place over more than two centuries. These three parts were included on the same scroll because they have some of the same themes and use many of the same words and ideas.

FIRST ISAIAH

The first part of the book of Isaiah was proclaimed by a man whose name was Isaiah. The name means "Salvation of Jehovah." This First Isaiah lived through some of the most difficult periods in Hebrew history. He was city bred, a high-born aristocrat, a man of some substance and wealth, and he had privilege and prestige among his own people.

We know from his book that he was married and a father of two sons. And his sons bore names that relate to his message. The first son's name translates, "a remnant shall return." No matter what happens a remnant shall survive and return. The younger son's name means "the spoil speeds, the prey hastens," an indication that danger

is very present and it is coming faster than the people realize.

Isaiah looked at Jerusalem as a holy place, which, because it was God's dwelling place, would always stand. He talks about Jerusalem as Zion. Jerusalem, the earthly city, means habitation of peace, while Zion is an idealized understanding, a higher sense meaning an exalted place. He said that if Jerusalem would ever fall, then the people would someday return and reestablish it on a higher plane as a New Jerusalem.

Isaiah had an unusual call to prophecy. King Uzziah had just passed away, and his grandson Ahaz, who was not so spiritually minded, became King. Isaiah was very concerned about the situation of his country. So he was looking to God for some sign. While he was in the courtyard of the temple, he had a Shekinah vision, the power and presence of God made manifest to his human sight.

He saw God as the only real King; he saw God's power and glory fill the whole temple, which stood in fact for the whole world. In this holy experience Isaiah perceived that there was no loss of good guidance; God's presence and good government were everywhere. He alone was King.

The most familiar sign we find in the book of Isaiah is where he said, *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.* Today this passage is very important to Christians as prophesying the coming of the Messiah. But, as we said before, the prophets were concerned with what was going on right then. And the child intended here was a child to be born that King Ahaz would know about. Many scholars now believe that child was King Hezekiah, son of Ahaz.

How then do we accept Christ Jesus' birth as fulfilling this prophecy? What the prophets said in their own time to their own people, later generations of Hebrew people realized could also have a future connotation. So what the prophets said, in speaking to their own people, later generations interpreted as a collective, composite picture of the coming Kingdom of God — God's reign on earth.

Matthew took the messianic expectations of the Jews and identified Jesus as the one in whom those expectations were fulfilled. The prophet himself couldn't possibly know of all the ramifications in the future of his message, because it's God's word. And though given to the people of the prophet's time it cannot be confined to that time. God's word is always true. For instance, when we read the Psalmist's words, *The Lord is my shepherd*, we can identify with that, even though it was not written for us at the time. God's word never can be limited to one time or place.

Isaiah's main theme was the holiness of God versus the unholy condition of the people. Other recurring themes in his message are the return of the remnant and the importance of the house of David. King David was a shepherd, and Isaiah sees the Messiah to come, this anointed one, as a shepherd, another recurring theme.

Isaiah had no use for political alliances, negotiations, compacts, treaties. He said that God is working in history, He is working His purpose out, His hand is in everything. God's government is the only power. He said God is seen in signs and wonders, and that He would send *a saviour*. Salvation in Bible times meant deliverance from everything that would harm, so it has to do with healing and regeneration. These signs from God are healing signs.

SECOND ISAIAH

During First Isaiah's lifetime the northern Kingdom fell and Judah was captured. Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, in three stages took people back as captives to Babylon, and finally destroyed the whole city. So in Second Isaiah we have an unknown prophet who is in exile, and he is talking about the conditions in his own time and what the message from God is in this new crisis situation.

Starting in chapter 40 it says, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.* God is going to see that this people go back to their homeland in a new exodus, one of the important themes in this second part of the book of Isaiah.

It goes on to talk about three voices. The first says in verse 3 *the voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.* This was taken as a messianic prophecy in Jesus' time by John the Baptist, but when written it was a reference to the exodus from Egypt. In the new exodus is an echo of the voice of Moses, the first voice.

The second voice, in verse 6, says, *The voice said, cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. ... The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever.* First Peter (1:24, 25) tells us that this is a summation of all Jesus taught, the essence of the gospel he preached.

THE THREE ISAIAHS

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There is a third voice in verse 9 which says, *O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!* What it really says is: "O thou that bringest good tidings to Zion, get thee up into the high mountain; O thou that bringest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength, lift it up, be not afraid." In Hebrew the third voice is in the feminine singular. It is the voice of a woman crier, proclaiming to Zion/Jerusalem the good news to come.

