

MARGARET J. JEWSON

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ELIJAH  
AND  
ELISHA

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*The author gratefully acknowledges the help she has received in her study of this subject from the following books:—*

SCIENCE AND HEALTH WITH KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES	<i>Mary Baker Eddy</i>
PROSE WORKS	<i>Mary Baker Eddy</i>
THE SCIENCE OF THE BIBLE	<i>John W. Dooley</i>
PELOUBET'S BIBLE DICTIONARY	
THE SCOFIELD REFERENCE BIBLE	
PEAKE'S COMMENTARY ON THE BIBLE	
AN AMERICAN TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE	<i>Smith and Goodspeed</i>
HELPS TO THE STUDY OF THE BIBLE	<i>Oxford University Press</i>
THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO THE BIBLE	



*The following abbreviations have been used in referring to the writings of Mary Baker Eddy:—*

<i>S. &amp; H.</i>	SCIENCE AND HEALTH WITH KEY TO THE SCRIPTURES.
<i>Mis.</i>	MISCELLANEOUS WRITINGS.
<i>My.</i>	MISCELLANY.

# ELIJAH AND ELISHA

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## *Elijah*

### INTRODUCTION

Israel had entered upon the fourth thousand-year period of its history. The Israelites had accepted Jehovah as the creator. They had learnt to some extent to separate between good and evil. They had identified Jehovah as I AM, and themselves as the people of God, and this had brought them out of the bondage of Egypt into the Promised Land. Unfortunately the majority of the people had identified the Promised Land as the land of Canaan, and not as a spiritual idea, and so instead of turning to "government by divine Principle" (*S. & H.* 587) in the land of spiritual development, they demanded that God should give them a physical king in a material land. They wanted to use what understanding they had of the one God to demonstrate material prosperity and power.

This is the state of thought which is frequently referred to in the Bible by the symbol three-and-a-half, half the seven, and appears in several different forms. It is the attempt to use an understanding of Mind, Spirit, and Soul to demonstrate ease in matter, and it always results in frustration,—a drought or a famine. The second three-and-a-half, which completes the seven, is the understanding of Mind, Spirit, and Soul demonstrated as Life, Truth and Love, supreme over all.

At the time when Elijah enters the story, Ahab is king of Israel. "Ahab" means "father's brother," which seems to signify, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (*John 8: 44*), for it is said of him, that he "did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him" (*I Kings 16: 30*). Yet it would seem that Ahab was not as a rule deliberately wicked. He was just weak, and easily led by those around him. His great sin was that he married himself to Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Zidon. "Jezebel"

means "unmarried," and is used throughout the Bible as the symbol of false womanhood. She introduced into Israel the worship of Baal, of materiality, on a scale not known before, and Ahab was a mere puppet in her hands. Jezebel "cut off the prophets of the Lord" (I Kings 18: 4), and led the people backwards to the worship of materiality.

It was at this point that, without any introduction, Elijah suddenly appeared on the scenes. "Elijah" means "God is Jehovah," and, unlike almost every other Biblical character, there is no mention of his being the son of any human father. He is merely referred to as "Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead" (I Kings 17: 1). Certain commentaries say that this means that he dwelt at Tishbeh, but no one knows where that was, and other commentaries say that "Tishbite" simply means "sojourner." "Gilead" means "rocky region," so it would appear that Elijah was a sojourner, or dweller, in a Christly place, or consciousness. Writing of Jehovah, Mrs. Eddy says on pages 576-577 of *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, "The term Lord, as used in our version of the Old Testament, is often synonymous with Jehovah, and expresses the Jewish concept, not yet elevated to deific apprehension through spiritual transfiguration. Yet the word gradually approaches a higher meaning. This human sense of Deity yields to the divine sense, even as the material sense of personality yields to the incorporeal sense of God and man as infinite Principle and infinite idea." This passage summarizes the story of Elijah (our idea of "God is Jehovah"), which, through a growing understanding of the Word as Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, and Love, gradually rises higher and higher, until eventually Elijah is translated into Elisha, "God is salvation."

In this story we get constant references to the three degrees through which mortal mind is translated out of itself, and which are described by Mrs. Eddy on pages 115-116 of *Science and Health*. Elijah undoubtedly stands for the spiritual, the third degree, in each one of us. He is what we understand of the spiritual. He appears to the "Ahab" in us, the first degree, the physical, and says, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (I Kings 17: 1). When Israel, the

second degree, the moral in us, accepts Ahab, the physical, for its king, and allows itself to be led back into the worship of materiality, then it loses all its inspiration (dew or rain) which can come only through the spiritual. It is interesting that where this drought is referred to in the New Testament (Luke 4: 25 and James 5: 17), in both places it is mentioned as having lasted for three years and six months, three-and-a-half years, though it is not actually so stated in the story here in Kings.

Having uttered his warning to the moral and the physical, that using their spiritual development only for material gains would result in the drought, Elijah, "God is Jehovah," disappeared to work out his own salvation, which he did through the Word order of Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth and Love, or the third degree of "Wisdom, purity, spiritual understanding, spiritual power, love, health, holiness" (*S. & H.* 116).

## MIND    Wisdom    The Brook Cherith

### I Kings 17: 2-7

"And the word of the Lord came unto him." Elijah is throughout guided by "the word of the Lord" which comes to him from outside, that is, objectively. It is the way we all begin, and Elijah had the wisdom to listen and to act as the Word directed him.

Here the word of the Lord told him to turn "eastward," towards the Christ, and hide himself "by the brook Cherith," where "the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook." "Cherith" means "cutting, ravine, trench," and it seems that when we start to work out our own salvation from the starting point of Mind, our inspiration comes to us through a comparatively narrow channel or trench. Here, too, we are fed by ravens. It is interesting to see what the Bible says about ravens. A raven is first mentioned in the story of Noah, where, after the flood, he sends it forth from the ark; but it goes backwards and forwards over the water, and does not return or help him in any way. In Leviticus and Deuteronomy ravens



are described as unclean birds, unfit for food, and in Proverbs and Isaiah as birds of prey. In Job, Psalms and Luke, however, they are referred to as being fed and sustained by God, particularly the young ravens, and here in Kings they feed Elijah in the first stage of his journey from sense to Soul. It seems that ravens symbolize belief, and as such are usually "unclean" and birds of prey, unfit for spiritual food. Mrs. Eddy defines such beliefs as "Mortal thoughts, illusion" (*S. & H.* 582: 3). But, at the beginning of our ascent towards an understanding of the one God, the first essential is that we *believe* in the allness of God in the face of all the material evidence to the contrary. This firm belief, which Mrs. Eddy defines (*S. & H.* 582: 1) as "Firmness and constancy; not a faltering nor a blind faith, but the perception of spiritual Truth" is the fundamental proposition that we have to accept before we can get anywhere. But as we progress, this belief grows, first into faith, and then into understanding. In the initial stages, however, belief in the infinite One is the raven that brings us the bread and meat (the Christ Truth) both in the morning,—when our thought is clear—and in the evening,—when it is troubled. And while we feed on these elements of the bread of Truth, we drink of the inspiration of the water of the Word of Life, which comes to us at this point through the narrow channel of the brook Cherith.

This is a wonderful beginning, but it is all hedged about with limitations, and as we eat the bread of Truth and drink the water of Life, it becomes too narrow for us. Our expanding thought demands a wider outlook, so the brook of inspiration runs dry, and forces us, as it forced Elijah, to move on to a "wider sphere of thought and action" (*S. & H.* 265).

## SPIRIT Purity The Widow of Zarephath

I Kings 17: 8-16

When the brook, the inspiration, dried up, "the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath, . . . behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain

thee." "Zarephath" means "place of refining," purity, the firmament of Spirit, to which "the word of the Lord" directed him.

Here he was fed by a widow woman,—by one who had been "married" to materiality, but had found that materiality was "dead" and could no longer support her. She was at "the gate of the city," gathering sticks, when Elijah arrived and asked her to fetch him a drink of water and a morsel of bread. She replied, "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die."

When the Elijah in us, our ascending sense of "God is Jehovah," arrives at "the gate of the city" of Spirit, the widow woman, faith, is there to meet us. When asked to supply us with the water of Life and the bread of Truth, faith replies at first that she has only a small and inadequate supply of Truth, and a little oil of consecration and inspiration, which she is about to use to nourish herself and her "son,"—the spiritual idea of the Christ to which she has given birth. To this end she is gathering "two sticks,"—what she knows of Mind and Spirit as the Word and the Christ,—but she fears that this understanding of the truth is so small that it will not be equal to the occasion, and they will both perish.

Elijah tells the woman to use the truth as she has said, but first of all to make him a little cake, and he prophesies that "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth." Faith accepts the word of "God is Jehovah," and "she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord." What a comfort that is! When we are faced with a difficult situation of any kind, and feel that our understanding and inspiration is inadequate to meet that situation, let us remember that if we use what understanding we have to feed our "Elijah," then the barrel of meal will not waste, nor the cruse of oil fail until the day ("The irradiance of Life; light, the spiritual idea of Truth and Love," *S. & H.* 584) dawns, and the Lord sends rain (fresh inspiration) upon the earth (the spiritual idea). If

we use it properly, that which we know of Truth is always adequate to meet whatever we have to meet at that moment.

## SOUL Spiritual Understanding The Widow's Son

I Kings 17: 17-24

But "God is Jehovah," the ascending, developing sense of our true selfhood, cannot remain static. Most of us are inclined, when we have taken a step forward, to want to sit back and think we can rest for a while and enjoy the fruits of our progress. But "spiritual Love will force you to accept what best promotes your growth" (*S. & H.* 266). It may have seemed like failure to Elijah when the brook dried up, but had it not done so, he would probably have been content to remain in the "trench," fed by belief. However, spiritual Love forced him to move on to Zarephath. Now that he is ready for the next step forward, again spiritual Love forces that development, though again it seems to come through a failure. Many of us have similar experiences. What seems at first to be good demonstration, suddenly ends in failure. Often enough we are ready to accept it as failure, and to sit down and give way to discouragement. But to the "Elijah" in us, what seems at first sight to be failure is an urge and an opportunity to go forward. It arouses us from our apathy and from a sense of satisfaction with the progress already made, and it indicates that we are ready for further development and greater proofs and demonstration.

In the story, the "son" of the woman died. The conception of the Christ-idea, which faith had brought forth, died. But Elijah realized that this was because he had outgrown that concept, and that it must be lifted on to a higher plane. "He took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode." He lifted the Christ-idea out of the bosom of faith, and carried it up to true identification in the spiritual understanding of Soul, "where he abode." The woman had asked, "Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" So often when we have attained a certain

measure of demonstration, and feel rather pleased with it, instead of pushing ahead, we stop and look back, and call past sins (false identifications) to remembrance. If we indulge this tendency of mortal mind, before we realize what is happening, our "son" is dead. The spiritual idea of ourselves which had been born to us, has "no breath left in him," has no inspiration or life, and becomes a dead thing. Then the "Elijah" in us must take the idea out of the bosom that looks back, and carry it upward and onward into the loft of Soul, and lay it "upon his own bed," lay it upon his own spiritual understanding.

Elijah cried unto the Lord, "O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn, by slaying her son?" As Mrs. Eddy says, "In moral chemicalization, when the symptoms of evil, illusion, are aggravated, we may think in our ignorance that the Lord hath wrought an evil; but we ought to know that God's law uncovers so-called sin and its effects, only that Truth may annihilate all sense of evil and all power to sin" (*S. & H.* 540). Elijah saw this as spiritual Love forcing him to accept what best promoted his growth. So he "stretched himself upon the child three times"—he used his understanding of Mind, Spirit, and Soul to the utmost of his present understanding,—"and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived." Soul-sense resurrected the spiritual idea.

Elijah, however, did not leave the resurrected spiritual idea up in the "loft" apart from everyday life. He brought it down into the "house," into the consciousness where we are now, into our present everyday experience, "and delivered him unto his mother." Then faith answers, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth." This is one of the two instances in which Elijah is identified as a "man of God,"—man made in God's image and likeness,—and with this identification, faith becomes spiritual understanding, and the woman's work is accomplished, just as the ravens' work was accomplished at Cherith.

