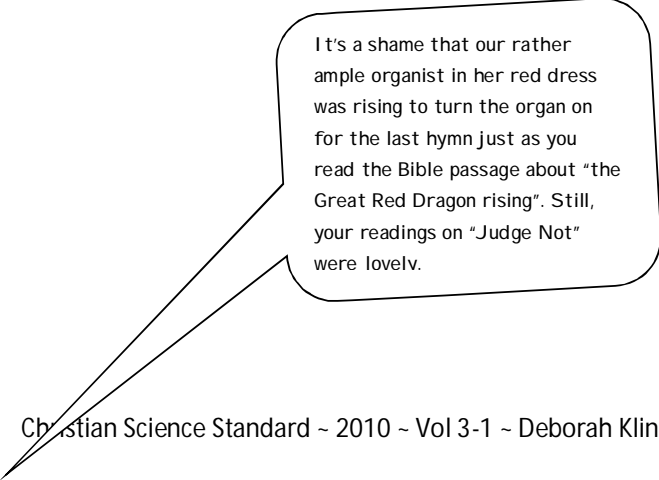


The Christian Science Standard

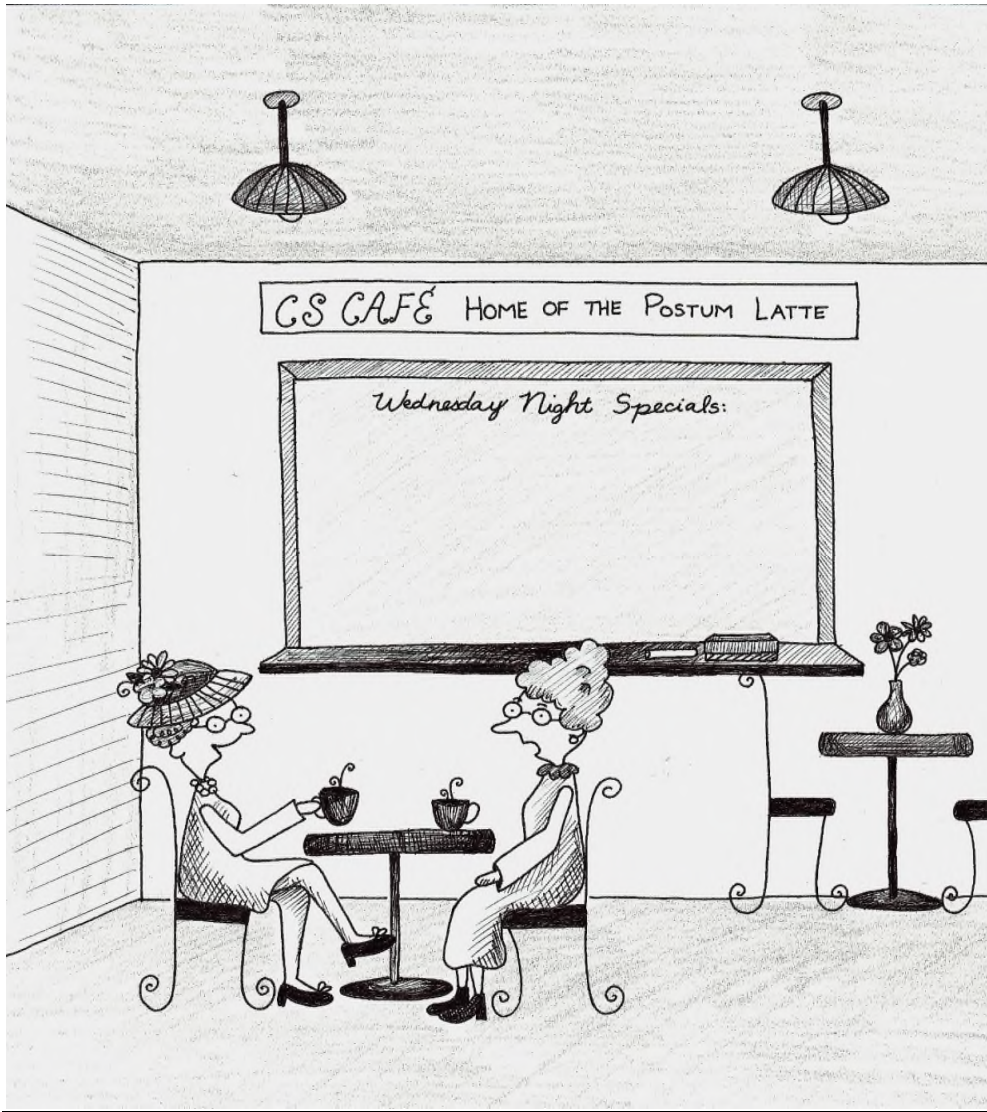
Volume #3 Issue #1 June 2010

The Christian Science Standard is an independent (non-church related) anthology of literature related to the third successive stage of Christian Science. This new stage of Christian Science has been made possible by the laboratory testing of Mary Baker Eddy's theory using methodology formulated by the late Bruce Klingbeil and tested largely by his son John. The methodology and initial test results along with background information are recorded in a book called *The Spindrift Papers* (Salem Oregon 1993.) *The Standard* is calling for the complete reform of the Christian Science Church and the re-establishment of genuine Christian Science. I am asking the Christian Science field (church members plus the growing Diaspora) to support laboratory testing of the Christian Science healing system. I am also calling for the development and modernization of Mary Baker Eddy's system of spiritual healing. "The possibility of healing the body through Mind is already established; ancient Christianity furnished the precedent and proof; then, wherefore delay to modernize this great good?" (Mary Baker Eddy. *The Red Book*, pp.118-119) *The Standard* is written, edited and published by me, Deborah Klingbeil © 2010 WI. and I am solely responsible for its content.

Below: Ethel (on the right) in her tasteful below-the-knee reader's dress, enjoys a postum latte (make mine a double) with her friend Grace after the Wednesday e



It's a shame that our rather ample organist in her red dress was rising to turn the organ on for the last hymn just as you read the Bible passage about "the Great Red Dragon rising". Still, your readings on "Judge Not" were lovely.



vening church

service.

Contact Information

Welcome to *The Christian Science Standard*. I write and publish *The Standard* and am responsible for its content. All of the contents of this publication are copyrighted and

you need written permission to use any portion commercially. You may photocopy and share this publication for individual use provided you give appropriate written credit.

The Standard is published twice a year, in June and December.

The Standard is free and goes to a small number of subscribers who have supported us or been interested in the work of Spindrift in the past. It is my way of saying “thank you”. If you do not wish to receive *The Christian Science Standard* please let me know and I will be happy to take you off the list. Otherwise your subscription is free and ongoing.

To maintain this work I adhere to a contemplative life except for talking on the phone to my patients, students, or my subscribers. This means that I am no longer available to the public except through my publications.

I have replaced the Raven’s Nest and moved into a trailer suitable for living in, with a stove, bathroom etc. It is located at a temporary address, in a pleasant place by a creek, with ducks and horses nearby for company. Some of you have heard me speak of my friend that works with wildlife. It is at her place that I am camped. This is a temporary address but it’s the only one I have at present so I have given it below.

I wasn’t going to name the new trailer but some of the youngsters that I have been mentoring in how to heal through prayer quickly named it for me. They have dubbed it “The Incubator” because here healings, new research tests, ideas, and new material for publication receives the warm affection needed to develop and hatch. And here I have the refuge I need to develop spiritually too.

These youngsters have used incubators in their prayer research so I suppose it was a natural label.

At one time we had an organization called Spindrift Nursing Inc. and we hired an artist to computer generate the following logo which we had hoped to trademark.



SPINDRIFT NURSING INC.®

The organization folded before we did a trademark search and so the logo was abandoned, but recently the kids have begun using the term “Inc.” again, not to refer to the word “incorporated” but to the word “incubator.”

Spindrift Nursing Incorporated has been resurrected as the Spindrift Nursing Incubator and I frequently get text messages asking me “How’s it going living in the inc?” To which I reply that it’s going pretty well.

My email is down for now although I am able to check it about twice a month. Hopefully I will be online daily again in a few months.

Meanwhile the fastest way to contact me is by phone. During prayer and when I am sleeping the phone is turned off so do not worry about calling at the wrong time – you can always leave a message. I have unlimited minutes and texting so you can also send a text message.

