

# FORUM HIGHLIGHTS

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ISSUE 185

**SUBJECT: Reality —  
March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

## **Blind Bartimaeus — From Blind to Eye-Witness**

“And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.” (Mark 10:49)

“Notice in this passage the striking contrast: on the one hand, a great multitude; on the other, one lowly individual, as low in the social scale as a person could get...a blind beggar. It is tremendously impressive to see Jesus turn his attention from the many to the one. No crowd was ever big enough to blind him or render him deaf. His was not only an amazingly sensitive ear and eye; there is evidence of something deeper: the priority he gave to persons, to any person, at the point of need.” (*Interpreter’s Bible*, Volume 7, p. 819)

“Here Jesus pays the ultimate tribute to a person in need. . . He stopped and gave the whole of his attention, his mind and heart, to a blind beggar. His stopping said clearly, ‘You count.’... The art of stopping is a high art. We are so prone to be in busy motion. We have a schedule... So we ‘skedaddle’ from here to there, to arrive breathless at the exact moment of the appointment. It is not easy to stop. It takes humility.... But this narrative should remind us that it is a necessary prelude to any real work of healing. Jesus never healed anybody on the run. ‘Stopping’ is a necessary part of any genuine ministry to life.” (*Ibid.*, p. 821)

“And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.” (Mark 10:50)

“He threw it off, full of joy at the prospect of being healed, and that he might run without impediment to Jesus. This may be used to illustrate

— though it had no such original reference — the manner in which a sinner should come to Jesus. He should throw away the garments of his own righteousness — he should rise speedily — should run with joy — should have full faith in the power of Jesus, and cast himself entirely upon his mercy.” (*Barnes Bible Commentary*)

“...like the patriarch of old, you take off your shoes — lay aside your material appendages, human opinions and doctrines, give up your more material religion with its rites and ceremonies, put off your *materia medica* and hygiene as worse than useless — to sit at the feet of Jesus. Then, you meekly bow before the Christ, the spiritual idea that our great Master gave of the power of God to heal and to save. Then it is that you behold for the first time the divine Principle that redeems man from under the curse of materialism, — sin, disease, and death.” (*Miscellaneous Writings*, “The New Birth” 17:7-17)

“And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.” (Mark 10:52)

“We may reasonably infer from this that Bartimaeus was one of those who went up with the travelling company to Jerusalem.... his new-found gift of sight qualifying him to take his place among the eye-witnesses of the things that were done in the ensuing [passion] week. In the Apocryphal ‘Gospel of Nicodemus’ he appears as one of the witnesses for the defence on our Lord’s trial.” (*Ellicott’s Bible Commentary*)

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## **“Lord, I Pray Thee, Open his Eyes, That he May See.”**

“And Elisha prayed, and said, **LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.** And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses

and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” (*Emphasis added.*) (II Kings 6:17)

We should all be praying this prayer for ourselves and our world so that we may reflect the Divine vision, which alone can reveal to us **YOUR TRUTH**, which alone is **REAL!** Like the young man with Elisha, many are gripped with so much fear of one thing or other. Blinded by the foolishness of human opinion, we deal treacherously with each other, swayed by the lies of mortal sense, we are influenced by hatred, selfishness, injustice, greed, etc. Mesmerized by animal magnetism, we accept the suggestions, temptations of sin, sickness and death.

We are all praying this, that we may be imbued with the “fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance” to gain **the vision clear** that we may see your **Present Power, Glory and Light** to lead us out of this bondage of false sense! Lord open our eyes that we may see!

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### **Error’s Last Gasp!**

Not only have I been inspired by this week’s Lesson on Reality, but recent comments in the Forum have also reminded me to look for ways to locate this inspiration right here in my own experience. The Bible story in Isaiah elucidates such an important lesson on what may happen when uncovering the reality of Truth. Animal magnetism, and specifically chemicalization, often magnifies the error through fear in the hope of undermining our faith and discouraging further uncovering that would lead to its own demise. The beauty of the story of Elisha and his servant shows that as the odds of defeat appear to increase, the stronger must be our alignment with God’s goodness, protection and salvation, until our conviction is so rooted in Reality that, “...as the kingdom of heaven reign[s] within us, sin, disease and death will diminish until they finally disappear.”