## SOUL and PRINCIPLE The Story of Obadiah

I Kings 18: 1-16

This incident takes place where, to Elijah, Soul is identifying itself and its idea with Principle. In the New Testament it is stated as occurring after three years and six months, the three-and-a-half stage, where thought must definitely go on to full identification with Principle, and its demonstration as Life, Truth, and Love, or else turn back to the drought of trying to apply Mind, Spirit, and Soul to material conditions.

“The word of the Lord came to Elijah in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.” The Word to “God is Jehovah” is always a sense of ascending, of going forward.

“And Ahab called Obadiah, which was the governor of his house. (Now Obadiah feared the Lord greatly.)” “Obadiah” means “worshipper of Jehovah,” and it seems that Obadiah was that part of the weakling, Ahab, in us that *fears* the Lord greatly, and feels it is wise to placate Him if possible in secret, whilst openly Jezebel is being allowed to “cut off the prophets of the Lord,”—to destroy that which would bring about the “disappearance of material sense before the conscious facts of spiritual Truth” (*S. & H.* 593). “Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water.” He took a hundred spiritual facts and *hid* them in a cave in his thinking “by fifty,”—by applying the five physical senses to the human problem. He did however feed them on bread and water—Truth and Life—so far as he was able, but it is obvious that these prophets came to nought, for Elijah is continually referred to as the only surviving prophet.

“And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks: peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts. So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself.” The weakling is always divided

against himself, even in his search for "fountains of water" (inspiration), and for "grass" (the Word) to save some of the "beasts" (the moral qualities).

It was to Obadiah, "worshipper of Jehovah," that Elijah, "God is Jehovah," appeared, and bade him fetch Ahab. Obadiah was terrified. He thought that if he told the other part of his vacillating self that he had seen that "God is Jehovah," the vision would vanish, Elijah would disappear, and Ahab would kill the "worshipper of Jehovah" in himself. Elijah, however, reassured him, and he brought Ahab, the physical, to meet Elijah, the spiritual, face to face.

## PRINCIPLE Spiritual Power The Prophets of Baal

I Kings 18: 17-40

"And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" The Ahab in us always tries to blame the operation of our spiritual natures for all the trouble that arises. But our spiritual self replies, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim." In other words, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do" (John 8: 44); and this is the trouble. Then Elijah tells Ahab to gather all Israel to mount Carmel, the "fruitful place" of exalted thought, together with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of the groves. Undoubtedly the four hundred prophets stand for the opposite of Principle, the calculus of materiality. Four hundred and fifty is half way between four and five hundred. Does that stand for the opposite of Principle operating as the opposite of Life,—in other words, Baal, materiality, governing thought through the belief in death?

Elijah appealed to the people, saying, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God; follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." How long will you halt at the three-and-a-half stage? Either you must go on to the demon-

stration of Principle as Life, Truth, and Love, or you must turn back to trying to find ease in matter. "And the people answered him not a word." They were undecided. So Elijah suggested that they should take two bullocks, and that the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal should first prepare one for sacrifice, but put no fire under it. Then Elijah would do the same to the other,—“and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.”

The people answered, "It is well spoken," and the prophets of Baal chose their bullock and prepared it, and "called on the name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered." Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked." In other words, because he claims to be a god, Baal would also claim to counterfeit the divine infinite calculus. His "talking" counterfeits God's revelation of Himself through the Word; his "pursuing" counterfeits the Christ which comes where we are and lifts us up; being "in a journey" counterfeits the universal everpresence of Christianity; and Science never sleeps.

When "evening" was come ["EVENING. Mistiness of mortal thought; weariness of mortal mind; obscured views; peace and rest" (*S. & H.* 586)], Elijah said to the people, "Come near unto me." Then, with the consciousness of spiritual power, he took twelve stones to repair the altar of the Lord. His altar was built of the twelve stones of the calculus of the Word, the Christ, Christianity, and Science, each demonstrated as Life, as Truth, and as Love. "And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed." "Seed" is nearly always used in the Bible as a symbol of the Christ, and the "trench," which in this story originally guided the inspiration of Mind (the brook Cherith), is now enlarged to take two measures of the Christ,—the Christ ascending and the Christ descending, the objective and the subjective idea of the Christ.

Elijah then put the wood in order, and cut up the bullock. This bullock, which is to be sacrificed, would seem to correspond to the murrain on beasts of the fourth plague in Egypt, when

the understanding of Principle destroyed the belief in government by false gods, as represented by the animal worship of Egypt, and the worship of the golden calf in Israel, and now the worship of Baal. Elijah "cut up" this belief (analysed it) before the people.

He then instructed them to fill four barrels—the barrels of the Word, the Christ, Christianity, and Science—with the inspiration of the water of Life, and to pour it over the sacrifice. This was done three times, once from the standpoint of Life, once from Truth, and once from Love, making in all the twelve barrels of inspired demonstration. This water of inspiration "ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water."

At the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, which to Elijah symbolized "peace and rest," but to the people who watched was "mistiness of mortal thought; weariness of mortal mind; obscured views" (*S. & H.* 586), Elijah prayed to God, saying, "Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." Elijah's demonstration of the operation of Principle destroyed the false sense of government (the bullock), the stones of the calculus of materiality, the Adam belief (dust), and licked up what was left of the water of materiality. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there." "Kishon" means "binding," and, with true spiritual power, Elijah took all the false beliefs that had led to the government by materiality, and destroyed them all by the enduring, or binding, inspiration of the brook Kishon.



## LIFE Love The Rain Comes

I Kings 18: 41-19: 3

“And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain.” The drought had lasted three-and-a-half years, and outwardly there was no sign of a break, but Elijah had proved his Principle, and *knew* it must demonstrate itself in the abundance of Life. He commanded Ahab to “get thee up,” exalt your thought; and he himself went up to the top of mount Carmel, the “fruitful place.” There “he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees.” With the love that is Life, he laid the mortal concept of himself upon the “earth,” the spiritual idea, and humbled his false sense of identity.

Then, though already at the top of Carmel, Elijah told his servant (the thoughts that served him) to go *up* and look towards the sea. To look towards the sea would be to look towards the West, towards Science, and here, that little word “up” occurs five times in three verses, and the third verse ends with “Go again seven times.” When thought looks towards Science, and exalts itself through the seven synonymous terms, things begin to happen. At the seventh time the servant reported that “there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand.” The fruit of the demonstration begins to manifest itself “like a man’s hand”—with power.

Ahab was told at once to prepare his chariot and go down, lest the rain prevent him, whilst the heaven became “black with clouds and wind” (“that which indicates the might of omnipotence and the movements of God’s spiritual government, encompassing all things,” *S. & H.* 597), “and there was a great rain.” As Ahab rode down to Jezreel, Elijah “girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.” “Jezreel” means “God sows,” and when the “Ahab” in us has received the demonstration of the rain of abundant inspiration, it is well that the “Elijah” in us keeps ahead to guide that inspiration to where “God sows.”

Nevertheless Ahab told Jezebel, false womanhood, how Elijah had destroyed the prophets of Baal, and “Jezebel sent

a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time." False womanhood, which had introduced and fostered the worship of materiality, would do all it could to destroy "God is Jehovah." Then Elijah "arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba [the "well of the seven" or sevenfold inspiration], which belongeth to Judah ["A corporeal material belief progressing and disappearing; the spiritual understanding of God and man appearing," *S. & H.* 589], and left his servant there." He left there some of the beliefs that he had been using, but had outgrown.

## LIFE and TRUTH Under the Juniper Tree

I Kings 19: 4-8

In these few verses that illustrate the "day's journey" from Life to Truth, there is a perfect picture of the threefold definition of "Wilderness" as given by Mrs. Eddy on page 597 of *Science and Health*: "Loneliness; doubt; darkness. Spontaneity of thought and idea; the vestibule in which a material sense of things disappears, and spiritual sense unfolds the great facts of existence."

"But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers." He came into the wilderness of "Loneliness; doubt; darkness" and gave way to despair. He had been faithful in his ascending path, having demonstrated to the very best of his ability and understanding; yet it all seemed to be of no avail. He felt he was a failure. While our sense is that of "God is Jehovah," and we are striving to go up and improve ourselves, each forward step reveals so much more to be overcome and dealt with, that demonstration is frequently followed by that sense of failure and frustration. The Word alone never satisfies. It is only when the Word is translated, and we get "Elisha" ("God is salvation"), and we look out

from God, that demonstration becomes sure, effortless, and satisfying.

Here, in the wilderness of "Loneliness; doubt; darkness," Elijah is almost overcome by the "depravity" and "unreality" of the "Physical" in the "Scientific Translation of Mortal Mind" (*S. & H.* 115). He prayed that the Lord would take away his sense of life as mortal, but he lay under his juniper tree, and slept,—slept the deep sleep of the Adam dream.

But this was the wilderness, and so "an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat." "Angels" are "God's thoughts passing to man; spiritual intuitions, pure and perfect; the inspiration of goodness, purity, and immortality, counteracting all evil, sensuality, and mortality" (*S. & H.* 581). He experienced the second section of the definition of wilderness,—"Spontaneity of thought and idea." This angel told him to "Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head." This "spontaneity of thought and idea," the result of understanding, fed him on the bread of Truth and the water of Life, just as earlier he had been similarly fed by the ravens (belief), and the widow (faith). This time, as he fed, his thought was lifted from the "Physical" ("First Degree") to the "Moral" ("Second Degree"), and he "laid him down again."

The wilderness is thirdly "the vestibule in which a material sense of things disappears, and spiritual sense unfolds the great facts of existence." Elijah had prayed, "O Lord, take away my life,"—my false sense of life,—and this prayer was now being answered. It began to happen as he ate, and his thought was lifted from the "Physical" to the "Moral." This process now continues. "And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee." The journey from sense to Soul is too great for the moral sense. It must be lifted into the "Third Degree" ("Spiritual"). And so he ate the second time, and "went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God." The strength of understanding of the spiritual sustained him while he applied the calculus of the Word, the Christ, Christianity, and Science to the material problem, and this brought him to "Horeb the mount of God" where Moses first identified God as Jehovah.

## TRUTH Health On Horeb

I Kings 19: 9-18

On Horeb, Elijah lodged in a cave, but "the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?" When we come to "Horeb the mount of God," it is not "healthy" to hide ourselves in a cave. We must go out in the consciousness of Truth, and face the lie that is troubling us. Elijah answered the Lord from the depth of his depression, showing clearly the "unhealthiness" of his thought. "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." Though Elijah had reached the point where he felt *he* had been demonstrating true manhood for himself, and identifying himself with God, he felt that everyone else was wrong.

So the command came, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord." Don't hide in a cave, but go out on to the mountain of exalted thought, and look at the problem from God's point of view. "And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind." Mrs. Eddy defines "wind" as "That which indicates the might of omnipotence and the movements of God's spiritual government, encompassing all things. Destruction; anger; mortal passions" (*S. & H.* 597). Positively it is a symbol of the power of the Word, and it will rend the mountains of evil, and break in pieces the rocks of the material calculus. But the Lord is not in the symbol, nor has He any knowledge of the self-destroying, destructive elements of anger and mortal passions.

Then "after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake." The earth in its higher meaning symbolizes the spiritual idea, the Christ-idea, in so far as we have identified it and rest upon it. That which causes an "earthquake" is, therefore, the antichrist, and "the Lord was not in the earthquake."

“And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire.” Mrs. Eddy defines “fire” in part as, “Fear; remorse; lust; hatred; destruction” (*S. & H.* 586), the opposite of the love and fruitage of Christianity, and “the Lord was not in the fire.”

“And after the fire a still small voice”—the voice of Truth speaking as Science. Then Elijah “wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave.” He wrapped his identity in his spiritual understanding, and he came out of the cave in which he had confined himself. The voice repeated the earlier demand, “What doest thou here, Elijah?” and Elijah gives the same despondent reply. He is then shown how to use Truth to establish a true sense of manhood. He is told to go to Damascus, and anoint Hazael to be king of Syria, and then to anoint Jehu as king of Israel, and Elisha “to be prophet in thy room.” “Hazael” means “whom God sees,” and undoubtedly Syria typifies, in these stories, the first degree, the physical. Elijah begins to see that Hazael, “whom God sees,” is king even over physical conditions.