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Corrections from the last issue

On page 28 of the last issue there was a photograph of a mold spore that had been prayed for. The text was unclear so that some of our readers thought that the photo was of the spore before there was any prayer applied to it.

The photo was not a “before” photo but an “after” photo. It shows the growth of more rings on the side that was inadvertently prayed for as explained in the article.

Another correction is that on page 72 I stated the necessity of “doing battle with the patient.” That was very poor wording. I did not mean that you would battle against the patient but that you and the patient would do battle against the disease together, that you would be working with each other.

I hope that my readers will continue to send in corrections when they see them. It is much appreciated.

Thank you.

From the Editor

SILO Program Scrapped: An Appeal to Support IFT Testing Center

Before I talk about SILO I know that many of you were looking forward to the next article in how to give a prayer treatment, which was to be on doing denials and was to appear in this issue. Although I have started the article it will not appear until our next

issue in December because of the press of work connected to the things I will be talking about in this letter. I hope you won't be too disappointed.

In the meantime, for those of you who are actively working on treatment, the one thing I will say is that when you come to the denial part of prayer be sure to do it with great love; this is the key to good denials.

The SILO program was supposed to be a nine-year research program. The first three-year phase, called SILO One, will be finished six months early, in July of this year, except for one test that lasts one week per month through November, which I will keep going. A description of some of the issues that came up during SILO One follows in the next article.

I am ending the research for three years and scrapping the basic SILO program. I do not have the skill, the funding, or the staff to continue with the research tests. It has also become clear to me that it is out of balance for these tests to continue as a one-person operation.

Beginning in mid-July I will take three years off from doing experiments. Instead I will devote the next three years of my time to expanding my practice (the healing work of Christian Science) not only from part time to full time but also by pioneering the expansion of the work into untraditional areas.

I will also mentor a few young people who attended the children's programs I used to do (and who are now young adults) in how to heal through prayer. At this time such mentoring is done over the phone; eventually I will do actual classes and include more people. My plan is to record these classes in some form and make them available to subscribers.

The kind of teaching I will be doing, which truly is mentoring more than teaching (in other words letting the students learn hands-on and from their own questions) is not the equivalent of "going through class" with a Christian Science teacher. It will be more like a "practitioner's handbook" something the church never did put out though they have promised to do so for half a century. Perhaps I should say that this will be more like "practitioner's meetings" something the church did have back in the 1960's, where questions that come up in the healing work are openly discussed.

These meetings or classes will have the added dimension of teaching students how to pray in non-traditional settings and how to pray in laboratories. I would love to do some

tapes with children at some point, tapes that might help those of you who have asked me over and over, "How can I teach this to my children and grand-children?"

If and when I do classes I will be looking at the nitty gritty of day-to-day healing work and the questions that come up. We will talk about actual case histories (anonymously) and discuss the ethics and logistics in detail.

Apparently even when working with animals privacy laws apply these days. My friend needed to take her cat in for an eye operation. She had to fill out papers derived from the privacy act to transfer the cat's medical papers from the vet to the eye specialist.

I have not heard yet though that soybeans and corn have any privacy paperwork to deal with when treating them but I promise you all confidentiality issues will be followed.

The healing work of IFT is experiencing a small renaissance which I expect to get bigger over the next few decades. I could kick myself for not having recorded the ten years of children's activities I did on spiritual healing; they would be invaluable now.

As this historic time develops where spiritual healing is moving from an unproven to a proven therapy, - even as the 19th century doctor with his black bag and patent medicines gave way to the laboratory age of standards - it is good to keep a record of the successes and failures, the questions, the cases, the development, and the progress. I hope you will all enjoy sharing in this. Whatever way of recording I come up with will always be available to my subscribers.

The Standard will continue to be published in its present format for now. It will begin to focus strongly on the healing work. At some point, when needed, its format will change.

During my time off from research I will spend the first two hours of every day praying for four things; first, for the development of the Spindrift work, second for the re-establishment of genuine Christian Science on the earth, third for my practice - that only those whom I can bless and who can bless me will come and that I be led into new and pioneering areas of the healing work, and finally I will pray for myself.

After that I will spend the rest of the day in the healing work. I will maintain my contemplative lifestyle which means that I do not go "out into the world" (well, I confess that every few months I do go out and get a milk shake) and no visitors are allowed except students, but I do have a phone now and hope to have daily Internet again by winter. I no longer spend my whole day in silence, in fact I enjoy talking on the phone

and those subscribers who have questions, feedback, or ideas should feel free to call me.

New technologies (yes, I have even learned to text though I don't twitter) make it possible to stay in touch with people universally while still retaining a contemplative lifestyle and this is a wonderful thing.

Mrs. Eddy tells us about, "...the need of watching, and the danger of yielding to temptation from causes that at former periods of human history were not existent." (*Miscellaneous Writings* p. 12)

I have found that today diseases also are mentally caused from causes that did not formerly exist in human history. The mental infrastructure has changed as much as our road system has changed from the cow-paths of yester-year to the super highways of today. New forms of the healing work are possible and necessary. I learned a lot in SILO One and plan to apply all that I learned over the next three years while healing in the field instead of in the lab.

People ask me all the time what I see as necessary to the establishment of the Spindrift work.

I have not been trying to establish the Spindrift work as much as to apply the Spindrift methodology to the prevention and healing of human suffering. That is so much needed and will soon be needed more.

As to what that takes the needs have pretty much stayed the same since the 1970's. We need a lab and a publishing company. Preferably separate. A laboratory, in my judgment, should not be involved in the interpretation of its findings. The laboratory's appropriate product is research papers.

Yet there will always be a need to interpret the findings from different standpoints. Christian Scientists will want to interpret the findings from their standpoint, Christians and others may want to look at broader theological questions, nurses will need to know how the findings might implicate care, medical ethics committees may find some data interesting, writing for children is always a welcome thing, agricultural and "green" applications should be explored, and of course there is even now a great need for clear, non-denominational secular writing about the Spindrift work and methodology.

95 per cent of the subscribers to *The Standard* are refugees from the Christian Science church, which is why I write in denominational tones, but for the 5 or 6 of you who do not come from a CS background I am sure that your needs would be better served by

clear secular writing. I was deeply touched when one of these subscribers said to me on the phone, "I can assure you there are thousands of "me's" out there."

I do know that is true. I know that good secular writing would benefit many people who could be genuinely helped by what Spindrift has to say.

I am not sure I am the one to do such writing because I am not by profession a writer, a scientist, or a mathematician and all I know about any of these subjects is what I've taught myself. We need more professionalism. I am a professional healer. I need help from people in other areas.

Recently I read a book review of *The Spindrift Papers* by Dr. Ted Rockwell, an engineer with impeccable credentials who worked with Admiral Rickover and wrote a book about it. He also published a fictional book recently called *The Virtual Librarian* in which he mentions Spindrift. Many of you might enjoy it.

Rockwell actually is the proverbial "rocket scientist" so maybe, as our critics say, it really does take a rocket scientist to understand this stuff. I was struck by how clear his writing was. Given the bizarre statements coming from the CS church and its members lately it would seem that an outsider understands basic IFT theory better than the church itself.

Since most of you have never read this review I have excerpted it to help meet this need of good clear secular writing and you will find it in this issue.

Spindrift needs more than a good article here and there. It needs a publishing company to publish items that explore its work from many angles.

There's a lot to running a publishing company besides writing. First you have to do some fund raising because like any new company it's going to take a few years to build up a clientele and turn a profit and you need to survive those years. You have to write a business plan, keep the books, build a website or delegate the same, spend time in lawyer's offices doing trademark searches etc, apply for copyrights and ISBN numbers, learn about e-books, audio conferencing and video and learn or hire people to do editing. You need to hire graphic artists and understand what to put in simple contracts. You need to learn to format manuscripts for the printer or how to interview and hire people to do it for you. You need to learn good line-editing.

All of this is fun to learn and do but it takes time. We have time. We don't need this immediately, though we will in three years time and I would love to see someone pick

up the ball and start now even if in the end they hand it on to someone else. Starting, and taking action, is so important.

Maintaining mailing lists, learning to edit and create audio or video tapes etc. is not something that I have the time anymore to learn. If, after three years in the healing work, I do three years of research again, at the end I will be pushing 70, and will have been associated with this work for half a century.

