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THE FIRE CONSUMED NOT

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The understanding that Christian Science operates as divine law shows us how to eradicate evil on the basis that it is lawless, hence provably nothing. As Science quickens our thought into purer, holier consciousness and we discern that being is spiritual, not material, we demonstrate man's unity with the Father-Mother God. We also become increasingly aware of divine protection, and fear of the violence of evil is stilled. Whatever the need, our help is here and now available through unwavering reliance on the ever-present law of God.

In a small town, a fire was discovered in the night. An earnest student of Christian Science owned several buildings in the threatened area. Before it was discovered, the fire had gained sufficient headway to endanger the surrounding properties, including those belonging to the student. The fire, which had started in a three-storied wooden structure, was raging furiously only five feet away from one of his buildings and was being driven toward it by a strong wind. It seemed impossible to save any of the buildings which were in the path of the flames.

The student called a Christian Science practitioner and turned without reservation to God, his heavenly Father, for help. Consecrated prayer was continued, and a firm stand was taken that God controls and governs all, that He is the only power, that fear and destructive forces are not of Him and are therefore powerless, lacking ability to destroy or consume.

It was clearly seen that the same law of indestructibility which saved the three Hebrews from the fiery furnace was in operation today as it always has been and that this law was protecting the student's property from the godless, evil forces which seemed to threaten. Soon the student felt a great sense of gratitude for the unfoldment of good that had been realized for many years from the prayerful application of Christian Science. Peace and comfort replaced anxiety and the fear of destruction.

Shortly thereafter the wind changed and drove the flames back into the burning area. The fire was brought under control with no damage except to the building in which the fire had started. The paint on the buildings that were in the path of the conflagration was not scorched, nor were any of the windows broken by the heat.

No damage from the fire was suffered by this student, who had turned in his time of need to his Father, God. Is it any wonder that many felt that a miracle had taken place? Those who had witnessed the experience rejoiced for this proof of divine deliverance from what seemed to be a hopeless situation, with destruction of other property appearing certain. The spiritual fact had been realized that man dwells securely in divine Mind, eternal Life.

What was needed in order to experience the protection described above was to change the belief of inharmony to the realization of ever-present harmony, unfettered by human fears or a belief of danger. In the stillness of an exalted moment, we can prove that God, divine Mind, is All-in-all; therefore evil in any form finds no abiding place in this allness.

Mind is cognizant of neither danger nor destruction; Mind knows only its own ideas. All that God made is very good and is forever intact. Truth, or God, always destroys the lie; and error, the opposite of Truth, is powerless and is nothing.

Mary Baker Eddy tells us in "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures" (p. 298), "Angels are pure thoughts from God, winged with Truth and Love, no matter what their individualism maybe." Also, she assures us (*ibid.*, p. 567): "Truth and Love come nearer in the hour of woe, when strong faith or spiritual strength wrestles and prevails through the understanding of God."

Angel messages come to the pure in heart with the dawn of understanding, replacing material beliefs with spiritual ideas and giving the assurance that nothing real can ever be destroyed. However arrogant the threats of destruction or other circumstances with which we are confronted may seem to be, our protection lies in our conscious at-one-ment with Love, which liberates us from evil's extravagant pretensions and provides a way of escape from impending dangers.

In the practice of Christian Science, we do not ignore, nor do we stand aghast at, the machinations of evil, because every opportunity to demonstrate Love's protecting power gives a greater faith in and a firmer understanding of Truth with which to solve problems. Christ Jesus said to the two blind men (Matt. 9:29), "According to your faith be it unto you."

Every experience that dispels the clouds of fear enlarges our ability to demonstrate the presence of divine Life. Such an experience awakens us to see through the mist of seeming chaos to our true identity, at one with divine Love. This understanding protects us, lifting us above material sense testimony and revealing perfect safety where danger appears to be.

Because God is good and fills all space, it is clear that evil is nonexistent. It is nothing but mesmeric suggestion, without capacity or power to penetrate the God-endowed consciousness which is man's only real selfhood.

Through a prayerful study of the Bible and of Mrs. Eddy's writings we obtain a spiritual understanding of God's divine law and of our dominion over the powerless, empty threats of so-called evil and its efforts to dominate us. Through prayer we glimpse something of our heritage of freedom from fear and are confident that God alone reigns with immediate and divine justice, blessing all mankind.

The consciousness that we dwell in divine Mind is our rock of salvation upon which to stand amidst the turbulence of mortal dreams. "There is no power apart from God. Omnipotence has all-power, and to acknowledge any other power is to dishonor God." So Mrs. Eddy tells us in Science and Health (p. 228).

Let us see as an illusion the argument that there is something going on with which we are unable to cope. Let us claim the peace, security, and dominion which are obtained through self-discipline and obedience to Principle. Let us not place reliance upon or fearfully linger in thought over reports of world unrest, evil powers, and the deviousness of mortal mind.

Such conditions have no foundation in Truth, and through God's law we find deliverance from them. We have this promise (Isa. 26:3): "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

Love's divine forces, demonstrated through the spiritual might of prayer, extinguish the consuming elements of hatred and materiality. The fact remains that when one is clad in the armor of Love, he is safe and secure, equipped to face unafraid whatever fiery trials he may encounter. Love's tenderness dissolves the ugly threats of evil, leaving intact God's kingdom, wherein man ever dwells. All that is real is man's to love and enjoy.

Fire consumes not God's creation, which is infinite, perfect, and indestructible.