“Jehu” means “Jehovah is he,” and as king of Israel he seems to typify the second degree, the moral. Finally “Elisha” means “God is salvation,” and Mrs. Eddy defines “salvation” as “Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all; sin, sickness, and death destroyed.” He is to be the “prophet” to carry on and fulfil Elijah’s work, and “prophet” is defined as “A spiritual seer; disappearance of material sense before the conscious facts of spiritual Truth” (*S. & H.* 593).

The “still small voice” goes on to say that “him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.” Thus, through the translation of mortal mind through the three degrees will sin, sickness, and death be destroyed. But that is not all, for Truth speaking as Science says, “Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.” Elijah had thought that he alone was representing the true man, yet now he is shown that there are seven thousand in Israel,—in other words, he begins to understand the underlying perfection of *all* men,

however much mortal appearances seem to claim that every knee has bowed to Baal, to materiality.

It is interesting that Elijah foresaw the annihilation of evil as taking place through the translation of the physical, through the moral, to the spiritual; but later in the story, in actual demonstration, the process was reversed. Elijah called Elisha, the spiritual, and it was Elisha who, much later, anointed Jehu, the moral, king of Israel, and saw Hazael become king of Syria, the physical, and witnessed the annihilation of evil taking place through this reversed process.

## TRUTH—*continued* The Call of Elisha

I Kings 19: 19-21

So Elijah "departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him." Elisha, "God is salvation," was the son of "Shaphat," which means "Judge," and it is the Christ which is the true judge. He was ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen. He was trying to demonstrate through using the moral qualities (oxen) to "till the ground,"—so to "improve material belief by thought tending spiritually upward as to destroy materiality" (*S. & H.* 545). Elijah "cast his mantle upon him." He cast the influence of his spiritual understanding over him. Elisha immediately "left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee." This is similar to Jesus' disciples who asked leave to bid farewell to their families, or to bury their father, before following him (Matt. 8: 21-22; Luke 9: 59-62). Elijah was obviously disappointed, for he answered, "Go back again: for what have I done to thee?" If Elisha was to carry on his work, as God had promised, there could be no turning back again to placate materiality.

Elisha *did* go back, but not to kiss his father and mother,—not to bid farewell to a material sense of life,—but to complete the demonstration he had been working on when Elijah appeared. He had been using the oxen (moral qualities) so

to "improve material belief by thought tending spiritually upward as to destroy materiality." Now he "took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat." He saw that, as a means of demonstration, the moral qualities and their "instruments" were not enough. He had finished with them as a basis for demonstration, but he used them for what they could be used for,—namely to feed the people. "Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him."

## TRUTH—*continued* Naboth's Vineyard

I Kings 21: 1-29

Elijah's next appearance is in the story of Naboth's vineyard. "Naboth" means "prominence," and in "Jezreel," "God sows," he had a vineyard which Ahab wanted as "a garden of herbs"; but Naboth refused to part with "the inheritance of [his] fathers" either for money, or in exchange for another vineyard.

Naboth brought into prominence, or manifested, something of Elijah's growing sense of manhood as seen from the standpoint of the second degree, "Humanity, honesty, affection, compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance" (*S. & H.* 115). He inherited the earth, symbolized by the vineyard where "God sows," and which brought forth good fruit. Ahab, the physical, coveted this fruitful inheritance. He wanted it as a garden of herbs; he wanted to take for himself, without working for it, Naboth's "herb," the Christ of the third day of creation. Naboth, realizing that each individual has his own "inheritance" which he has to cultivate himself, and which cannot be given to another, refused to give or sell it to Ahab. So Ahab returned to his house, displeased and sulky, "and he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread."

Thereupon Jezebel his wife, false womanhood, undertook to obtain Naboth's vineyard for Ahab. "She wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth, . . . saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on

high among the people: And set two men, sons of Belial, before him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king. And then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die." It is just another version of the Cain and Abel story. The physical is jealous of the greater success of the moral, and the moral, if not backed by the spiritual, is unable to protect itself, and, for the time being, is killed. Then "the word of the Lord" came to Elijah, the spiritual, who proclaims to Ahab, "Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? . . . Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine." Just as Cain's crime led to his banishment to the land of Nod, darkness, nothingness, so Ahab's and Jezebel's crime led to their destruction. Ahab repented when he heard Elijah's words, and so the sentence was postponed, but there was no real reformation and so first Ahab himself was killed as Elijah prophesied, and eventually Jezebel and the whole house of Ahab was utterly destroyed by Jehu.

## TRUTH and LOVE The Captains of the Fifties

II Kings I: 1-18

Ahab was succeeded by his son Ahaziah, who "fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick." "Ahaziah" means "Jehovah hath grasped." He evidently had some idea of man being grasped or held by Jehovah,—being the reflection and manifestation of Jehovah,—but he fell from this "upper chamber," and was very sick, as a fallen sense of man always is. But instead of turning to God to recover this lost sense of health and manhood, he sent messengers, saying, "Go, enquire of Baal-zebub the God of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease." "Baal-zebub," or "Beelzebub" as he is called in the New Testament, means "Lord of the flies," and was the god of sin, or, as Jesus called him, "the prince of the devils." "Ekron" means "torn up by the roots," and it is rather lovely to realize that "the prince of the devils" is god only of that which is already torn up by the roots!



“But the angel of the Lord said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria.” Until now it has always been “the word of the Lord” that has instructed Elijah and sent him forward, but now that he is realizing something of the fulfilment of the Word, it is a more subjective idea that comes to him, symbolized by an angel. This angel tells him to send word to Ahaziah through his messengers, saying that because he has turned to Baal-zebub instead of to God, he will not recover, but will surely die. When Truth merges into Love, and “God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good,” any mortal sense of man must “surely die!”

With that, Elijah departed, and the messengers returned to Ahaziah, who wanted to know why they had come back. They told of their meeting with Elijah (though they do not seem to have recognized him), and gave the king his message.

Ahaziah asked, “What manner of man was he which came up to meet you, and told you these words? And they answered him, He was an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite.” The description of him as “an hairy man” at once convinced the king that it was Elijah. This is the only reference to Elijah as “hairy,” and it is interesting that it comes here where he is fulfilling his sense of manhood. Hair to the Hebrews was a symbol of God’s favour, and loss of hair, or baldness, was looked upon as a mark of God’s displeasure, a loss of identity. Prophets, to symbolize full identification with God, wore hairy garments. So when the messengers answered, “He was an hairy man,” it was equivalent to saying, “He is a man of God.”

Then the king sent “a captain of fifty with his fifty” to Elijah, and “behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down.” The king sent to Elijah his belief of life in and of matter as symbolized by the “captain of fifty with his fifty,”—the five of a false sense of life applied to the human. Elijah’s thought was exalted. He was *resting* on the top of a hill. Mrs. Eddy, speaking of man’s spiritual progress, says, “He shall rise to know that there is no sin, that there is no suffering; since all that is *real* is *right*. This knowledge enables him to overcome the world, the flesh, and all evil, to have dominion over his

own sinful sense and self. Then shall he drink anew Christ's cup, in the kingdom of God—the reign of righteousness—within him; he shall sit down at the Father's right hand: *sit down*; not stand waiting and weary; but rest on the bosom of God; rest, in the understanding of divine Love that passeth all understanding; rest, in that which 'to know aright is Life eternal,' and whom, not having seen, we love" (*Mis.* 125). Yet the false sense of life said to Elijah, "Come down!"

Elijah answered, "If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty." Only on one occasion before this has Elijah been called the "man of God." That was when the son of the widow of Zarephath died and was resurrected. Twice then, as she identified him, she called him "thou man of God." Now, as Truth is being fulfilled in Love, Elijah is identifying himself and claiming the dominion of the "man of God,"—of man made in God's image and likeness. As the "man of God," he no longer struggles, but sits on the top of his hill of exalted thought, claiming dominion, and using his manhood to call upon the fires of God to destroy the belief of life in matter, the physical, which is calling upon him to come down from his exalted position. "And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty." Just as easily as that was the demonstration made!

Then the king sent a second captain with his fifty, saying, "O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly." Sometimes we resist the cry of the physical, "Come down to our level," and the temptation is quickly wiped out. But it is followed by the moral which cries even more urgently, "Come down *quickly!*"—help us from the standpoint of the good human,—and often this is a far subtler temptation than the first. However Elijah gives exactly the same answer,—“If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty,” and from his standpoint of the “man of God” this temptation is dealt with as promptly as the first. “And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty.”

A third time the king sent a captain with his fifty, but this time “the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him,

O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight." From the standpoint of the third degree, the spiritual, there is no call to go *down* to a lower level of thought to meet the situation. Instead, that which calls for help from the spiritual comes up to reach the spiritual, and in humility begs that its life may be held "precious in thy sight." Then "the angel of the Lord said unto Elijah, Go down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and went down with him unto the king." When "an angel," a "spiritual intuition," bids us go down to deal with a situation, it is a very different thing to going down in response to the call of the error. At the angel's bidding we go down without lowering our thought; we go down with the dominion of true manhood, with our thought still resting on the hilltop of the spiritual, and then, like Elijah, we can speak with authority to mortal mind's concept of man, saying, "Thus saith the Lord, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers to enquire of Baalzebub . . . therefore thou shalt not come down off that bed on which thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. So he died according to the word of the Lord which Elijah had spoken."

## LOVE Holiness Elijah's Translation

### II Kings 2: 1-11

The sense of mortal man, fallen man, had died to Elijah. "God is Jehovah" has risen from the primitive Jewish sense that Jehovah was "a tribal god to be worshipped" (*S. & H.* 524) to the understanding of "the incorporeal sense of God and man as the infinite Principle and infinite idea,—as one Father with His universal family, held in the gospel of Love" (*S. & H.* 577). Here "God is Jehovah" is translated into "God is salvation,"—the story of Elijah becomes the story of Elisha. Elijah ascends, and his mantle falls on Elisha.

Elijah has just demonstrated dominion over the false sense of man through the rising translation of the three degrees,—the physical, the moral, and the spiritual. Now, before the "Elijah" ("God is Jehovah") can be fully translated into "Elisha" ("God is salvation"), he has to bring this demon-

stration of the spiritual right down through the moral to the physical, proving that the spiritual is master of both the moral and the physical. It is the process which is neatly described in Genesis 9: 27: "God shall enlarge Japheth [the spiritual], and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem [the moral]; and Canaan [the physical] shall be his servant."

Elijah starts from Gilgal, which means "circle,"—the symbol of eternity, of the spiritual. He says to Elisha, "Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Beth-el." "Beth-el" means "house of God," and stands for a theological and organized sense of religion,—the good human, or moral aspect. Elijah thought that "God is salvation" would surely stay in Gilgal, the spiritual, but Elisha realized that he could not reach fruition unless he followed Elijah's demonstration to its completion. He replied, "As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee."

"So they went down to Beth-el." That word "down" puzzles the commentators, who declare that Beth-el is situated above Gilgal, and they suggest that the text should probably read, "So they went *up* to Beth-el." But the writers of the story were using these names not geographically but symbolically to show how thought comes with dominion from the spiritual to operate through the moral and the physical. "Beth-el" ("the house of God"), or organized religion, functions largely on a moral basis, rather than on a spiritual one, and here Elisha has to deal with the "sons of the prophets." "And the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace." "The sons of the prophets" play a considerable part in the story of Elisha. They seem to represent the understanding of Mind, Spirit and Soul which has not yet sufficiently identified itself with Principle to demonstrate Life, Truth and Love. This objective understanding sees that Elijah is about to pass completely beyond its comprehension, and tells Elisha so. Elisha, who is looking at the situation from a subjective standpoint,—looking out from God, rather than up to God,—is fully aware that momentous things are happening, and says, "Hold ye your peace." Don't interrupt and disturb the operation of Principle; get self out of the way, and let

Love unfold its plan unobstructed by mortal questionings. Thus "God is salvation" deals with the attempted obstruction of organized religion.

Again Elijah suggests that Elisha shall tarry at Beth-el while the Lord sends him to Jericho, and again Elisha refuses to leave him. "Jericho" means "place of fragrance," and stands for the physical, matter, of which Mrs. Eddy writes that it is "sometimes beautiful, always erroneous" (*S. & H.* 277). Here again the sons of the prophets say to Elisha, "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to day?" Again he answers, "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace," thus dealing with the opposition to the translation of what seems good and pleasant in the material.