The prayer work, which few others have the background in Spindrift to do, should now be my first priority. My organizational days are over. Spindrift's work, by any name, has moved far beyond a one-man operation so what is really needed at this point is initiative from others to do the organizing and start the institutions.

If someone had the funds to make it through the first two years I think such a publishing company could be very profitable. To me the publishing work is part of the healing work. It might be something one person wanted to do to run as a business and make a living. Or it might be something a group might do to eventually raise money for prayer research. Non-profits, rather than depending so much on grants and donors, now sometimes have relationships with for-profit businesses that raise funds for them through normal business practices, usually in a related field.

The fields aren't always related. I read of an inner-city church whose congregation started, ran, volunteered at, and patronized a local Burger King to raise money (very successfully!) for their church's programs. It's a changing world.

I am not sure there's a Burger King in our future but I do think it's appropriate to raise money for prayer research from the actual healing work being done in the field and possibly from the publishing work also. I am certainly willing to donate my time and any written materials I can help with to this cause.

I am asking that plans be made now to start an IFT Testing Center in three years time.

A non-profit needs to be started to be a place where funds can be deposited and information and mailing lists gathered. This need to happen as soon as possible. Perhaps there is all ready a non-profit out there with a related mission that could begin this work for us until such a testing center was started.

I am willing to help but I will not take the lead on this. Others must do that. This means that I will not be on the board, and I will not represent the organization or speak to the

media, though I am happy to provide written material to the board for such use if the board requests it.

I would be happy to be the head of the prayer provider program. As such I could attend board meetings via the Internet or audio-conferencing, but not vote. In the past we have had a problem with Spindrift in that the prayer providers were expected to do a lot of work that detracted from prayer.

Prayer and healing is at the heart of any Spindrift or Spindrift type research program. Without it there can be no research. The prayer work must be valued as the heart of the operation. Those who do the healing work need to be nurtured, loved, and given the time space and privacy needed to do their prayer, heal the sick, and develop spiritually. If this does not happen the research will fail.

I personally have always been truly blessed with friends who nurtured and cared for me, but this has not yet – perhaps through my own fault - been translated organizationally into the nurturing and valuing of the prayer work which is the heart and soul of the research.

If prayer is not valued above everything else the ability to get a measurable effect in the laboratory will be lost. This respect is more than just the respect that we have for an individual healer. It needs to be reflected organizationally. Administrative tasks should not be valued more highly than the prayer work in terms of time, money, or of its place in the organization.

Thankfully people can be taught to get an IFT prayer result in the lab on a part time basis. Those who are responsible for getting a measurable effect day after day need to transform their minds and hearts and this can be a messy process not always easy to fit into a so-called “normal” life. People do not always understand the hours of prayer needed daily to transform oneself into an advanced healer.

There is also the problem that in our celebrity prone society people tend to think of spiritual healing as a personal gift rather than as a science to be applied. There is always the natural human temptation to glomp onto the personality of the healer, rather than look at the principle underlying the work. Healers are not information products and they should never be publicity people. A healer should not be the public face of the organization. Others can do the talk shows or whatever needs to be done, but healers need to be given the sacred respect needed or they will not be able to function. The principle underlying the work must be kept the focus rather than the personal stories of the healers.

Generally a non-profit requires three board members and generally, depending on the state you organize in, you can have board members from different states and meet by email or phone conference. Organizing is necessary. Mrs. Eddy said that organization was necessary to “meet the banding together of error” and never has there been a time in history when collective thought was so strong.

In the early 1970's, before the organization of Spindrift was formed, the seed tests were already being done and a small publishing company called CCC or *Christian Concepts Clearing House* had been formed. The publishing company went bust and even after Spindrift was formed a real lab was never established. Both needs still remain today, 40 years later. It is my opinion that Christian Scientists need, *for their own sakes*, to support these tests.

In the past we have bit off more than we could chew. A much simpler step-by-step program is needed. My opinion is that the purpose of the IFT Testing Center should be to do research to explore the question of when where and if Christian Science healing supports or conflicts with current medical therapy.

Of course a lab would not put this in the denominational terms I just stated – denominational issues could be explored by publications outside of the lab. The lab would look at whether goal-referenced and normalcy-referenced or identity-referenced therapies support each other or conflict with each other in various situations.

I have been told that recently a *New York Times* article had a headline reading *Christian Science Seeks Truce With Medicine*. I did not see the article but apparently it claimed that the church now seeks to present Christian Science healing as a supplement to medicine rather than as a cure. Apparently there was also a later written response from the Church which friends told me was “confusing.” Since I am offline right now I have not yet been able to read any of this; if any of you have copies I would appreciate it if you send them.

I do not see CS as opposed to medicine but as an advance in medicine so I do not see this in terms of battles or truces. It is a clear sign to me of how totally we have abandoned our scientific roots that such things would be decided on by opinion.

Do people vote on whether a drug is effective and on what side effects they should allow it to have? Do they vote on whether to mix it with this drug or that based not on safety concerns but based on which drug companies are popular? No. They test the drugs.

Christian Science must be tested. Mrs. Eddy says she tested her healing system everywhere where it was “humanly possible” (see *Science and Health* p. 147). Today much more is humanly possible. It’s our turn.

I cannot tell you in advance what the outcomes will be because I do not know. There is no point getting up in arms emotionally and defending CS as an alternative to current medicine, or for those on the opposing side saying that it must be a supplement and not an alternative, because these are not issues of emotion. This is not a matter of emotionally defending our beliefs about Christian Science. These are issues of science.

I pray every day to know that I am one of the unresisting channels through which the healing force of the next successive stage of Christian Science is flowing, and I hope other Christian Scientists affirm this daily also.

I phrase it this way because I think in religious terms. For a non- church person it is equally appropriate to affirm daily that you are (or else ask that you be) one of the unresisting channels through which the next great advance in medicine or science can flow, because the world needs this kind of love from you. We can expect to be a part, however small, of progress that is based on an actual pursuit of truth and not simply the opinions and politics of science. (Or theology).

People say that we should not subject CS – or more generally ‘spirituality’ to the materialism of the sciences, but science is only materialistic if you do it that way. Spindrift doesn’t. Science is a method or tool. It’s what you do with the tool, not the tool itself, that is or is not materialistic.

Identity Field Theory, or the measurable aspects of Eddy’s theory, is extremely complex. She said it would not be understood for centuries. One century has passed. It’s time to make a little progress. We need humility and a real desire to learn. Otherwise the research is fruitless.

There is no one definitive test. A step-by-step research program is needed. Definitive results may take decades. There may be confusion, controversy, ridicule, and sometimes inaccurate reports in the media surrounding this work. This should not throw anyone off course.

In daily experience I know that CS prayer has healed things that medicine gave up on, so I have seen it act as a cure. I have also seen cases where it was my professional opinion – admittedly untested – that mental conflicts set up when using both medicine

and IFT neutralized the effects of both and contributed to or caused the death of a patient. But I also know that Mrs. Eddy said that in cases of surgery, until the age advanced, it was possible to use CS as a supplement to physical surgery.

“Until the advancing age admits the efficacy and supremacy of Mind, it is better for Christian Scientists to leave surgery and the adjustment of broken bones and dislocations to the fingers of a surgeon, while the mental healer confines himself chiefly to mental reconstruction and to the prevention of inflammation. Christian Science is always the most skillful surgeon, but surgery is the branch of its healing which will be last acknowledged.” *Science and Health*, pp.401-402

I realize that my experiences are anecdotal which is why I suggest a testing program. We cannot prove CS through anecdotal evidence but neither can it be disproved or discounted through anecdotal evidence. People often discredit CS healing by telling a gruesome story of someone who died under its care but this is no more scientific, even when true, than stories of spectacular healing. It's all anecdotal.

I am not sure that church practitioners know the difference between praying in a supplemental way or in a curative way in other words I am not sure they know the difference between nursing prayers and practitioner prayers. And I am not at all convinced that the majority of CS practitioners actually practice normalcy-referenced or identity-referenced healing which is the Christian Science standard of “spiritual healing, or that they know when they are or when they aren't.

As to where the lines are drawn – where CS prayer sets up a mental conflict that could be dangerous to the patient (if it does) and where it can be mixed with current therapies, and why this may differ in various branches of medicine, well, I don't think anyone yet knows that.

It would be helpful to people beyond the CS field to know these things. Doctors, nurses, medical ethics committees, etc., all have a stake in this and I would expect that they, as well as Christian Scientists, would be involved in the IFT testing Center. If Christian Scientists come in with their guns blazing to prove they are right or to emotionally defend a stand, then research will be impossible.