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### **Mariner’s Version of Psalm 23**

“Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them.” (2 Kings 6:16)

Throughout World War II, a shocking number of U.S. Merchant Marine and U.S. Army Transport Service vessels were attacked and sunk, resulting in heavy casualties. In the face of such danger, Marine Captain J. Rogers composed this “Mariner’s Version” of Psalm 23, filled with powerful angel-thoughts that he entertained day and night, which preserved him from fear and gave him a sense of divine protection throughout the war.

Repeating this psalm meaningfully many times, the captain was able to crowd out fear-thoughts in such a way that the God-thoughts (angel-thoughts) eventually far outnumbered the fear-thoughts. Thus, the captain developed an immunity to fear, avoiding the trap that Job fell into, “...the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me...” (Job 3:25)

The Lord is my Pilot;  
I shall not drift.

He leadeth me across the dark waters  
and steereth me in the deep channels.

He keepeth my Log  
and guideth me by the star of holiness  
for His Name’s sake.

Yea, though I sail amid  
the thunders and tempests of life,  
I shall dread no danger,  
For Thou art with me;

Thy love and Thy care, they shelter me.  
Thou preparest a harbor before me  
in the homeland of eternity;

Thou anointest the waves with oil,  
and my ship rideth calmly,

Surely sunlight and starlight  
shall favor me all the days of my voyaging,  
and I will rest in the port of my Lord forever.

(Source: *The Mast*, September 1948)

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## “Impossible to Lose Aught That is Real”

“It is impossible that man should lose aught that is real, when God is all and eternally his.” (*Science and Health* 302:8-9)

The word “impossible” in this statement really hit me. Webster defines it as “that which cannot be, which is contrary to law,” — God’s law being the only law.

Then, our income can never be lost, for God gives us a continual allowance all the days of our life. Our companionship can never be lost, for thy Maker is thy husband, thy wife, thy brother, thy friend, thy neighbor. Our home can never be lost, for in thy Father’s house are many mansions, and He has prepared a place for us. Our good name can never be lost, for God has called thee by name, and thou art His. And so it goes, on and on. How comforting and wonderful to know this for all the good that God gives us!

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**SUBJECT: Unreality —  
April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

## Resurrection Story from WW2

“It is a sin to believe that aught can overpower omnipotent and eternal Life, and this Life must be brought to light by the understanding that there is no death, as well as by other graces of Spirit.” (*Science and Health*, 428:32-4)

A striking instance of unconscious resurrection from error into truth by the grace of Spirit:

Dr. Evelyn Fleet, psychologist associated with the University of London during WW2, related the following incident that occurred during the Luftwaffe Blitz: as she was helping to conduct people to safety, suddenly a bomb fell upon a nearby hospital in which quite a number of paralytic patients lay bedridden, some of whom had resided there for as much as 20 years. Moments after the explosion, she was astonished to see these same patients *running down the stairs*, exiting the hospital with perfectly coordinated limbs, heading for shelter.

Later, some of these patients “remembered” that they were not supposed to be able to walk, and, in so thinking, their bodies returned to their previous paralyzed state, but most of them remained completely healed.

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## Raising the Dead

“RESURRECTION. Spiritualization of thought; a new and higher idea of immortality, or spiritual existence; material belief yielding to spiritual understanding.” (*Science and Health* 593:9)

Four instances of Jesus raising the dead:

- (1) Widow of Nain’s son – Luke 7:11-17
- (2) Jairus’ daughter – Luke 8:41-42; 49-56
- (3) Lazarus – John 11:1-44
- (4) His own Resurrection: Mat 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-20; Luke 24:1-49; John 20:1-31

Other instances of the raising of the dead:

- (1) I Kings 17:17-24 – Elijah raised the widow of Zarephath’s son
- (2) II Kings 4:18-37 – Elisha raised the Shunammite woman’s son
- (3) II Kings 13:20-21 – Man revived as soon as his body touched Elisha’s bones
- (4) Matt 27:50-54 – “Many bodies of the saints” arose from the dead upon Jesus dying on the cross
- (5) Acts 9:36-42 – Peter raised Tabitha (Dorcas)
- (6) Acts 14: 19-20 – Paul stoned – supposing him dead, the disciples stood round about him and he rose up
- (7) Acts 20:7-12 – Paul raised Eutychus after he fell down from the third loft window, and was taken up dead
- (8) John apparently raised his faithful disciple, Drusiana, and 2 others at Ephesus — see *Revelations from an Archive: An Update on the Apocalypse*, New York Public Library Research Fellow, 10/23/2020, and *The Acts of John*, Mary Jane Chaignot)

“. . . the miraculous cure of diseases of the most inveterate or even preternatural kind can no longer occasion any surprise, when we recollect that in the days of Irenaeus, about the end of the second century, the resurrection of the dead was very far from being esteemed an uncommon event; that the miracle was frequently performed on necessary

occasions, by great fasting and the joint supplication of the church of the place and that the persons thus restored to their prayers had lived afterwards among them many years.” (“Theophilus ad Autolyicum,” *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, by Edward Gibbon, Vol. 1, p. 408 — Raising of the Dead with the early Christians for 300 years)

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### “...They Mourned and Wept...and Believed Not”

Mary Magdalene “...went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.” (Mark 16:10-11)

The apostles were so overcome with the belief of death and mourning, even self-pity, that it had hardened their hearts and made it impossible for them to see the risen Christ. *Science and Health* states: “Mortal mind must part with error, must put off itself” before “the Christ ideal, will appear.” (430:3-5) It wasn’t until Jesus “upbraided them,” that the apostles’ eyes and their hearts were finally opened. Once they got rid of the mourning and self-pity, — the whole belief in sickness and death, which “tends to shut out the true sense of Life and health,” —they were then able to obey Jesus’ command, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

This made me think of how many times a pity-party, mourning for myself, self-justification and excuses, or any indulgence in self, kept me from doing what I really needed to do, — that is, go out and demonstrate the Christian Science that I’d been taught. What a great lesson to be learning here in this church!

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### “Includes all the phenomena of existence”

“Jesus said (John viii. 51), ‘If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.’ That statement is not confined to spiritual life, but *includes all the phenomena of existence.*” (*Science and Health* 429:31-2) (*Emphasis added.*)

In *Watches, Prayers, Arguments*, it tells how Mrs. Eddy’s handling of death included all the phenomena of existence. “One day Mrs. Eddy said to a student, ‘Are you working?’ He began to tell of his hours of study and work. She said, ‘When you see old age, do you declare that Life is eternal activity, beauty and joy? When you see the leaves falling and hear the wind blow, do you declare that there is no change, decay or cold? When you see deformity and disease, do you declare that man is made in the image and likeness of God?’ The student answered, ‘Mrs. Eddy, I am not working.’”

I realized that I needed to declare the same when I look in the mirror and see my grey hair, or wrinkles on my face, or when I see a decaying flower or blighted bud, or when I’m tempted to celebrate a New Year’s Eve that ends a year, or any whisper or hint of death or ending anywhere. Like that student, I realized that I also had to answer, “I am not working.”

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### Hymn 390

*From The Christian Science Hymnal,  
1932 edition*

Why is thy faith in God’s great love so small?  
Why doth thy heart shrink back at duty’s call?  
Art thou obeying this: Abide in me;  
And doth the Master’s word abide in thee?

O blest assurance from our risen Lord;  
O precious comfort breathing from the Word.  
How great the promise, could there greater be?  
Ask what thou wilt, it shall be done for thee.

Ask what thou wilt, but O, remember this,  
We ask and have not when we ask amiss.  
If weak in faith, we only half believe  
That what we ask we really shall receive.

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### *Praise Our Risen Christ*