Then Elijah said to Elisha, "Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on." They went on till they came to Jordan, the understanding which is "the line of demarcation between the real and the unreal" (*S. & H.* 505), between Spirit and matter. Here, while Elijah and Elisha stood by Jordan, "fifty men of the sons of the prophets went, and stood to view afar off." The understanding of Mind, Spirit, and Soul, with its sense of life applied to the human (fifty), must always view from "afar off" the demonstration of the prophets, of the "disappearance of material sense before the conscious facts of spiritual Truth" (*S. & H.* 593).

"And Elijah took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground." He took the Mind of Christ, wherewith he had clothed himself, and with it smote the waters, "the elements of Mind" (*S. & H.* 507) so that they divided and the firmament of Spirit appeared, enabling them to pass from matter to Spirit on the dry ground of the definiteness and certainty of Soul.

"And it came to pass, when they were gone over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee." What can "God is Jehovah" do for "God is salvation" before it passes away in fulfilment? "And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." Let me not only have the Word which you have

demonstrated so fully as Mind, Spirit, and Soul, proving themselves as Principle, Life, Truth, and Love, but also the Christ where Principle, Life, Truth, and Love come to the flesh to destroy incarnate error through Soul, Spirit, and Mind.

Elijah replies, "Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so." You have asked what nobody can give you. Nobody can give another the Christ, but if you can see and understand the fulfilment of the Word, where the purely objective approach to God ascends to divine Principle, Love, and becomes one with God, then you will indeed look out from God, and be the Christ to every situation that may arise.

"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." They still went on. "Infinite progression is concrete being, which finite mortals see and comprehend only as abstract glory. As mortal mind, or the material sense of life, is put off, the spiritual sense and Science of being is brought to light" (*Mis.* 82). The fires of the Holy Ghost, "the development of eternal Life, Truth, and Love" (*S. & H.* 588), burnt up the material sense of things; translated the corporeal sense of the Word into the incorporeal; Elijah ("God is Jehovah") disappeared, and Elisha ("God is salvation") was left to prove the definition of salvation as "Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all; sin, sickness, and death destroyed" (*S. & H.* 593).

# *Elisha*

## INTRODUCTION

In this second half of the story, Elisha is demonstrating the Christ as salvation. Mrs. Eddy defines Christ as "The divine manifestation of God, which comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error" (*S. & H.* 583). Elisha manifests the Christ as Life, Truth and Love, which comes to the flesh and deals with the human problem through Soul, Spirit and Mind.

First he demonstrates chiefly from the standpoint of Life, and in this section he is clearly feeling his way, and developing steadily, and so one might say that this section is from the standpoint of the Word.

Secondly he demonstrates from the standpoint of Christ, Truth, and from this point onwards he is continually referred to as "the man of God." Here he is translating Principle to its idea, and mortal mind out of itself.

Thirdly, from the standpoint of Love, Elisha sits back and allows Principle to operate with absolute dominion and certainty as Christianity and Science.

Apart from these general headings, no attempt has been made to classify the sub-tones under headings, for in almost every story there is a wonderful blending of all seven synonyms, and of the operation of the Word, the Christ, Christianity, and Science, all delicately interwoven. In most of them Elisha is demonstrating Principle as Life, Truth or Love in Christianity or Science, whilst to the person he helps (the receiving end of the story), it comes as the Word or the Christ, demonstrated through Mind, Spirit, and Soul. So there are many threads running parallel, and often changing tone at different points. The writer has therefore concentrated on showing the practical import of these stories in dealing with the problems of everyday life, leaving the reader to follow as much or as little of the changing sub-tones as interests him individually.

## LIFE Elisha Recrosses Jordan

II Kings 2: 12-18

Elijah had ascended, and Elisha had seen it, and now he was left to carry on. He cried, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." As our sense of the Word is translated, it becomes to us our Father, Life, which comes to Israel as chariots and horsemen of fire,—God's revelation of Himself through the numerals of infinity, through all the ideas God has of Himself as Mind, as Spirit, as Soul, as Principle, as Life, as Truth, and as Love.

"And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces." When the Word becomes absolutely incorporeal to us, absolutely subjective, then we realize that our "clothes" are in "two pieces,"—we have the "double portion" of the Word and the Christ.

"He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him." When our "Elijah" ascends, we do not lose the Word. We take up the mantle, the understanding, that falls from him, and we use it, but from a higher standpoint, from the standpoint of "Elisha." Elisha realized that the "double portion" was not truly his until he had brought his vision down and proved it to be practical in ordinary everyday life. So he must recross Jordan. The Christ must come to the flesh to destroy incarnate error. He must bring the Christ right down where it can deal with the material fable. To do this he used the mantle of Elijah. He "smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" Has the Word of God ascended beyond human use, or is it still available here and now? "And when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over."

"The sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho" saw what happened, and they said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha," but they did not comprehend in the very least what this meant, for they still felt that "Elijah" was corporeal, and must be visible in the flesh. So they came and bowed before Elisha and said, "Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy



master: lest peradventure the spirit of the Lord hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley." The understanding merely of Mind, Spirit, and Soul wished to send fifty strong men—the strong belief that life is in and of matter—to search for the Word in a corporeal form.

Elisha replied, "Ye shall not send," but "when they urged him till he was ashamed, he said, Send." Sometimes, when our spiritual sense has witnessed something of the true prophet, the "disappearance of material sense before the conscious facts of spiritual Truth" (*S. & H.* 593), the "sons of the prophets" in us demand permission to search for that which has disappeared, and though the "Elisha" in us is satisfied that the material sense *has* disappeared, those "sons of the prophets" go on nagging and expressing doubts until at last, like Elisha, we reply, "All right then! Go and see if you can find life in matter!" "And they sought three days, but found him not." Even from the standpoint of Mind, Spirit, and Soul only, you cannot find the Word as a corporeality.

## LIFE—*continued* The Healing of the Waters

### II Kings 2: 19–22

Until this belief of life in matter was thoroughly dealt with, Elisha "tarried at Jericho." He remained with the first degree, the physical. "And the men of the city—" (the calculus of materiality, not the city of the Spirit) "—said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the ground barren." How often the city of materiality appears to us pleasantly situated, but we soon find that there is no water of Life, no inspiration, and the ground proves to be very barren.

Elisha said, "Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein." Bring me a new sense of Life, and fill it with salt, the symbol of everlasting Life. Then "he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land." He led thought to the "spring of the waters," which Elisha realized to be none other than

the river of Life, but which the people thought of as life in matter, and he "cast the salt in." Into the people's wrong idea of life, he cast his own understanding of the newness and eternity of Life. This "healed the waters" by translating the belief of a physical and material source into a spiritual idea, where there is not "any more death or barren land."

## LIFE—*continued* The Forty-Two Children

II Kings 2 : 23-25

Having translated Jericho, the first degree, the physical, Elisha "went up from thence unto Bethel," which is the "house of God," the moral, or second degree. "As he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head."

You may remember from the story of Elijah and the captains of the fifties that hair, to the Hebrews, was a symbol of God's favour, of true identification, and that baldness was considered a sign of the loss of God's favour, the loss of identity. Elisha had not yet fully proved that he *was* "Elisha," "God is salvation," and these nasty little doubting thoughts came and mocked him, saying, "Go up, thou bald head." "Go up." You have not yet reached that exalted understanding of salvation as "Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all; sin, sickness, and death destroyed" (*S. & H.* 593). You are still a "bald head." You are not identified as a "man of God." You have not received the "double portion." In fact, you have only attained to the three-and-a-half, and you have a long way to go up before you attain dominion and fulfilment.

But Elisha was wise. He did not let these doubts rankle. He turned and faced them at once. "He turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord." He saw that they were not of God, and therefore were accursed. "And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them." The bear usually comes in the Bible as the second of a series of animals, symbolizing the Christ.

Here it is "two she bears,"—the two of the "double portion," and "she" to emphasize the womanhood of the Christ, the subjective sense. This womanhood or motherhood of the Christ came "to the flesh to destroy incarnate error," and in so doing, "tare forty and two children." Forty-two is three-and-a-half times twelve. The doubts that were troubling Elisha could be summed up as inability to demonstrate (twelve) Principle as Life, Truth and Love (the second three-and-a-half). But as he turned on these doubts, and "cursed them in the name of the Lord," he saw that they were nothing to do with God, with reality, and the Christ immediately came to the flesh and destroyed them. "And he went from thence to mount Carmel," the "fruitful place," the third degree, spiritual reality. From this point onwards he seems to have no more doubts, but begins to speak with authority and has ever-increasing dominion over every situation that arises.

## LIFE—*continued* The Rebellion of Moab

### II Kings 3

Jehoram, the second son of Ahab, was now king of Israel, "and he wrought evil in the sight of the Lord; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made." "Jehoram" means "Jehovah is exalted," and though this was an improvement on the gross materiality of Ahab and Jezebel, it cannot have been a very high concept of Jehovah, for he still "wrought evil in the sight of the Lord."

Now the king of Moab had for some time been tributary to Israel, but after the death of Ahab, Mesha, king of Moab, rebelled and refused to pay his tribute. The Moabites were supposed to be the descendants of Moab, the son of Lot by his daughter, who, after they escaped from Sodom, made her father drunk, and went in to lie with him. The tribe seems to typify lust, sensuality, and "Mesha," which means "freedom," would be the licentious freedom of lust, which broke free from the control of the moral as symbolized by Israel.

Jehoram gathered his army together and prepared to make

war against Moab to re-establish his control. He sent to Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, and asked for his help, and Jehoshaphat agreed to join forces with him. "Jehoshaphat" means "Jehovah hath judged" and was undoubtedly nearer the spiritual idea than Jehoram. It is interesting to note that this story is about "Jehovah is exalted"—some sense of Life; "Jehovah hath judged"—some sense of Truth; and "God is salvation"—"Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all."

Jehoram asked Jehoshaphat which way they should set about subduing Moab, sensuality. The answer was, "The way through the wilderness of Edom." "Edom" means "red," and is essentially the same word as "Adam." These two decided (as we do so often) to try to subdue lust by material means,—by going through the wilderness of the Adam dream! It is not therefore surprising to read that, after they had "fetched a compass of seven days' journey," "there was no water for the host, and for the cattle that followed them." A seven-fold deviation into the Adam dream results in a complete lack of inspiration.

Jehoram bemoaned his fate, but Jehoshaphat said, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may enquire of the Lord by him? And one of the king of Israel's servants answered and said, Here is Elisha the son of Shaphat, which poured water on the hands of Elijah." "Which poured water on the hands of Elijah!" What a lovely description of Elisha that is! "God is salvation" poured inspiration on the power of "God is Jehovah!"

So the three kings of Judah, Israel, and Edom went to Elisha, who said to the king of Israel, "What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother." He realized that Jehoram's real leaning was to the material, rather than to the spiritual. But eventually, because of the presence of Jehoshaphat, who really wanted the spiritual, Elisha called for a minstrel to play. He called for harmony, and "when the minstrel played,—when he became conscious of harmony"—the hand of the Lord—spiritual power—came upon him." Then he said, "Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled

with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts." As a well-known hymn expresses it:—

"Make channels for the streams of Love,  
Where they may broadly run;  
And Love has overflowing streams,  
To fill them every one."

This outpouring of inspiration does not come as the result of any material happening, symbolized by wind or rain. We do not have to know or outline by what channels it will reach us. It demands, however, that we keep channels ready to receive it, for it is the ever-present abundance of Life, forever here and now, forever available for all who are ready to accept.

Elisha continues, "And this is but a light thing in the sight of the Lord: he will deliver the Moabites also into your hand. And ye shall smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones." These instructions trouble the commentators, because to follow such a "scorched earth" policy was contrary to the Mosaic law, and they cannot understand Elisha disregarding the law. But considered from the symbolic standpoint as our own story, when we set out to conquer lust and sensuality, how important these instructions are! We are to smite every fenced city—every stronghold in our consciousness where lust is entrenched. Also every choice city—every spot in our consciousness that says there is pleasure or anything "choice" in lust. We must fell every tree that claims to be a tree of knowledge of good and evil. We must stop all wells of water—all that would nourish lust. And we must mar every good piece of land with stones—we must use the calculus of Spirit to ensure that no fertile ground is left in our thought where lust can grow and flourish.