It is the nature of science that such testing will eventually take decades. Science is very detail oriented. There is no one definitive test that will tell us what we need to know although the media and the public will grab at early conclusions and try to interpret tests that way because that is the current nature of the media and that is what they do even with regular science research, such as genetic research.

Christian Scientists tend to get so out of whack whenever they think something they believe is expressed incorrectly or “in the wrong words” and they are going to have to get over that. Everything settles down eventually but once the research starts things will be stirred up for a long time and this is part of the process.

The scientific method is in part a way of breaking down information so that the most good can be derived from it. Good research not only requires objectivity and a genuine desire to learn but it also requires humility, modesty, infinite patience, vision, and quite frankly, love.

An IFT Testing Center, even one with a limited objective to explore only certain of Eddy’s hypotheses related to health care, would be very controversial. Those involved must have the humility not to fan the flames but to modestly and joyfully continue the research while the storm blows, going forward “like the ticking of a clock during a thunderstorm.”

It may sound odd to say so but once you shut out the storm of personalities believing this and that and defending their egos, views, and fears, then there is nothing more fun, more joyful, holier or more interesting to do than prayer research. That joy needs to be maintained under fire and this is part of why we need to work together and support each other. We need a network.

People outside of CS entirely – such as some of the young people I will be mentoring – are able to get IFT result on tests where listed practitioners from the church cannot. The question is going to be raised of how you define CS healing. In research terms it’s going to have to be defined by data, not by church or denominational politics.

Such a center would blow CS healing out of the water, by which I mean out of the church, because many of the best IFT healers today are not in the church. Healers in the lab would be those who have prayer profiles (test scores) showing that they can get the normalcy-referenced or identity-referenced effects regardless of denominational background.

What is Christian Science healing? Is it the placebo? Is it like other types of mental and spiritual healing, or is it truly something new under the sun, something not previously known or classified scientifically?

Identity is at the core of identity field theory. The identity of Christian Science healing – what it actually is – is what these tests will show. You can’t decide if a system conflicts with another system until you can define and identify it

What do we need for such a testing center?

- We need an organization to handle mailing lists, money, and the administrative tasks involved in preparation. Maybe there is a non-profit already out there that could handle this. The organization also needs to set policy, handle mission and guide the overall direction of the organization.
- We need a business plan, a mission statement, By-laws, a proposed budget and the outline of a three-year testing program (that may be premature but it good to start putting plans on paper.)
- Once we have the above things then we will need money, donations, grant writers and fund raisers and the sooner the better. The Board will need access to a lawyer and an accountant once a year, and will probably need someone to handle publicity (communications) and a website.
- We need a physical place for the Center.
- We - I suppose here I mean I – need to develop good and standardized prayer profiles by which I mean a series of tests to accurately test prayer providers . The profile will be the data they get on standard tests. This helps us match practitioners of equal ability, or at least ability within stated parameters, so that the research program can function. Being able to test practitioners is central to any research program.

Setting up prayer profiles and teaching costs time and money. I cannot do this until there is some organization to support it. I will however tithe ten percent of my income from the healing work to this effort, beginning immediately.

- We would need a director of prayer which is the job that I would like to have given my choice. This is someone who would hire train, supervise and test the prayer providers.
- We would need about five prayer providers.
- We would need at least a part time secretary.
- We would need one to three technicians.

- We need the support of Christian Scientists, including healers, and also of people in the medical community. In my healing work I work with doctors and nurses at times. During my years of caregiving I have developed good relations with many in the medical community I will take responsibility for finding those in the medical field that will work with us. This will come later as we near the actual start of the research program. Christian Scientists, in my view, need to take the lead and start now.

Christian Scientists must come forward on their own. It is their choice. It is my hope that they would come forward while I am still available to apply my experience to help with such a research center, but I cannot do this for the field nor should I. Although medical people will help us the burden of proof is on us. If the research does not get started in the next three years that's OK too. I am content to write up what I have on hand and put it in the "silo" for future generations and then retire.

My original idea for SILO Three was to do research to lay the basis of a nursing program sometime in the future. That is why I called it SILO because I was thinking long term, thinking of bringing this work into the SILO for the future. For now that must be scrapped because this other work is foundational. You can't have nurses that support an undefined system. Defining our healing system in terms of data and exploring its relationship to current medical systems is a big enough job to last for many years.

Now that the Spindrift methodology has been clearly established – and it's very simple at its core - the block to this research is sociological rather than logistical. I am hopeful for the future because prayer can deal with some of these sociological issues. I learned a lot about taking defense mechanisms down during SILO One.

The Spindrift work is all love. It has come into the world at this time to help reduce suffering and to help us walk through the years of bitterness still to come in this century with strength grace, comfort, and meaning. The more experienced I become in this work the more my heart yearns for people to have the options that Spindrift represents because I know first-hand the good that it can do and the suffering that it can prevent.

But the more experienced I become the more I am also willing to leave my will and desire out of it and let this go for a few more generations if that is what it takes. Either way I am looking forward to three years immersion in the healing and teaching work.

In 1889 Mrs. Eddy wrote this letter to her student Mrs. Noyes. It is quoted here from page 441 of the book *In My True Light and Life* put out by the Mary Baker Eddy Library.

“My precious student,

What shall I say to you? It is this. Gird up your garments of love and faith and stand firm in the coming years. You have been a faithful vigilant soldier of the cross and will wear the crown. No, do not yield for a moment your faith in God’s care for you. But do not expect that all things will be as you could wish. Only rest in this, that of two evils you can always choose the least and God will give you the wisdom to choose if you do the best you know and trust Him for the hour in which you are called to act. Love your enemies in this, do them good but be not afraid to let them dip with you in the dish even if they betray for God will overrule the wrath of man.

Lovingly,

MBG. Eddy

I cannot thank you enough for your remembrance of me through your Association.”

I always thank all of my readers in my heart for your prayers and your interest in this work.



Deborah Klingbeil

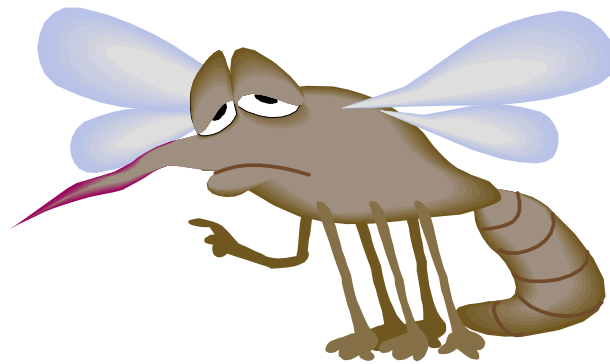
Writer and editor

Section One: Of Special Interest

to our Secular Readers

Who the Heck Prays for Parasites?

Some random thoughts from someone who does.



A summer interlude

The Human Side of Prayer Research

“How you say this word?” Zunngol asked me on a hot day last summer. She is from Mongolia and is fluent in Russian and Mongolian as well as speaking a little German. She also reads and writes English very well but since she taught herself English out of books she does not know what the words sound like.

English, Mongolian and Russian. That's not just three languages, that's three different alphabets. I am always amazed at Zunngol, who I call by her nick-name of Zunni (pronounced Zoo-nee.) I can't imagine trying to teach myself Mongolian out of a book.

I look at the word in question. The word is 'slouching.' "Not slou-king" I tell her. "Slou-ching."

"Slou-ching." she says several times. "Slou-ching." Then she wants to know what it means. It's easy to explain because I am slouching in my chair at the computer completely frustrated.

She tells me that when she was growing up her grandma made her sit up straight. I smile and tell her "Mine too." Apparently some things are the same in all cultures.

Zunni came for a few weeks last summer to help me. The SILO tests were down due to technical problems and also because I had totally messed up the research designs and had to start over. Which is why I was slouched at my computer in frustration. But at least with the tests down I had some time to enjoy her visit and to help her with her English and with learning to drive.

Despite our genuine friendship communication is a problem. She does not at all understand prayer research or why I want the experimental set-ups that I ask for.

"Why you want that?" she will ask throwing her hands up in the air dramatically."What kind of research you doing? It makes no sense."