We don't know what kind of a man Second Isaiah was except that he commanded great respect as a prophet of God, a comforter of his people. God will come and send them home in a new exodus, and this time the way will be straight — not a difficult wilderness experience through the desert, but a highway for our God. These are good tidings. The theme of Second Isaiah is a message of comfort, of restoration and peace, of hope and salvation to his people. The idea of Jesus Christ being the comforter comes directly from this Second Isaiah.

This anonymous Second Isaiah says that God is the only God there is — *I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me.* All through his prophecy he talks about God as the creator of the universe. The Hebrew word for "create" used in Isaiah and in chapter 1 of Genesis was a new word. *Bara* was not in the Hebrew language until Second Isaiah's time. There were other words that meant to make, or to fashion, or to put together. But here we have a new word that signifies a different kind of creation, one that only can be used of God, never of man.

Bara implies a perfect, complete result, and no one but God can ever do that. Scholars know that the first chapter of Genesis was written in Isaiah's time, but was put at the beginning of the Bible because it summarized everything the Hebrews believed about God. You might say Genesis 1 is an outline of what the Bible is all about — God's work; His plan, His creation and it's perfection "from the beginning."

Scholars tell us that the words, *God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good,* is a legitimate translation. But it's even better to translate it that, "God saw everything that he had made and behold it was completely perfect."

THIRD ISAIAH

Third Isaiah is a collection of anonymous works put together in the last part of that scroll. All the themes in First and Second Isaiah are repeated in new ways. There are some messianic prophecies that are important. For instance, this is the only place that specifically describes the comfort of God for His people as a mother's love and care for her children. Other Bible passages and names for God hint at this (e.g. Deut. 32:11), but in Isaiah 66:13 it is spelled out that God is mother as well as father: *As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem.*



... AND ON THY CARE DEPEND

(continued from page 2)

The care of the heavenly Father as stated in the story of the Prodigal is our example. *Son, thou art ever with me, and all I have is thine,*⁵ applies to you and me. When this is understood we will never fear that giving will deplete our resources, because our resources are not material. We can give of our *heart's rich overflow,*⁶ in a way that humanly meets the need. And we will do this with such joy, because we delight in following the teachings of Christ Jesus. We delight in our God.

O God, I cast my care on Thee; ... And on Thy care depend.

1 *Christian Science Hymnal*, 224

2 *Miscellaneous Writings*, 307:1-2

3 *Science and Health*, 79:31

4 *Science and Health*, 518:15-19

5 Luke 15:31

6 *Christian Science Hymnal*, 139

ASSURANCE, NOT INSURANCE

(continued from page 3)

Take a copy of *Science and Health*, and read through again from the *Preface* through *Fruitage*, highlighting every statement of assurance. Then when fear knocks at the door of thought we can take this *Science and Health* from the shelf and drink deep drafts of that medicine which is Mind, which assures us that "with God all things are possible." Then why not do the same with the Bible, going through the Old Testament and the New, highlighting every assurance.

We can read these assurances until we are so filled with the conviction of *perfect God and perfect man*,³ that we will have spiritual insurance, the assurance that we never will be in a position *where Love has not been before us and where its tender lesson is not awaiting us*,⁴ with its abundant blessings for us.

1 *Science and Health*, 392:24-27

2 1 John 3:2

3 *Science and Health*, 259:13

4 *Miscellany*, 149:31-2

BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE PROGRESS

The idea which led to the Conference on Benevolence in San Francisco last year is bearing fruit. We seek a broader expression of benevolence — good will — in support of Christian Science care.

We have identified this broad purpose for our work together:

Our purpose, based on Mary Baker Eddy's definition of Church in Science and Health, is to bear witness together to the fact that God cares for man and that no one is left out.

Soon we hope to identify goals which will aid us in fulfilling this purpose, and as we continue working together we look to see specific activities to help us meet these goals. "Committee on Benevolence" is the working name we have chosen.

Many of those involved in this project are not affiliated with Fern Lodge, and we gladly welcome new participants. If you would like to learn more about the Committee on Benevolence, or if you would like to attend a meeting or receive our mailings, please write or call George Strong at Fern Lodge.

COME TO LISTEN, AND TO SING!

You are invited to come to Fern Lodge on

Sunday, May 16 AT 2:00 IN THE AFTERNOON

to take part in a vocal recital given by

CAROLYN KARDINAL.

Carolyn will present a program of songs and lead us in a sing-along of some popular inspirational selections. Carolyn is a Christian Scientist, and she has soloed in Christian Science churches across the country. She earned a degree in Music Education from Kansas University and has taught vocal music and orchestral strings in public schools. Carolyn currently solos at East Bay Christian Science churches.

The program will last about an hour, and you may also enjoy the gardens and take a tour of Fern Lodge.

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