"And it came to pass in the morning," ["MORNING. Light; symbol of Truth; revelation and progress" (*S. & H.* 591)] "the country was filled with water."

When Moab heard of the threatened invasion, "they gathered all that were able to put on armour, . . . and stood in the border." But on the morning when "the country was filled with water," "the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood." They thought

the three kings had been fighting among themselves, and they rushed in to gather the spoils, but the Israelites were ready for them, and "the Israelites rose up and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: but they went forward smiting the Moabites, even in their country." The inspiration which saves the situation for our spiritual selves, appears as "blood" to our sensual natures, and causes those sensual natures to rush forward to their own destruction.

Then the Israelites followed Elisha's instructions, destroying everything to do with Moab, sensuality. "They beat down the cities, and on every good piece of land cast every man his stone, and filled it; and they stopped all the wells of water, and felled all the good trees," until only Kir-haraseth was left. "Kir-haraseth" means "wall or fortress of brick,"—a man-made sense of the Word. Here the king of Moab made a last stand, and gathering "seven hundred men that drew swords," he tried to break through to the king of Edom. "But they could not. Then he took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering upon the wall." Thus lust, pursued to its last stronghold, destroyed its own "son," and Israel "returned to their own land."

## TRUTH The Widow's Oil

### II Kings 4: 1-7

Elisha has now reached the point where he no longer hesitates when confronted with a problem, but meets the situation with the irresistible and ever-available dominion of Truth. From the standpoint of the Christ he proves himself to be the man of God.

These next two incidents of the Widow's Oil and of the Shunammite and her Son have a considerable resemblance to the incident of the Widow of Zarephath in the Elijah story, and many of the commentators think they are variations of the same story, but attributed in the one case to Elijah, and here to Elisha. They serve to show us how differently similar experiences appear to us from the Elijah standpoint of working up to God, or the Elisha standpoint of working from God.

Here, a "woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets" came to Elisha, and said, "Thy servant my husband is dead." She had been married to the understanding of Mind, Spirit, and Soul, but this had now gone "dead" to her. It was no longer enough to support her, just as materiality had failed to support the widow of Zarephath. This widow continued, "The creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen." Truth always demands that our debts are forgiven only as we forgive our debtors. The widow of Zarephath had one son,—the Christ-idea as born to her from the Elijah standpoint of Spirit in the Word. This widow had two sons,—the subjective and objective sense of the Christ-idea that came from the Elisha standpoint of the Christ. In the first story the "son" died because the widow called her sins to remembrance; here "the creditor" came to take the "sons" as bondmen, because she had not learnt to identify herself and others with Principle, and so was not paying her "debts." The creditor is the belief of life in matter, and, if we let it in, this belief will surely try to bind our "sons" with bonds and limitations, and lead them away captive.

Elisha could help her only by developing what was already within. He asked her what she had in the house, in her consciousness. She replied, "Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil." Her only asset was her consciousness of possessing oil, which Mrs. Eddy defines as "Consecration; charity; gentleness; prayer; heavenly inspiration" (*S. & H.* 592). Many of us, when confronted by a problem which claims to be taking away our "sons," if asked by our "Elisha" what we have of Truth in our consciousness, would probably reply as did the woman, "Thine handmaid hath not any thing." We feel utterly depleted. But on second thought, could we not too add, "save a pot of oil?" Those five characteristics which constitute the symbol of oil must be ours at least in part, or we should never have had a "son," nor should we be crying to "Elisha" to save him from the "creditor."

That "oil" must be used. Elisha said to her, "Go, borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty vessels; borrow not a few. And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into

all those vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full." When our understanding of Mind, Spirit, and Soul seems to die and leave us "widowed," and the "creditor" claims our "sons," it is because we are not using to the full what we already have. Jesus brought this out in the parable of the talents, where those who used the talents doubled them, but "from him that hath not [uses not] shall be taken away even that which he hath" (Matthew 25: 29). The answer is to go ahead and use what we have in a broader way than ever before. This widow was to borrow empty vessels from her neighbours. She was to gather receptive thoughts from all around her. Then she must shut the door of her consciousness against all that is unlike God. Mrs. Eddy writes, "The closet typifies the sanctuary of Spirit, the door of which shuts out sinful sense but lets in Truth, Life, and Love" (*S. & H.* 15). In this "quiet sanctuary of earnest longings," her sons—what she knew of the Christ—brought her the receptive thoughts of her neighbours, and she filled them all with her oil of "Consecration; charity; gentleness; prayer; heavenly inspiration" (*S. & H.* 592). Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (John 12: 32). It is always our "sons" that draw others to us.

As each "vessel" had received all it could take, it was "set aside." When we begin to pour out our "oil" we need to watch that we do not force on those who come to us more than they can take. We must never overflow the "vessels." When all the vessels were full, then "the oil stayed." Our "heavenly inspiration" flows abundantly while we can use it. It is equal to every demand made upon it, but it never overflows to be wasted. When we stop using it, its flow seems to stop until we again begin to use it.

"Then she came and told the man of God." This is the first reference to Elisha as the "man of God," but from this point, where he starts to demonstrate the dominion of man made in God's image and likeness, he is continually referred to as the "man of God." The man of God says, "Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest." Go and exchange your "oil" for even higher ideas of God. Use these to wipe out all "debts"—all false beliefs, all the wrong things you have thought about your neighbours—and there



will be inspiration enough left to sustain you and your "children."

## TRUTH—*continued* The Shunammite and Her Son

II Kings 4: 8-37

In Shunem there lived a "great woman," who, when Elisha passed that way, "constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread." She was a "great woman" because she had great spiritual sense, and her womanhood enabled her to appreciate that Elisha, "God is salvation," was indeed "an holy man of God" to be welcomed, cherished, and fed in consciousness. But she was a Shunammite, and "Shunem" means "uneven."

She said to her husband, "Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither." Let us prepare a chamber in our consciousness, built upon the "wall," the symbol of the Word, and furnished with a "bed," the understanding of the Word on which we can rest; with a "table" at which we can partake of the bread of Truth, the Christ; with a "stool" on which we can rest in Christianity on the realization that Principle demonstrates itself; and a "candlestick" to give us the light of Science. And let this chamber be ever ready to receive the inspiration of the Christ whenever it comes our way.

One day as Elisha rested in this chamber, he bade his servant Gehazi call the Shunammite, and ask her what she desired, what he could do for her. When we prepare our consciousness to receive Truth, there is some motive behind it. Often we hope that more understanding of the Truth will improve our condition materially. This is a wrong motive. We should desire Truth for its own sake, because we desire to know more of God and of God's man. Elisha wanted to find out what was the Shunammite's motive. He asked if she would like a recommendation to the king, or to the captain of the army. She

replied, "I dwell among mine own people." She dwelt among the children of God, and desired no material advancement. He asked again, "What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old." Her husband was old,—an old theological sense, to which she had wedded herself, and this had given her no "child," no understanding of her true Christ-selfhood. It was this Christ-truth that she desired above all things. Here was the unevenness. Her desire and her sense of womanhood were great, and her motives were right, but she had married herself to old beliefs.

So Elisha sent for her, and she "stood in the door,"—the door that "shuts out sinful sense but lets in Truth, Life, and Love" (*S. & H.* 15). "And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son." Her desire for Truth was so sincere that it would enable her to overcome the limitations of belief, and to bring to birth her individual concept of the Christ-idea. At first she dared not accept this, and protested, "Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid." How often does self-depreciation make us deny the possibility that we can give birth to a spiritual idea! Nevertheless, "the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life,"—when her thought was fully prepared for it.

"And when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my head." The old theological sense of life was out in the field of mixed thinking, helping to reap the fruits of tilling the soil, trying to improve material beliefs. If we allow our infant Christ-idea to wander out into that field where Abel was slain, and Joseph lost his coat of many colours, then it, too, is liable to suffer, and to cry, "My head, my head."

The father commanded that he be carried to his mother. He realized that the need was for a greater sense of motherhood. So a lad carried him to his mother, and "he sat on her knees till noon, and then died." Womanhood nursed and tended the idea humanly until noon, when, to human sense, it died. When we reach noon, the fullness of day, which Mrs. Eddy defines in part as "the irradiance of Life; light, the spiritual idea of Truth and Love" (*S. & H.* 584), we see the futility of

trying to sustain our spiritual idea humanly. Then we are ready to say, "Keep Thou my child on upward wing tonight" (*Mis.* 389), and to do as the Shunammite then did. "She went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out." She laid him on the understanding on which the "man of God" rests safe and sound, and she shut the door that "shuts out sinful sense but lets in Truth, Life, and Love" (*S. & H.* 15), and there she left him.

"And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, it shall be well." Womanhood asked for a young idea to accompany her, and an ass to ride upon. Peloubet's *Bible Dictionary* writes of the ass as follows: "With us the ass is a symbol of stubbornness and stupidity, while in the East it is especially remarkable for its patience, gentleness, intelligence, meek submission and great power of endurance. . . . The ass was the animal of peace, as the horse was the animal of war." And so, when the woman set out to find man made in God's image and likeness, it was appropriate that she should ride upon an ass, with an active young idea beside her. But old theology immediately objected that it was not the sabbath or a feast day. The search for God and for the man of God is, to old theology, an occupation only for Sundays and special occasions, and has nothing to do with the troubles of everyday life! The woman does not argue, but replies, "It shall be well," as much as to say, "My action will be justified and proved correct by the results."

She allowed nothing to stop her until she came to the "man of God" on mount Carmel, the "fruitful place." There Elisha saw her coming when she was still afar off, and sent Gehazi running to meet her, and to say to her, "Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered, It is well." What faith that woman had! She was indeed a "great woman!" Her own understanding seemed to have been insufficient to meet the human problem, yet when asked by Gehazi whether all was well with herself, her husband, and the child, she was able to translate this on to a higher plane, where, as the mother, she became the symbol of Love;

where her husband was Life; and the child was Truth. All is well with Love, Life, and Truth.

“And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet,” by the understanding; “but Gehazi came near to thrust her away.” “Gehazi” means “valley of vision,” and seems to represent Elisha’s thought in his less exalted moments. The “valley of vision” cannot understand another’s need, and does not approve of anyone catching the “man of God” by the feet! But Elisha dealt with this at once, saying, “Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the Lord hath hid it from me, and hath not told me.” Elisha was now demonstrating from the standpoint of the Christ, and the Mind of Christ enabled him to appreciate the unvoiced call for help, though the “Gehazi” in his thought prevented him being spiritually clear enough to discern fully what was the trouble.

Then the woman said, “Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?” She had doubted whether she was spiritually minded enough to give birth to a spiritual idea. Now it seemed to her to have been proved that she was not ready for the experience, for she had been unable to sustain the idea when it had come to her.

“Gehazi” was still uppermost in Elisha’s thought, and he tried to work through him. He said to him, “Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; . . . and lay my staff upon the face of the child.” But with whatever urgency we charge our “valley of vision,” and though we put our staff of the understanding of Life, Truth, and Love into his hand, we cannot work out a problem in that way.

The woman realized this. She would have nothing but the best. She wanted “God is salvation,” not the “valley of vision.” She said to Elisha, “As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her.” Elisha *arose*,—he lifted his thought from the “valley of vision,” and followed the woman, who, at this point, showed him the way.

Gehazi returned to say that he had “laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing.” Even the staff of Life, Truth, and Love laid upon the identity

of the child could evoke no response when applied from the lower standpoint.

“And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the Lord.” He entered into the closet and shut the door, as Jesus later directed. Mrs. Eddy wrote, “The closet typifies the sanctuary of Spirit, the door of which shuts out sinful sense but lets in Truth, Life, and Love. Closed to error, it is open to Truth, and *vice versa*” (*S. & H.* 15). Under similar circumstances, Elijah stretched himself three times upon the child, from the standpoint of Mind, of Spirit, and of Soul. Elisha “went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm.” He went up. It was no longer the Gehazi sense of the “valley of vision.” Elisha now worked from the highest standpoint he knew. He “put his mouth upon his mouth.” The mouth symbolizes the Word, and Elisha saw that the living Word was universal, and so belonged to the child as much as to himself. He “put his eyes upon his eyes.” He saw that the discernment of the Christ was also universal, belonging to the child as well as to himself. He put “his hands upon his hands.” He saw that the power of Christianity was universal, and so belonged to them both. These were the three that he stretched upon the child. As he did this, “the flesh of the child waxed warm.” Science came into operation. He began to “be.”

“Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.” Elisha walked to and fro in his “house,” his consciousness, to make sure that there was nothing there to hinder the demonstration, and then he stretched himself again upon the child. Thereupon, through the seven sneezes, the child eliminated the errors which were the opposites of the seven synonyms, and which had caused the trouble, and he “opened his eyes.” He perceived the Truth of his own identity as a spiritual idea.

Then the Shunammite was called, and Elisha said to her, “Take up thy son. Then she went in,”—through the Word—

“and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground,”—using the Christ to translate the situation,—“and took up her son,”—in true Christianity,—“and went out” to live Science. Mrs. Eddy writes, “Let mortals bow before the creator, and, looking through Love’s transparency, behold man in God’s own image and likeness, arranging in the beauty of holiness each budding thought” (*Mis.* 330).

## TRUTH—*continued* The Poisoned Pottage

II Kings 4: 38-41

Elisha came again to Gilgal, the circle of immortality and eternity, and there he met once more the sons of the prophets, —the understanding of Mind, Spirit, and Soul which had not yet identified itself sufficiently with Principle to demonstrate Life, Truth, and Love. These sons of the prophets were approaching the point where they were ready to be translated by the Christ into this higher understanding which would identify them with Principle. They were becoming dissatisfied with what they knew and understood. Mind, Spirit, and Soul alone no longer fed them adequately, and so we read, “there was a dearth in the land.”

Elisha said to his servant, “Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the prophets.” Prepare for them the spiritual food they need. But “one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of pottage: for they knew them not.” One went out into the field of mixed thinking, where there is always danger. He was looking for “herbs,” the Christ as brought forth in the third day of creation. But what grows in that “field” is not the Christ that is brought forth by the “earth,” but a poisonous counterfeit, which he did not recognize as harmful.

However, the moment “the sons of the prophets” began to partake of the spiritual food prepared, they detected some poison in the teaching, and “they cried out, and said, O thou man of God, there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof.” Elisha replied, “Then bring meal.” Bring the elements

of Truth, simple statements of Truth. "And he cast it into the pot," and immediately, of course, the truth destroyed the lie, as Truth always does. "And he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no harm in the pot."

## TRUTH—*continued* Elisha Feeds a Hundred Men

II Kings 4: 42-44

"There came a man from Baal-shalisha, and brought the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and full ears of corn in the husk thereof." "Baal-shalisha" means "lord of the third ground," and would seem to imply one who was "lord" of the third day,—who had understood Soul, and thereby identified himself with Principle, and was therefore able to bring of the firstfruits of Life, Truth, and Love. There were twenty barley loaves, and it is interesting that barley is nearly always associated with a "two." Whereas wheat usually symbolizes the Christ, barley seems to symbolize the Christ manifested as man, and the "two" is therefore the two of manhood and womanhood. This man brought his "firstfruits" of demonstration as an understanding of the real man and real woman applied to the human ( $2 \times 10$ ), and also a fuller sense of the Christ as symbolized by the "full ears of corn."

Elisha at once commanded that this should be given to those with him,—presumably still the "sons of the prophets." His servitor complains that it is insufficient for a hundred men. Twenty loaves was sufficient only for twenty men, and so would have to be multiplied five times to feed a hundred men. But Elisha replied, "Thus saith the Lord, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the Lord." Thus Elisha demonstrated through Life the abundance and multiplication of the bread of Truth, which is always adequate to meet every human need.

## TRUTH—*continued* Naaman

II Kings 5: 1-27

Naaman was a Syrian, captain of the host to the king of Syria, and "a great man with his master, . . . he was also a mighty man in valour, but he was a leper." Syria in these stories undoubtedly symbolizes the first degree, the physical and "Naaman" means "pleasantness." He typifies all that is best and is pleasant in the physical. In the early stages of spiritual development, that which is pleasant in matter, such as physical health, physical beauty, physical prowess, etc., seems good, but when we reach the Elisha state of consciousness, we realize that this is a "leprous" condition, because it is the claim that life and good, Life and Spirit, is in matter. The belief of life in and of matter must be translated into the understanding of Life in and of Spirit, and then we see that whatever appears good in a physical manifestation is *in spite of* matter, and not in or of matter.

Serving Naaman's wife there was a little Israelite girl, a captive of war, and this higher sense of womanhood told them that there was a prophet in Israel who could heal the situation.

So the king of Syria sent Naaman with a letter to the king of Israel (the second degree, the moral), and Naaman set out, taking with him "ten talents of silver, and six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment." He took much material wealth to buy his healing, but nevertheless all of it also symbolizing something higher. The "ten talents of silver" symbolize moral qualities expressed in human life. The "six thousand pieces of gold" symbolize true manhood expressed as "the gold of human character" (*S. & H.* 565), and the "ten changes of raiment" symbolize the desire for progressive changes in the understanding wherein we clothe ourselves.

When Naaman presented the letter to the king of Israel, the latter was horrified, and "rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?" The moral is quite helpless in such a situation.



However, Elisha heard what had happened, and sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Wherefore hast thou rent thy clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." Mrs. Eddy defines prophet as "A spiritual seer; disappearance of material sense before the conscious facts of spiritual Truth" (*S. & H.* 593). Naaman's material sense (leprosy) would disappear before Elisha's consciousness of the facts of Truth.

"So Naaman came with his horses and with his chariot,"—with his active thoughts,—“and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.” He stood at the door of Elisha's consciousness. But Elisha neither invited him in, nor did he go out to him. He would not admit the leprous condition into his consciousness, and he was so sure of the “facts of spiritual Truth” that he did not need to go out to meet the condition. He could speak with absolute conviction and authority, for he already had his “proof of healing” which Mrs. Eddy says is “a sweet and certain sense that God is Love” (*S. & H.* 569). He was now fully identifying himself with his name, “God is salvation,”—God is “Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all; sin, sickness, and death destroyed (*S. & H.* 593).

So “Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.” Purify your thought in “Jordan,” in that which separates Spirit from matter, and do it seven times, from the standpoints of Mind, of Spirit, of Soul, of Principle, of Life, of Truth, and of Love. That will wash away all sense of materiality, and you will find that your substance (your true flesh) is spiritual, pure and clean.

“But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the Lord his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper.” So often we feel like that! We long for a demonstration that is really spectacular, and will impress those around us. Often we want to be the centre of wonder and interest, or we want to convince an unbelieving husband or wife, relative or friend, that Science really can perform impressive cures. But we do not really want to work ourselves. We think it should all be done for us, and

we are wroth at the idea of humbling ourselves and working out our own salvation quietly and unimpressively through the gradual purification of thought represented by bathing seven times in Jordan. Like Naaman, we say in effect, "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean?" "Abana" means "stony" and "Pharpar" "swift," and "Damascus" is a "sackful of blood." These names signify the material calculus, the belief of life, truth, intelligence, and substance in matter. If we cannot have a spectacular demonstration with no particular effort on our part, we think we could do better by using material means than by working out the problem slowly and laboriously through purification of our thought.

But Naaman had good servants,—good thoughts that served him. These persuaded him to do as the prophet had said. He "dipped himself seven times in Jordan, . . . and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean." He had again the freshness, purity and spontaneity of a little child.

He then returned to the "man of God," saying, "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel," and he urged Elisha to accept a gift. But Elisha was healing Naaman of the belief that matter was substance. To have accepted material rewards would have been inconsistent, and might well have reversed the healing. So he firmly refused to accept anything.

"And Naaman said, Shall there not then, I pray thee, be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth? for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the Lord." Taken literally this would signify that Naaman thought that God was God only in Israel, and that, if he wished to serve the God of Israel when he returned to Syria, he must take with him some of the earth of Israel. Spiritually, however, earth is a compound idea, an understanding of the Christ, and it is probable that, just as Elisha had asked Elijah for a "double portion of thy spirit," so Naaman is asking Elisha for a double portion of the Christ-idea. After bathing seven times in Jordan, we should recognize our need of the two aspects of the Christ,—that which trans-

lates Principle to its idea, and also that which translates mortal mind out of itself back into Spirit.

Naaman also says that when he returns to Syria, he will be obliged to accompany his master, the king, when he goes to worship in the house of Rimmon, chief god of Syria, and he asks that this may be pardoned. When we determine to worship Spirit only, whilst we are still here in the flesh, there are many times when we are obliged to enter the "house of Rimmon,"—when we have to make concessions to matter; but we can let these concessions be a "suffer it to be so now," keeping our hearts and minds pure and uncontaminated. Elisha's reply was, "Go in peace."

But Elisha's servant, Gehazi, the "valley of vision,"—an aspect of Elisha's thought which he was fast outgrowing,—regretted the non-acceptance of material wealth, and ran after Naaman. Naaman saw him coming, and alighted from his chariot, and asked if all was well. Gehazi replied, "My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of garments." In this verse and the next, the word "two" occurs seven times! The writers of the story meant to make it abundantly clear that this incident is dealing with the claim of duality,—the claim of the reality of both Spirit and matter. Gehazi claims that he wants the goods for two of the sons of the prophets,—for those who understand only Mind, Spirit, and Soul, to whom matter is still very necessary; and "Ephraim" means "doubly fruitful," fruitful in both Spirit and matter.

"And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of garments, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. And when he came to the tower, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go. . . . But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi?" Gehazi denied that he had been anywhere, but the Mind of Christ had analysed the situation for Elisha. He said, "Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee?"

Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants?" In the story, Gehazi had accepted two talents of silver and two changes of garments. Now it is multiplied into eight items, which would seem to represent the calculus of duality, the calculus of materiality. Elisha continued, "The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow." The "valley of vision" had been a good servant to Elisha in the early stages. From that standpoint, however, matter seems quite indispensable, and often good, but as we advance to the "Elisha" standpoint, we begin to see that that which seemed good to the lower standpoint is now "unclean" to us. We see that "Gehazi" is a leper, mixing Spirit and matter, and we should all of us from this point onwards see him and his offspring as lepers for ever. Then, like Elisha, we should let the leprous attitude go out from our presence, and have nothing more to do with it.

## TRUTH—*concluded* The Axe Head Swims

### II Kings 6: 1-7

In II Kings 4: 38-44 we saw how Elisha fed the sons of the prophets by healing the "pottage," and multiplying the "barley loaves." These sons of the prophets were finding that the understanding of the Word only as Mind, Spirit, and Soul was no longer satisfying them, so they said to Elisha, "Behold now, the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell." They were finding that the consciousness of the Word only was too narrow, and they longed for a wider vision. So they decided to go to Jordan,—that which separates Spirit from matter,—and every man was to take from there a beam of wood—some sense of the Christ—to build for themselves a wider consciousness. Elisha consented to go with them. If we decide to build ourselves a wider consciousness on the banks

of Jordan, we shall always find Elisha, "God is salvation," with us to help and encourage us.

· "But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed." The axe we use to cut for ourselves a beam of the Christ is our understanding of the Word as Mind, Spirit, and Soul. But sometimes it is not real understanding. We have accepted glibly the words of another without really understanding them. Our axe is borrowed. Then, as we try to use it to gain a Christ-sense for ourselves, we suddenly find that it will not work. We have lost our axe-head! But if we are honest enough to admit that it is borrowed,—that we have never really understood it,—Elisha comes to our rescue, and Elisha means "God is salvation," God is "Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all; sin, sickness, and death destroyed" (*S. & H.* 593). He asks, "Where fell it?" Where did your understanding break down? What was your difficulty? The man showed him the place, and Elisha cut down a stick,—he cut down the particular individual idea of Christ, Truth, which was needed to resolve the difficulty for the man. This he cast in, just as he had cast the meal of Truth into the poisonous pottage. "And the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand and took it." When the man saw what had before seemed impossible to him, he put out his hand, his sense of spiritual power, and really grasped it.

After this the sons of the prophets come into the story no more. They had ceased to be "sons" and had become real "prophets" seeing the "disappearance of material sense before the conscious facts of spiritual Truth" (*S. & H.* 593).