I look at her without words to explain. I cannot even begin to explain. I realize with increasing despondency that it isn't the cultural difference or the language. I can't explain what I do to Americans either, not even to my fellow Christians and Christian Scientists. Especially, it seems, not to them.

It's not language – it's the frustration of leading a life and doing work that at this time in history is incomprehensible to most people.

"Can you do it Zunni?" I ask, referring to some unusual experimental set-ups I want to try.

She looks at me with good will but with no comprehension of why, yet she says kindly, "OK, OK." And she goes to work.

Although most of the parasites I pray for are at a distance and only viewed on-line via webcam, and although the ones I have physically in the Raven's Nest are too small to

see easily with the naked eye, Zunni, like most people, finds the idea of the parasites kind of icky.

“Too gross” she says using a word she has recently learned from television.

I did not want to write a description of what I have been working on at SILO for this issue. I am aware of how totally weird senseless and gross praying for parasites must seem in a world where prayer is so narrowly defined. The beauty of it is not something easy to explain.

Praying about parasites is certainly not senseless when you consider how many human diseases are caused by them.

I remember once that (as a Reader for a Wednesday night Christian Science church service) I had prepared what I thought were very holy readings on the subject of the Lamb of God that the Bible tells us “takes away the sins of the world.” I had many Biblical references to being washed in the blood of the lamb etc. but apparently the constant mention of lambs confused the congregation. The first lady that got up to give a testimony of healing thanked me for my readings on being kind to animals and gave a lovely testimony about her cat.

Apparently I was out in left field when it came to connecting with the congregation. Probably some other readings would have met the needs of the congregation better. I was out of touch. I still am.

I feel more and more the need to try and communicate effectively, and more and more the sensation of missing the mark, as when that lady got up and gave her testimony, even though it was a nice testimony.

Zunni is always very kind to me and that kindness, even without good verbal communication, is medicine to my low spirits. She is a ball of fire getting things done that have stacked up for months. Though she helps me more than I help her she is continuously grateful when I help her with her English and her driving. She always wants to help me more.

‘I make you cabbage dumplings?’ she asks.

“Later Zunni. We can have dumplings together for supper. Thank you.”

“I make you tea?” she says, trying again.

“Sure” I say, using her favorite word.

When she brings it we sit outside in the hot summer sun. Oddly the hot sweet tea seems just right. We talk and there is the joy of some communication, some genuine connections. She shows me a photo of her adorable grandchild in Mongolia, a little girl who always asks her, "Grandma, send me some ice cream from America." She shows me a photo of herself when young. She is wearing a scarf or headband across her forehead, has two long braids, and a loose belted tunic type dress. To my untrained eye she looks Native American.

I try to tell her about my work because she is helping me arrange the lab and wants to know what it all for. She is a Christian converted from Buddhism, and she also has training in the sciences. She is very smart and very well read but she does not understand why I have the lifestyle I do. She thinks maybe I am lonely and tries to loan me one of her American movies on DVD. When I try to explain to her about living a life of prayer she wants to know if I will have to shave my head. She is puzzled by almost everything I say and I realize that even if she spoke perfect English I would not know how to explain.

It isn't her. It's me.

When the tea is gone she does not give up on her quest to help me. "I wash your car?" she asks me.

"Zunni" I say. "You do so much work. Of course you don't need to wash my car. Relax. Enjoy a little vacation. You understand the word relax?"

"Sure," she says. "Sure." But she does not give up.

"I do your nails?" she asks hopefully.

"Sure" I say, even though I have not had a manicure in years and don't care anymore about my nails. When you are alone for months at a time fashion loses its priority. I realize suddenly that to her I must look like a perfect slob in my baseball cap and shirt with cut-off sleeves.

My hair is long and scraggly because I have not "gone out into the world" to get a haircut in many months. One day Zuni set my hair for me. Since I had no curlers she made some curlers out of newspapers. My landlord happened to catch me with a whole head full of grocery coupons.

"Don't stare." I said crossly.

"I'm not staring." he said, "It's just that there's quite a good article on the economy just above your left ear."

When the curlers came out I looked like I had an Afro but it was surprisingly flattering.

Although she is not a young woman Zunni is pretty and a little glamorous. She loves nail polish, make-up, perfume, jewelry, and the color red.

I will not let her paint my nails red though, and put the bottle firmly aside. We are still sitting outside at the table where we had our tea. I am preoccupied, thinking about how to make inexpensive bioassay chambers without having to put out the cash for pre-made ones. I only need ten but they are 12 bucks each and beyond my budget.

"What color you like?" she asks.

"Pink. Light pink. You know pink?"

"Sure" she says. "Sure."

She begins putting on a clear base coat. I hear the call of a pair of sandhill cranes. They have such a strange clacking sort of a call but their flight is graceful. They fly with their long legs stretched out behind them. I watch them circle and descend into the corn field.

Still preoccupied I look down again. Zunni is painting my nails dark black. "No, no" I say involuntarily and she looks up alarmed.

"I hurt you?"

I shake my head "No" quickly to reassure her but say "Pink." And repeat again, "Pink."

She smiles broadly and holds up the bottle of black nail polish saying, "Sure, pink. Pink."

I end up with black nails.

That is often how I feel when teaching prayer. I try to teach pink, non-directed, and everyone smiles and says "sure" but does goal-referenced. I do not know the words to explain what I mean. But perhaps it doesn't matter as much as I think it does. Any effect from prayer boosts confidence and can be a starting point. And I quickly get used to black nails.

They look like black jelly beans and I develop a craving for candy.

A 20 year old named Lisa that I am mentoring in how to heal through prayer stops by to help set up the new tests.

“Hey, I love your nails.” says Lisa “They look so Goth.”

“Thanks.” I say, having only a vague notion of what Goth means. I also have only a vague notion of the movies, songs, video games, and celebrities she often refers to. I realize that I am getting old. Most of the celebrities I’ve never even heard of.

We are looking through a catalog from The University of Georgia Research Foundation that has DVD’s and books that I need on parasitic wasps, but they are kind of pricey.

“You could ask for them for Christmas.” says Lisa. “Everyone says you’re hard to shop for. Why don’t you tell people this is what you want for Christmas?”

“Well, if I say I want any of these DVD’s I’ll probably get a dozen of one and none of the others.” I explain.

“So, you can always exchange some. Too bad you can’t register at this parasite place, you know, like a baby registry. For all your baby wasps. We need to have a baby shower for your wasps.”

“Very funny.”

I put the catalog aside still feeling restless frustrated and increasingly hungry.

“Maybe I’ll just ask people to send me black jelly beans for Christmas.”

She laughs. “Wrong holiday.”

Zunni has a birthday a few days before she leaves. I hunt up and wear a pretty blouse that has a lot of red in it that another friend, Linda, once gave me. It is a day for celebrating friendship. I am acutely aware as I stand in front of my modern flat screen computer that it too is a gift from a kind friend. The trailer I call the Raven’s Nest – the one I used as a lab for two years before moving into my current house trailer, was a gift. Despite my feeling un-connected and out of touch I realize that I have been blessed beyond measure by good friends. I remind myself that it is ungrateful to feel discouraged and I try, successfully, to focus on gratitude.

On her birthday I do not protest when Zunni paints my nails bright red. I think how much I will miss her. The luxury of one afternoon talking to a friend without the cares of work pressing in on me, and the sweet human pleasure of sitting beneath the pine tree eating birthday cake with another person, is very intense. I am out of practice, too used

to being alone, yet unable to imagine a normal life, a life without my loved medium of silence.

When Zunni leaves she takes her nail polish remover with her. I don't have any. I keep forgetting to ask the woman who delivers my groceries and pet food from Sam's club once a month to buy me some nail polish remover. I finally remember to ask Lisa once but she lives at a distance, visits seldom (most of my mentoring is by phone), and she has no opportunity.

It doesn't matter. The red chipped color is a reminder of a friend. So few people see me anyway that there is no one to be disapproving of my unfashionably chipped nails. The quiet life has its advantages.

It is the first week of November before the red on my nails chips off completely, disappearing like the last of the summer sun. My hands feel cold and bare.

Sitting in my chair I realize I am slouching. Slowly I sit up straight, respectfully, in a posture more fit for communion with the Holy. I begin to pray. Soon I am completely absorbed.

Questioning Assumptions

Working with parasites challenges all the assumptions I had previously made about prayer and healing.

I had wondered if it was even possible to do experimental work with parasites because of what I assumed is our unconscious assumption that they are 'bad'.

I have stopped working with whip worms. I did not understand what I was doing. They died when I prayed for them and it bothered me. The story of Jesus when he withered the fig tree by mental means has

begun to haunt me.



Unconscious assumptions must always be factored into the research and this is not an easy task. I assumed that prayer would stop the parasite from being parasitic but that is not a valid assumption. Does prayer stop predators from killing food? If you pray for someone will they suddenly give up hamburgers?

If you compare a parasite to a predator you are forced to change your assumptions, forced to stop projecting your emotions unto the organism. We are all predators, including those of us who are vegetarians, because even vegetarians kill plants to eat. Is a predator who kills or who is responsible for the death of many organisms in their lifetime more “worthy” of healing than a parasite that will only do intermediate damage to a few organism but not kill any of them outright?

The question is based on a false premise for when you reach the spiritual identity of the organism through prayer you find that it is neither predator nor parasite - but it is still a question that goes to the root of a working hypothesis in the lab. What I mean by that is that I started out with a broad and false hypotheses, that prayer would somehow lessen the parasite’s ability to do harm as I defined it. That turns out not to be true in most cases.

Prayer for people doesn’t necessarily result in their eating less meat, or fewer carrots. I mention vegetables because in the SILO One research I worked with both plant and vegetable parasites, although I will only speak of one research organism in this essay.

It is important when doing the Spindrift research not to project human beliefs unto the organism. It is also hard not to wonder how much of what one sees under the microscope is real – and how much of it is simply your own thought or else projected collective thought manifested.

How much of what I see is real?

It sounds like a goofy question but it's not. An article starting on p. 44 of the March 2010 *Scientific American*, titled *The Brain's Dark Energy*, talks about how little sensory information reaches the brain through the eye.

"The question of the existence of neural dark energy also arose when observing just how little information from the senses actually reaches the brain's internal processing area. Visual information, for instance, degrades significantly as it passes from the eye to the visual cortex.

Of the virtually unlimited visual information available in the world around us, the equivalent of 10 billion bits per second arrives at the retina at the back of the eye. Because the optic nerve attached to the retina has only a million output connections, just six million bits per second can leave the retina, and only 10,000 bits per second make it to the visual cortex.

After further processing, visual information feeds into the brain regions responsible for forming our conscious perception. Surprisingly, the amount of information constituting that conscious perception is less than 100 bits per second. Such a thin stream of data probably could not produce a perception if that were all the brain took into account." (p. 47)

Apparently the brain takes into account, among other things, stored images collected in childhood. It then models conscious perception by mixing the thin data stream that it really "sees" (less than 100 bits from 10 billion available) with its stored images. In much the same way a police computer modeler might update the photo of a missing child, filling in what it thinks the child would look like now from its data banks on the aging process, and combining that with actual data, or photos of the child when young. The updated drawing of the child is a combination of real data and educated guessing.

What you "see" when you open your eyes is actually not what is there but a composite of real data and the brain's educated guessing.

It works if the data banks you have are accurate. Those updated drawings of children are usually pretty accurate.

But what if the stored data banks you are drawing on are not accurate?

If fear of bugs and parasites are fed into and stored in our mental data bank very early, can we really trust the model or conscious perception we build with our brains as we look into the microscope?

If distrust or disbelief in spiritual healing, as well as the fear of and images of disease, are also fed into those mental data banks and stored from childhood on, how does that affect the collective and individual mental images we call perception and accept as reality?

This is a little off the subject but the article in *Scientific American* is of interest to the Christian Science or IFT healer because it sheds light on the unconscious activity of the brain where we would claim disease begins and where it must be addressed. Of course a Christian Scientist would define the brain differently than other people, but without getting into technicalities the idea that “mortal mind” is basically an unconscious or “self-deceived” state is hinted at in the following conclusions.

New studies have surprisingly concluded that our brains use more energy when at rest than when focusing on a conscious task. The unconscious areas of your brain are chatting away to each other all the time and this chatter slows down when you read, or do any physical activity that you need to focus on. This chatting is called the DMN or default mode network and it occurs totally unknown to you yet it is the largest part of your brain activity.

People strongly believe that they know what they think and that they choose what they believe, yet most of their thought processes are totally unknown to them.

“The energy consumed by this ever active messaging, known as the brain’s default mode, is about 20 times that used by the brain when it responds consciously...Indeed, most things we do consciously, be it sitting down to eat dinner or making a speech, mark a departure from the baseline activity of the brain default mode.”(p.45)

“60 to 90 per cent of all energy used by the brain occurs in circuits unrelated to any external event. With a nod to our astronomer colleagues, our group came to call this intrinsic activity the brain’s dark energy, a reference to the unseen energy that also represents the mass of most of the universe.” (p.47)

A large part of what we “see” is virtual, created by the wiring of our brain’s dark energy. Most prayer or mental input seeks to produce a better virtual perception. That is how healing is defined by most prayer research studies, as merely the disappearance of symptoms.

Primitive Christianity, including St. Paul, and also Christian Science, take the bold and as yet unproven position that it is possible, with some kinds of prayer, to step outside

of the brain (local mind), outside of the dark hole of inner computer wiring and virtual realities, to a wholly unsuspected reality outside of the brain (non-local mind) that is non-physical in nature. This is what the Spindrift research has the potential for. It is not simply a matter of proving that if you pray the symptoms go away. This is also why it's been much harder to communicate and establish the Spindrift research than it has been to establish mainstream prayer research – and even mainstream prayer research is not prospering. We have some challenges ahead.

“Neuroscientists have reason to suspect that disruptions to the DMN may underlie simple mental errors as well as a range of complex brain disorders, from Alzheimer’s disease to depression.” (p.46)

Disruptions to brain activities unrelated to any external event – unconscious – may cause disease according to modern science. The article goes on to say, in a section called *Consciousness and Disease*:

“In 2008 a multinational team of researchers reported that by watching the DMN, they could tell up to 30 seconds before a subject in a scanner was about to commit an error in a computer test...In years to come the brain’s dark energy may provide clues to the nature of consciousness. As most neuroscientists acknowledge, our conscious interactions with the world are just a small part of the brain’s activity. What goes on below the level of awareness – the brain’s dark energy, for one, - is critical in providing the context for what we experience in the small window of conscious awareness.” (p.49)

Mrs. Eddy knew nothing of predicting computer errors but she claimed that she could see a disease in the thought of a patient months before they came down with it by “seeing” the fear of it in their unconscious thought. (see *Science and Health*, p.168)

Obviously more preventive work needs to be developed as part of the future of spiritual healing. In her letters we find evidence that Mrs. Eddy did such preventive work. I intend to study those references and begin incorporating such preventive work in the practice when mentoring as well as when doing healing work myself.

To the extent that it is possible, given privacy concerns I will discuss these issues in *The CS Standard* as they come up case by case in our work. I have stopped thinking of the practice as a healer with patients and have begun seeing it instead as simply getting up in the morning and discerning and doing whatever God asks. If patients come to you you see and affirm that that is what they are doing too.

Since not all of our work deals with human beings, and since some humans give permission to use their case with or without their name, I should be able to share with you some of the pioneering work that will be done in the next three years in the healing work.

The quote above, from *Scientific American*, speaks of “context”. What mental context do prayer providers bring to the case when working with parasites and bugs – images so apparently scary to the unconscious mind that the brain, when agitated, will dredge up and produce these images as hallucinations? (I can’t tell you how many patients I’ve had who saw bugs on the wall, bugs that were not there.)

Do the defense mechanisms (resistance to spiritual healing, or to a CSer “animal magnetism”) work in part by disrupting the DMN?

Obviously these are questions beyond the skill of Spindrift’s current research.

“Beyond offering a glimpse of the behind-the-scenes events that underlie everyday experience, study of the brain’s dark energy may provide new leads for understanding major neurological maladies...Already this type of research has shed new light on disease...New theories will be needed.”(p.49)

Spindrift has some new theories. In Identity Field Theory the world is consciousness based. What appears to be physical is only a creation of unconscious thought. Disease is not caused physically but mentally. The brain does not create thought. Thought, unconscious self-deceived thought, creates the brain.

It is not the conscious thought or even an unconscious thought that causes disease. It is the unconscious network of thoughts messaging to each other that causes disease.