## LOVE Elisha Overcomes the Syrians

### II Kings 6: 8-23

"Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp." Physical beliefs came and warred against the moral as symbolized by Israel, but the spiritual, symbolized

as "the man of God," Elisha, was able to forewarn the moral every time. "The man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down. And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice." Mrs. Eddy writes, "Acquaintance with the Science of being enables us to commune more largely with the divine Mind, to foresee and foretell events which concern the universal welfare. . . . You will reach the perfect Science of healing when you are able to read the human mind after this manner and discern the error you would destroy" (*S. & H.* 84, 85). So successful was Elisha at forestalling the moves of error, Syria, that the king of Syria began searching for a traitor among his own servants. But one of them said, "Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber."

The king then sent men to spy out where Elisha dwelt, and the reply came back, "Behold, he is in Dothan." "Dothan" means "two feasts" or "double feast," and Elisha was indeed dwelling within the double feast of Truth,—the Christ seen both subjectively and objectively, the Christ translating principle to its idea and also translating mortal mind out of itself.

The king then sent "horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about." The king of the physical realm sent a great host of material beliefs including "horses and chariots,"—the most active and aggressive thoughts and beliefs,—and they compassed the city, the consciousness of Truth, by "night"—by "Darkness; doubt; fear" (*S. & H.* 592). Only by "night" can these beliefs assume any power!

The servant of the man of God (no longer Gehazi) rose early. This new servant was alert and watchful, and he saw the great host of physical beliefs that seemed to encompass them. He realized they must be met, but how? "Alas, my master!" he said, "how shall we do?" But the man of God, with the sense of dominion epitomized as "God is salvation," answered, "Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. 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." Mrs. Eddy defines eyes as "Spiritual discernment,—not material but mental. Jesus said, thinking of the outward vision, 'Having eyes, see ye not?' (Mark viii. 18)" (*S. & H.* 586). Elisha saw all the active ideas of God as numerals of infinity, filling the mountain of the divine infinite calculus, and he knew that there in Truth was the exact answer to every one of the counterfeit "horses and chariots" of false belief that seemed to besiege them. He prayed that the young man's eyes might be opened, that he might have the spiritual discernment to see that Truth had the answer to every one of those seeming problems, and that the truths he needed were at hand and immediately available.

"And when they came down to him . . ."—they were no use afar off and up in an absolute state of consciousness. They had to come right down and be available and practical just where he was at that moment. When this happened, "Elisha prayed unto the Lord, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha." First, spiritual discernment shows us the presence and availability of God's thoughts and ideas, and then it shows us the blindness and consequent helplessness of the material beliefs, the Syrians.

"And Elisha said unto them, This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. But he led them to Samaria." The host of false beliefs were blind and helpless before Elisha's comprehension of salvation as "Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all; sin, sickness, and death destroyed" (*S. & H.* 593). He had complete dominion over them, and he led them to Samaria and to the king of Israel that the moral might also see how helpless and ineffectual were these false beliefs. Then Elisha prayed that the Lord would open their eyes. Mrs. Eddy, writing of one of Jesus's demonstrations said, "The Scripture seems to import that Jesus caused the evil to be self-seen and so destroyed" (*S. & H.* 411). So it was here. Mortal mind had to see and admit that it was completely helpless.

The king of Israel, the moral sense, asked Elisha if he should smite them. The moral always wants to use some material means to deal with error, but Elisha forbade this. He said, "Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master." Set the bread of Truth and the water of Life before the wrong beliefs. Feed them on Truth and Life. Confront them with the truth about each lie, with what God knows about the situation. When we do that, we shall have the experience that the king of Israel had, for without our having to strike a blow, the false beliefs will return to their master, the one evil, the great nothingness. "So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel." That particular set of false beliefs was destroyed once and for all.

## LOVE—*continued* The Siege of Samaria

II Kings 6: 24-7: 20

In spite of saying in II Kings 6: 23, "So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel," verse 24 begins the next story with, "And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged Samaria." "Ben-hadad" means "son of the mighty," or, in Jesus's words, "Ye are of your father the devil" (John 8: 44). One band of false beliefs had been proved to have no power or entity, and could not return, but now "the prince of this world" (John 14: 30) gathered all its remaining false beliefs, and besieged Samaria, determined to destroy Elisha if there were any way to penetrate "the panoply of Love" (*S. & H.* 571) wherewith he had clothed himself.

"And there was a great famine in Samaria." When every false belief seems to come up and besiege us, we too find that there is a very great famine of spiritual sense. So great was this famine that "an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver." An ass's head was normally considered unfit for human consumption, and, according to the law, "unclean." "Dove's dung" is a plant. Authorities differ as to whether it is chick-pea or star of Bethlehem, but though both can be



eaten, neither seems to be used except in times of scarcity. "The fourth part of a cab" is rather less than a pint. That these things should command such a fabulous price, emphasizes the severity of the famine. From the metaphysical point of view, an ass's head, something unclean, unfit for spiritual food, was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, for a double sense of the calculus, the calculus of Spirit mixed with the calculus of materiality. The fourth part of a cab of dove's dung was sold for five pieces of silver. Again the four here would represent the material calculus sold for a sense of life in matter (five).

"And as the king of Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king." The second degree, the moral, was upon the wall (a symbol of the Word), and from there the prospect looked very bleak. The Word alone cannot save. So when the woman cried for help, the moral sense replied, "If the Lord do not help thee, whence shall I help thee?"

However, the king questioned her as to the nature of her trouble, and heard this horrible story,—“This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to day, and we will eat my son to morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son.” Do we find this story revolting, and think that such a thing could never happen among civilized people? Yet metaphysically many of us have done this very thing! When we are besieged by false beliefs and doubts and fears, and there seems a complete famine of inspiration, so that everything goes wrong and there seems no hope anywhere, have there not been times when many of us have cried in our misery, “I wish I had never heard of Science! It is Science that has stirred up all these things against me, and I have a good mind to give it up!” When we talk or think like that we are the women proposing to eat their sons, proposing to destroy their own spiritual idea of themselves. Often we then proceed to tear our “son” to pieces and devour him, though sometimes, like the first woman, we think better of it when it comes to the point, and hide our “son.” It is all a very ordinary human reaction when things have seemed to pile up against us, but “God is salvation” must deal with it, and the prophet writers here present it in its ugliest form,

so that when we see it in all its horror as devouring our own child, we turn from it with loathing.

“When the king heard the words of the woman, . . . he rent his clothes,”—a sign of sorrow and despair, and much akin to the woman’s action of eating her “son,” for clothes are the spiritual understanding wherewith we have clothed ourselves, and in our despair we rend that understanding. “And, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh.” The moral has no way of facing a famine situation except through mourning and trying to mortify the flesh. Then he exclaimed, “God do so and more also to me, if the head of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day.” He said in effect, as the moral side of us so often does on these occasions, “The spiritual is responsible for this awful state of affairs. I will cut off its head, and have nothing more to do with it!” Here was a third way of presenting the same mortal mind reaction!

But now we come to the story seen from the other side, seen from the spiritual instead of from the material. “But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him.” The understanding that “God is salvation” sat (rested) in true consciousness, and the elders (divine metaphysics) sat with him. Mrs. Eddy writes, “In proportion to a man’s spiritual progress, he will indeed drink of our Master’s cup, and be baptized with his baptism! be purified as by fire,—the fires of suffering; then hath he part in Love’s atonement, for ‘whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.’ Then shall he also reign with him: he shall rise to know that there is no sin, that there is no suffering; since all that is *real* is *right*. This knowledge enables him to overcome the world, the flesh, and all evil, to have dominion over his own sinful sense and self. Then shall he drink anew Christ’s cup, in the kingdom of God—the reign of righteousness—within him; he shall sit down at the Father’s right hand: *sit down*; not stand waiting and weary; but rest on the bosom of God; rest, in the understanding of divine Love; . . . and learn forever the infinite meanings of these short sentences: ‘God is Love;’ and, All that is real is divine, for God is All-in-all” (*Mis.* 124–125). This is exactly what Elisha demonstrated in this story.

The king sent a messenger (a malicious thought) to Elisha, “but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders,

See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and hold him fast at the door." Again Elisha is able to foretell the moves of animal magnetism, and he shuts the door of his closet ("which shuts out sinful sense but lets in Truth, Life, and Love," *S. & H.* 15) before the wrong thought has a chance to enter. "Is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?" Does it not come from animal magnetism, the devil, who was "a murderer from the beginning" (*John 8: 44*)?

But though Elisha shut the door on the suggestion that his life was endangered by the hatred and persecution of the physical and moral, he did not just turn his back on it. He dealt with it. First the error was made to voice itself,—the messenger said, "Behold, this evil is of the Lord; what should I wait for the Lord any longer?" Then Elisha answered from the certainty of his realization that "God is salvation"—that God is "Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all; sin, sickness, and death destroyed" (*S. & H.* 593). He replied, "Hear ye the word of the Lord; . . ."—Elisha was demonstrating Science, but it came to the lower levels of consciousness as the Word, which was all they could accept. "Thus saith the Lord, To morrow about this time shall a measure of fine flour be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria." He was so conscious of the abundance and availability of Life, Truth, and Love that, in spite of all the material evidence to the contrary, he had his "proof of healing,—in a sweet and certain sense that God is Love" (*S. & H.* 569), and was able to say with certainty that with the dawn of a new "day,"—"The irradiance of Life; light, the spiritual idea of Truth and Love" (*S. & H.* 584),—there would be what the Bible chapter heading describes as "incredible plenty" in Samaria. There would be an unlimited supply of fine flour,—the Christ Truth,—and a two-fold supply of barley,—the understanding of true manhood and true womanhood.

"Then a lord on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the Lord would make windows in heaven, might this thing be?" The human—even the good human—on which the moral depends and leans so much, questioned the possibility of such a demonstration as Elisha

had foretold. This good human was not prepared to bring all the tithes into the storehouse, and so could not envisage the possibility of God opening the windows of heaven and pouring out "a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3: 10). Elisha's reply was, "Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof." These human doubts shall indeed witness the abundant fulfilment of demonstration, but will not benefit thereby, because the very fulfilment of the demonstration destroys the doubts. This is clearly emphasized later in the story.

The narrative continues, "And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate." These four leprous men are the belief of life, truth, intelligence and substance in matter,—the calculus of materiality. How often they sit at the gate of our consciousness, contaminating all that would go either in or out! They said to each other, "Why sit we here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city, then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die." It is very comforting to realize that when we reach the state of consciousness that "God is salvation," the belief of life, truth, intelligence and substance in matter sees that it is doomed, and realizes that its only possible chance of survival is to go to the Syrians, to the physical, and even there it will probably be killed.

"And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians." It is always "twilight,"—two lights—where the belief of life, truth, intelligence, and substance in matter operates. "And when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there." When we can see that there is no "man" in the camp of the Syrians, in the physical, we are really getting somewhere. It was Elisha's understanding that man is never in the physical that enabled him to win this victory while sitting still in his house (his consciousness) with the elders (divine metaphysics).

"For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the

kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us." The host of physical beliefs heard and felt the movement of God's law operating as numerals of infinity,—chariots and horses. They interpreted this as hostile material beliefs, for the physical is always a kingdom divided against itself. "Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life." If this had been an army of men fleeing for their lives, would they have left their horses and asses? These would have helped them to escape. But when a host of false beliefs flees, they leave behind their tents (the consciousness in which they have been temporarily dwelling), their horses and asses (moral qualities), and all treasures (all that can be translated or evangelized).

When the lepers had been right through the camp and found "no man," they went from tent to tent eating and drinking, and carrying off silver and gold and raiment, which they hid. The calculus of materiality will take all upon which it can lay its hand, and hide it in the mist of material thinking, whereas of Truth it has been said, "Hid treasures it reveals."

But the material calculus is not happy. "Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, some mischief will come upon us: now therefore come, that we may go and tell the king's household." They were right that when morning came, mischief would come upon them, for morning is "Light; symbol of Truth; revelation and progress" (*S. & H.* 591). That is death to the material calculus, which cannot stand against it. But "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee" (Psalm 76: 10), and frequently when we have been besieged by a host of false beliefs, our first intimation of our release comes from these four leprous men. We find our body freer from the aches and pains or disabilities which have bound it.

To the king it was still "night"—"Darkness; doubt; fear" (*S. & H.* 592)—when the news came, and, quite frankly, he did not believe it. How often we think that this freedom is too good to last! The king suspected a trick, and said, "I will now show you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out

of the city, we shall catch them alive, and get into the city. And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, . . . and let us send and see. They took therefore two chariot horses; and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see." Why did they suggest sending five horses, and actually send two? Would not five horses symbolize active thoughts of Life, and two horses active thoughts of Spirit? Was not that which must verify the disappearance of physical beliefs the apprehension of "Life in and of Spirit" as Mrs. Eddy found when she discovered Christian Science? (See *Mis.* 24).

This apprehension of "Life in and of Spirit" followed the tracks of the flying Syrians as far as Jordan. There was no need to follow further. Once false beliefs have crossed the dividing line between Spirit and matter, they cannot return. "And, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king." As false beliefs fly, they cast away their wolf's clothing, and are seen in all their nakedness. They also throw away, or free, the vessels, the thoughts that have been receptive to them. "And the people went out, and spoiled the tents of the Syrians." When "God is salvation" understands the supremacy of Life, Truth, and Love, and causes the hosts of sin, sickness, and death to disappear, then there is much "spoiling of tents." We learn much from the experience. "So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the Lord." The consciousness of Christ, Truth, and of true manhood became so abundantly clear that the "famine of sense" was ended, and the "feast of Soul" (*My.* 263) was ushered in with incredible plenty.

And now we see what happens to that human part of us on which we lean, and which doubts that such a demonstration is possible. "And the king appointed the lord on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died, as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him . . . saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria: And that lord answered the man of God, and

said, Now, behold, if the Lord should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof. And so it fell out unto him: for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died." So it will always befall human doubts that stand in the "gate" of our consciousness when we reach the climax of the understanding that "God is salvation,"—that God is "Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all; sin, sickness, and death destroyed" (*S. & H.* 593). There is such activity of ideas coming and going that doubts are just crushed right out of existence. One point is worth noticing. When Elisha prophesied what would happen, he spoke of a measure of fine flour and two measures of barley, and so it is referred to in the positive demonstration. The Christ comes first, and true manhood follows. But when it is applied to the destruction of the doubts, it is given as two measures of barley and a measure of fine flour. True manhood coming first, leads to the Christ.

This story of the siege of Samaria is the climax of Elisha's demonstration. It shows the man of God with complete and absolute dominion over the forces of evil, and untouched by their attacks. There remain a few references to Elisha in the succeeding chapters, but he is no longer the central character, and the incidents seem to illustrate the use Israel made of their limited concept of "Elisha" rather than the portrayal of Elisha, the ideal man of God, himself.

## The Shunammite Woman Again

II Kings 8: 1-6

"Then spake Elisha unto the woman, whose son he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the Lord hath called for a famine; and it shall come upon the land seven years. And the woman arose, and did after the saying of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years." You may remember,

that "Shunem" means "uneven," and undoubtedly this woman, like the rest of us, was "uneven," inconsistent. But she was also described as a "great woman," and a great woman will always go forward, and will deal with whatever would hinder her spiritual development and progress. The "Elisha" in her bade her "Arise," go up higher, taking her whole household, her whole consciousness, to sojourn where she best could, while the Lord called for a seven year famine. Spiritual Love, forcing her to accept what would best promote her growth, demanded that there should be a "famine of sense" while the seven synonymous terms dealt with their seeming opposites in her consciousness. While this is happening, we have to sojourn where we can. If there is no resistance in our thought, we can sojourn in Science, and the famine of sense does not hurt us. But more often than not, there is "unevenness" in our thinking that resists the laying down of the mortal, and then, like the woman, we sojourn "in the land of the Philistines seven years." We work out our salvation through suffering instead of through Science, and we seem to have a pretty bad time, and to lose most of our spiritual possessions.

But after "seven years" that experience is finished, and, like the woman, we "cry unto the king for [our] house and for [our] land." We demand our spiritual birthright and inheritance. Mortal mind would say that we had lost our right to it, but if the seven years' famine has been properly accomplished, we lose nothing, and the Love that forced us into that experience cares for all the details, and restores to us our full inheritance at the right moment.

"And the king talked with Gehazi the servant of the man of God." To Elisha, Gehazi, "valley of vision," had become a leper, unclean because mingling Spirit and matter, and he had passed from his service. The commentators say that this incident must therefore have taken place before the healing of Naaman. But though to Elisha's exalted spiritual consciousness, the "valley of vision" meant going back to positions outgrown, and so was unclean, to the king, the moral sense or good human, it was still probably the highest level he could reach, and therefore to him was not a leper. So the king talked with Gehazi to learn more of "Elisha," the spiritual, saying, "Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done."



As Gehazi was telling of the raising of the Shunammite's son, the woman herself applied to the king for the restoration of her land. Gehazi identified her and her son, and the king commanded, "Restore all that was her's, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now." So when we have worked out our seven years' famine, and claim our inheritance, the "valley of vision" operates to restore to us what is good humanly, with the fruits of the intervening time, so that nothing is lost, and the result in the long run is just the same as if we had worked out our problem through Science instead of suffering.

## Elisha and Hazael

### II Kings 8: 7-15

In the first part of the story, when Elijah had reached the demonstration of Truth, and saw something of true manhood (I Kings 19: 15-17), he was told to anoint Hazael to be king of Syria, Jehu to be king of Israel, and Elisha to be prophet in his place. "And it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay." Syria, Israel, and Elisha typify the three degrees, and the prophecy was that evil that was not self-destroyed by Hazael and the physical would be destroyed by Jehu, the moral; and anything that escaped the moral would be destroyed by Elisha, the spiritual. In practice, the order was reversed. Elijah called only Elisha of the three named, and it was not until Elisha had completed his own demonstration that he operated in the thought of Israel to make Hazael and Jehu kings of Syria and Israel respectively, and that first Jehu, and then Hazael, began the promised work of destruction.

Elisha went to Damascus, the capital of Syria, when the king, Ben-hadad, was sick. Ben-hadad sent his servant Hazael to Elisha to ask, "Shall I recover of this disease?" Elisha replied, "Go, say to him, 'You shall surely recover,' but the Lord has shown me that he shall certainly die. And he fixed his gaze and stared at him [Hazael] until he was ashamed;

but the man of God wept. 'Why does my lord weep?' said Hazael. 'Because,' he said, 'I know the evil that you will do to the Israelites. . . . The Lord has shown me that you are to be king over Syria' (Smith and Goodspeed's translation). Most of the commentators seem to infer from this that it was Elisha who gave Hazael the idea of murdering his master and making himself king in his stead. But Elisha is the spiritual understanding in each one of us, and that spiritual understanding sees right through the physical. It sees it as a murderer, and that God's law operates to cause evil to destroy itself. But it also sees that that is a process that involves much suffering, and so the man of God wept because the Israelites had chosen to work out their salvation through suffering, when it might have been done through Science.

Hazael returned to his master, and in reply to the king's question said to him, "He told me that thou shouldst surely recover. And it came to pass on the morrow, that he took a thick cloth, and dipped it in water, and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael reigned in his stead." But not until Jehu had fulfilled his mission did Hazael really begin his work of destruction.

## Jehu Becomes King of Israel

II Kings 9: 1-10: 31

Meanwhile Elisha sent one of the "children of the prophets"—his understanding of Mind, Spirit, and Soul,—to anoint Jehu as king of Israel. Jehu was at that time captain of the host to Joram, the son of Ahab, the reigning king. The young man was instructed to take Jehu aside, and, anointing him, to say, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the Lord, even over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house of Ahab shall perish."

Jehu returned to his brother officers and told them what had happened, and immediately they started a rebellion, proclaim-

ing Jehu as king of Israel, and marching on Jezreel where king Joram was living. Joram went out to meet Jehu, and was slain close to Naboth's vineyard, into which his body was thrown. Jehu continued to Jezreel, and when Jezebel looked from her window, Jehu called upon those within to throw her out, and she was trampled by the horses and eaten by the dogs,—all this fulfilling Elijah's prophecy.

Next Jehu sent to Samaria where were "seventy sons" of Ahab. At Jehu's command the rulers and elders slew these seventy, and sent their heads to Jezreel to Jehu. "So Jehu slew all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, and all his great men, and his kinsfolks, and his priests, until he left him none remaining." This was followed by the slaughter of all worshippers of Baal throughout the land. So the destruction of evil, which Elisha had shown could be accomplished by Science without suffering, was continued by Jehu, the moral, with great horrors and bloodshed, for "Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the Lord God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin."

Then at last Hazael, the physical, takes up the work. "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; From Jordan eastward. . ." and this gradual destruction of the material Israel by the Syrians, and later the Assyrians, continued until finally Samaria was besieged and taken, and the kingdom of Israel ceased to exist.

## The Death of Elisha

II Kings 13: 14-21

"Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he died." What was this sickness that was to kill "Elisha" in the hearts of Israel? Surely it was apathy and lack of understanding. "God is salvation" falls sick and dies to us when we are apathetic over spiritual ideas, and so engrossed with material occupations that we lose—or seem to lose—our spiritual understanding. "Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and

wept over his face, and said, O my father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof." These were the words used by Elisha when Elijah ascended, and were then the inspired acknowledgement that the Word of Life, the fatherhood of God, operates through the numerals of infinity. Now, uttered by king Joash ("Jehovah is strong"), they seem a confession of weakness, and the acknowledgement that he is losing the support of a personal sense of Elisha and of the chariot and horsemen of God, the numerals of infinity.

Elisha told him to take bow and arrows,—to take the spiritual weapons he has,—saying, "Put thine hand upon the bow. And he put his hand upon it: and Elisha put his hands upon the king's hands." If the king would use the spiritual understanding he had, then he would find the power (the hand) of "Elisha" upon his. Then said Elisha, "Open the window eastward." Open the window to the Christ. Turn to the Christ, and shoot from there. And as the arrow sped, Elisha said, "The arrow of the Lord's deliverance, and the arrow of deliverance from Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them." Thus might Israel still have used "Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all" to destroy the Syrians,—“sin, sickness, and death” (*S. & H.* 593).

So Elisha told the king to take these "arrows of the Lord's deliverance," and he said, "Smite upon the ground. And he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice." He commanded the king to smite the ground—dust, matter, nothingness. This the king did only from the standpoint of Mind, Spirit, and Soul. He only used the first three-and-a-half. His apathy made him stop short of demonstrating Principle through Life and Truth, which would have given him the fulfilment of Love, symbolized as the consummation of the Syrians.

But apathy prevailed, and so "Elisha died, and they buried him. And the bands of the Moabites invaded the land." How many of us are inspired when we see or hear or read of an "Elisha" in our midst, a real demonstration of "God is salvation," and for a time "Elisha" lives for us. But we go back to

our ordinary lives, and by degrees our "Elisha" falls sick, and we allow the vision to fade and die, and we bury it deep down in our consciousness.

Then the Moabites,—sensuality, materiality,—invade the land, and we read, "And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band of men [Moabites]; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and when the man was let down, and touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood upon his feet." Though our "Elisha" seems very dead, and is reduced only to dry bones, buried deep in our consciousness, yet when materiality plunders the land, and kills our sense of man, in despair we also often cast that dead sense of man into the same sepulchre in which our "Elisha" is buried. Then to our amazement we find that our "Elisha" is not, after all, a dead thing. The moment a dead thought touches those "bones"—those fundamental truths on which "God is salvation" is built,—then immediately that thought is resurrected and translated, for "Life, Truth, and Love understood and demonstrated as supreme over all" cannot die, and, however deeply we may bury it, it will still continue to fulfil itself by destroying "sin, sickness, and death." As John Doorly so frequently said, "There is one thing you cannot escape, and that is salvation."

So in this whole story we see how our spiritual sense develops from a rather material sense of "Elijah" ("God is Jehovah") until this is translated into the glorious fact of "Elisha" ("God is salvation"). Then this fact comes to the flesh to destroy incarnate error, to destroy sin, sickness, and death. Finally we see that even if our apathy and lack of spiritual understanding may seem to cause our "Elisha" to die, yet he lives on, a vital, indestructible fact, always ready and able to resurrect and translate thought the moment it touches his "bones."