That’s our theory. Sitting in the Raven’s Nest on a quiet spring night listening to the frogs chirping it is obvious that many decades of research work by those far more skilled than me lay ahead. The question is, will the research start again in this century or lay dormant for longer than that?

Happily I am only the prayer provider and I do not have to worry too much about the technical side of the work. I do not even have to measure or spend a lot of time observing the organism physically. I hire professional technicians for that. I just have to pray. I have found that in the Spindrift work having the technical side and the prayer side of the experiments separated is the most effective.

Since I do not have the funds for a statistician I have to mull over the results on my own. In this I am totally ineffective and in over my head. I wish I was part of a larger team, that I had skilled people who could help me, wish that I lived a hundred years from now when this work would be hopefully more commonplace, more advanced, and funded

There are certainly responses to prayer with parasites. The prayed for and control sides differ, but I have no idea what the differences mean. Unlike with other organisms where you have preconceived (and possibly incorrect?) notions of healing (if the seed sprouts that is “good”) I cannot get a handle on what is “good” with my parasites. Unlike other organisms that I have prayed for the prayer does not seem to return them to their norm but has a number of almost bizarre consequences. I feel totally lost, but intrigued.

In dealing with the parasite//predator conundrum one part of the problem was coming up with a good organism for research purposes. After much experimentation and the loss of many months I settled on an organism that is easy to work with and that bridges the link between predator and parasite. The official name of this little creature is *Melittobia digitata* and it is a parasitic wasp a little smaller than a fruit fly. It is commonly found in nature but has only been used in classroom study – pre-college and early college – in the last ten years. Because it is used as a research organism in the classroom literature on it and supplies for studying it, as well as live laboratory reared specimens (‘clean” or disease free) are readily available.

Since the scientific name is a lot to get your mouth around this organism is commonly called the WOWBug.

WOWBugs are parasitoids. A parasitoid paralyzes another insect and then lays eggs on it. When the eggs hatch the larvae feed off the fresh (live) meat of the paralyzed insect, eventually killing it. The larvae then go through the normal stages of insect metamorphous often resulting in a creature that, in human terms “does good” either through pollination or by killing bugs that are harmful to crops. Farmers use parasitoids, including my little guys (the WOWBugs) in their fields as part of integrated pest management and so do some organic farmers.

Symbol

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The first parasitoid I ever came across in nature was the organ pipe mud dauber, a type of wasp that used to build mud tubes on the walls of my chicken coop. Unlike some other wasps the dauber is a solitary wasp. Actually most wasps do lead solitary lives and are harmless to humans, but we tend to think of the small percentage that live in nests together and sting.

The dauber builds long vertical tubes out of mud and attaches them to a wooden or other surface. She then catches and paralyzes spiders, sticking one in each tube, and laying her eggs on its abdomen. In what to me, as a human, was a horrifying spectacle, the eggs hatch into little white maggot like larvae who feed on the live spider. The spider twitches its legs but cannot get away and finally dies.

I doubt that the little bit of consciousness that we call a spider is aware of its predicament; the leg twitching is probably simply a reflex. And OK, I know that most of you do not feel much sympathy for the spiders anyway. As a symbol however the notion of being eaten alive while paralyzed is about as close to the horror genre as a symbol can get.

It was a powerful symbol to me because I could see myself, my church, and even the disciples of Jesus, as sometimes being paralyzed like that twitchy-legged spider.

Think of the night of the crucifixion. The disciples were in as much physical danger as Jesus, yet they slept. That makes no sense. Their adrenalin should have been running. You don't fall asleep when someone is trying to kill you.

Here we see a certain type of "resistance" to spiritual good coming into play, a certain type of "defense mechanism" as *The Spindrift Papers* call them. A stupefaction that hits you and puts you out of service while harm occurs is not uncommon in the history of Christianity.

I have felt it myself, a sort of paralyzing unnatural half sleep or mental paralysis when I was trying to pray. I have certainly seen it in my church. The church, like the mud dauber's spider, is twitching but no longer acting, no longer sending forth the stream of

"pure and undefiled religion" that heals. Meanwhile enormous spiritual damage is occurring and eating the church alive.

In the *Course on Divinity*, in a chapter called *Recorded Events*, is this entry on p.259

"One night Miss Shannon was on watch duty at Pleasant View and Mrs. Eddy saw her in her room very sleepy. She awakened her and said, 'No, that is not a natural sleep. Get up and work.'"

Of course the real insect is not a symbol but a created identity like anything else, but I thought by learning about such creatures as the parasitoid I might get a handle on how to break the stupefaction that resistance, or defense mechanisms, cause in order to block the Spindrift work.

Physical Models

In doing this I was drawing on my Bible history because in the Bible the Old Testament provides physical blueprints of what the New Testament shows mentally and spiritually. Studying the Old Testament makes the New Testament easier to understand.

Mrs. Eddy wrote:

"Every claim of materiality has a twofold expression...In other words every manifestation of evil discerned in physical phenomenon will occur in a higher and wholly mental sense before it is dissipated. Because of the universal belief of both mind and matter, in the present phase of existence error will manifest itself through both classes of phenomena." (*Course on Divinity* p 145.)

In the Old Testament the actual temple is built; in the New the heavenly tabernacle is presented. In the Old Testament we have physical signs of covenant like Noah's rainbow and circumcision. In the New Testament a completely mental covenant is achieved, "written on our hearts." In the Old Testament Jerusalem, the holy city is built from Salem, a small town on a hill. In the New Testament Jesus teaches us to access a "city built without hands."

In the Old Testament spiritual healing almost always needed a physical mechanism in order for the people to understand it. By the New Testament we go “wireless” and most spiritual healing (but not all) is done without a physical intermediary.

When Moses made fresh water come out of a rock he didn't just pray, he used a physical staff. Jesus spoke of living water – something entirely mental – to the woman at the well. He needed no physical staff to impart this living water.

When the prophets purified contaminated well water or stew with poisonous herbs that had been inadvertently added they didn't just pray over the pot; they threw some trivial physical thing (like a branch) into the pot to purify it, or at least to be the visible sign of invisible spiritual healing. When an iron axe head fell into the water a prophet performed the “miracle” of making it float so that he could retrieve it. But first he threw a stick into the water. Only then did the iron “float.” By contrast when Peter was led out of prison by a vision the iron gate “opened of its own accord” and no physical action was needed.

When people were dying of snake bites Moses didn't heal the bites directly through thought, like Paul would later do when he was bit by a poisonous snake. Instead Moses had a sculpture of a snake made and put it on a pole, telling people they would be healed if they looked at it.

After the experiences I have had in healing in the last several years I think perhaps Moses was causing their fear to be self seen. Prayer has the startling effect sometimes of bringing fear up from the unconscious into the conscious perception, or of causing fear to manifest itself so that it can be seen and then destroyed.

By the New Testament we find that Jesus and others often healed without these material accompaniments. The lessons from the Old Testament were clear enough that they could now be applied directly without using physical models.

When we see in the Old Testament a physical kingdom built, and we read through all the physical steps of taking the little hill of Salem and building mighty Jerusalem, as well as building the kingdom of Israel and the physical warfare conducted by King David and others, we can more easily understand its later New Testament counterpart of spiritual building and spiritual warfare.

We also see in the Old Testament when the physical defenses were adequate and when they were not and apply this to mental warfare. We understand what the sword of Spirit is like when it is compared to a two edged sword. We understand the secret

place of the Most High a little better because we have descriptions of physical forts. We learn about shields and bucklers – a buckler being a small shield that protects your sword arm. We then understand that it is necessary to protect our consciousness, which is our sword arm in prayer.

We see what happens when defenses are let down. We watch when the physical kingdom is destroyed and the temple obliterated. We also find out that when the new temple is rebuilt it is more modest than the first temple, and yet by some spiritual seers it is seen as a better temple. There are lessons to learn in that.

This continual study of the physical models in the Old Testament is very useful in understanding how Jesus builds the kingdom within, “the city not built with hands, eternal in the heavens.” We also can learn from the Old Testament the dangers to that building process, what destroys the power within, and what builds it up. Just as a physical veil covers the “holy of holies” – the holiest room in the temple at Jerusalem, so Paul tells us of the veil, which he explains as our physical body, that prevents us from entering the holiest room of our minds, unless we are able to put aside that veil or covering, and walk through it to our spiritual identity.

In the articles I am doing about how to give a prayer treatment, when I come to the article on the watch prayers that you put after a treatment, I will be using the physical models given in the book of Nehemiah to explain the watch prayers. You will be able to see directly how a physical model can inform a spiritual prayer.

When working with children I early learned the advantage of beginning with a physical model before moving to a spiritual concept. For example using the model of physically tracking an animal in the woods and then transitioning to “prayer tracking”, tracking the effects of prayer through experiments, was helpful to the children.

. Being familiar with this pattern of going through the physical steps first to learn of purely spiritual steps second, I thought that perhaps physical parasitoids might provide a model for me to build on when learning about purely mental defense mechanisms, especially those that mimic parasitic, predatory, and parasitoid behaviors on a purely mental level and block or retard the Spindrift research. This proved to be true.

It was a place to start. As with many of the physical models or stories of the “Old Testament” variety I found the physical organisms to be violent, disconcerting, surprising, intriguing, humbling, emotional, powerful, confusing, and responsive to prayer, all at the same time. .

I have mentioned this because so many Christians and Christian Scientists have tended to undervalue or skip over the Old Testament. This is a mistake. Starting points, in both prayer and prayer research, can be difficult. It's always helpful to start at the beginning.

Continual Questions

WOWBugs are much smaller than mud daubers; in fact they paralyze and lay their eggs on the mud dauber just as the mud dauber does to the spider. In the world of parasites you will find that there is a food chain just as with predators. Most parasites have parasites, which in turn have smaller parasites who feed on them. WOWBugs are smaller than mud daubers; they are a little smaller than a fruit fly and best observed under a microscope although you can observe them in less detail under a really good magnifying glass.

The WOWBug is interesting to me because it can feed on up to 30 different organisms, though mud daubers are their food of choice. They are sometimes found in bee's nest, feeding on the larvae, which causes an emotional reaction in me since I have both raised bees and used them in research. I like bees and see parasites as their enemy.

Lesson #1: Human emotions projected onto these organism and human notions of 'good' and "bad" must be discarded if you want the spiritual patterns to appear.

WOWBugs can also be fed artificial food which has recently become available commercially. The effect of prayer on WOWBugs who are fed artificial food as compared to those who are fed live food differs (live food is also available for purchase.). I do not know what the differences mean or how to apply this in the real world. Should we all be eating synthetic food? I doubt it, but what does it mean? Is it possible my preference for the artificial food is affecting them?

It is impossible to tell because the WOWBug spends the first part of its life – including the part where it mates – inside the host's body, and when fed artificial food, even when kept in the dark to stimulate being inside a host, the difference in the bug's experience is a large variable that I don't' know how to factor. Obviously there is a

huge tactile difference between moving through empty space in the dark, and moving through the solid tissue of a host's body.

Do WOWBugs respond differently to prayer when preying on different organisms? Do WOWBugs that kill the larvae of a bee respond differently to prayer than one that kills the larvae of a destructive (in human terms) insect? Is there sort of a prayer hierarchy?

Are the effects of prayer necessarily human centered?

I feel like a person who started out to climb Mt. Everest and only got a short way up the mountain before realizing that I did not have the skill to continue. There was nothing passive about doing this research. Many things in my life were painful and grueling during this time and I felt, rightly or wrongly, that resistance to the work, within and without, was partly to blame. When you climb a mountain you should not be surprised by the wind and the cold, but you also have to be practical and know when to quit. So I am laying the research aside hoping that some day it can be replicated by a better and more well prepared team of climbers and also that I can improve my climbing skills in the next three years.. I am enormously grateful to have gotten even a small way up the mountain.

It is surreal to work with such organisms. When you look up from the microscope you begin finding the human world surreal too. You begin to question what is real.

The whip worms that I originally worked with were a particular type common to the intestines of pigs, but the worm presumably does not know that it lives in the intestine of a pig. It does not hate the pigs or purposely do damage to them. It just knows that it lives and functions normally in its world, that is if it knows anything at all which I doubt. I suspect the whip worm may be a human invention; that is that it does not have any corresponding spiritual dimension or identity but is a creation of the collective human mind (working on the theory that matter is a form of thought and that the world is consciousness, not matter.)

It makes me wonder if we really know where we are or what harm or benefit we produce. Is the earth alive in a spiritual sense? Is a galaxy an organism in ways we do not comprehend? Do we live inside of something without any knowledge the way the whip worm lives in the pig's intestine?

With WOWbugs it took me a whole year to get to know them before I could do any experiments. My first hypotheses were not good ones. Eventually I began studying diligently the hypotheses given in *Science and Health* and attempted to do

corresponding WOWBug experiments using those hypotheses directly. It was so much easier to see the patterns on creature totally foreign to me, than on other human beings, because with these organisms I have fewer preconceived notions of “healing.” Still some variable has to be measured and that is why I spent the entire first year monitoring the bugs so that I could design tests with some notion as to what to measure, that is what variables were responsive to prayer.

Heat and Cold

A working theory in Christian Science is that heat and cold are mental states. Since WOWBugs are highly sensitive to temperature I tried designing simple experiments with temperature.

The tests were inconclusive but they led me to thinking about heat and cold in ways unrelated to WOWBugs but in ways that spiritually challenged me.

If you asked me if prayer could heal sunburn I would say, “Of course.” If you asked me if it could heal a high fever, a chemical burn, hypothermia, or any other health condition related to temperature I would say “Yes. Prayer can heal that.”

If you asked me if prayer could put out a fire I'd say “No.” Prayer would not be my response to a fire.

Why not? The principle is the same.

Don't worry. I am not advocating arson as part of prayer research and I am certainly not recommending that anyone pray instead of calling the fire department or using a bucket of water and common sense. Nor do I expect to see firemen with clerical collars anytime soon.



Yet *Science and Health* does state that:

“Holy inspiration has created states of mind which have been able to nullify the action of the flames, as in the Bible case of the three young Hebrew captives, cast into the Babylonian furnace; while an opposite mental state might produce spontaneous combustion.” (p.161)

Why do I apply prayer to the health related issues of temperature and ignore anything not directly health related?

Education. When growing up my church stressed health applications of prayer and that’s the mental box I’ve put prayer in. Prayer should be applied to sickness, not to physics. At least that’s what I grew up thinking. Now I’m not so sure.

When working with WOWBugs I found something that I have no way to prove or even describe well. Like a child who sees a falling star but can’t articulate or understand what he has seen I can only try in primitive and probably incorrect words. What I found in prayer is that the individual wasps appeared to me to have some kind of mental mechanism associated with them and when this mechanism was “activated” or “made to stand up” through prayer they could work outside of their normal temperature ranges.

I wonder what the Christian Science practice will look like in the future. Instead of sitting around praying for sick people will healers scientifically understand mental mechanisms associated with various organisms and spend their day activating them as consciously as a physical scientist comes into the lab in the morning and grows cultures in a Petri dish?

One thing is for sure. The young adults I am mentoring today, when they are my age, will not be doing their healing work the way I do it now.

I am still such a medieval Christian Scientist. The Renaissance of spiritual healing is still so far from my comprehension even though it is upon me. I see it “through a glass darkly” like a medieval monk being shown a cell phone, but emotionally I balk at it. I’m praying about that, praying to dissolve my resistance.

New applications of spiritual healing are coming. Spirituality is developing in us and in the world.

Don’t be surprised the next time I burn brush if you see me saying a few prayers over my burn pile.

Other Effects

One thing I found with the WOWBugs was that prayer affected their social groupings before it affected the individual organisms themselves.

I remember a large prayer research study in which no effect was found from prayer on heart patients, yet the study (which is my opinion had serious design flaws) did bring people of several religions together, including such divergent traditions as Unity and Roman Catholics, to pray for healing.

Maybe that was the first response. Twenty years ago you wouldn’t have gotten such groups together to pray. They would have argued over the right way to go about it. We had enough trouble with that sort of thing at Spindrift.

Maybe the prayer affected the social groupings of the prayer providers first before it affected the organisms (heart patients.)

I have been collecting wild WOWBugs as well as ordering them from the lab, and I am currently trying my hand at rearing them. I keep each group in quarantine from the

others of course. Wild WOW's can't be used in tests because they carry diseases and parasites themselves, but it is interesting to observe them. It is hard to identify them since the *Melittobia* species has 14 known varieties and only the *digitata* is the WOWBug. I am getting better at identification.

Mud dauber nests turn out to be hot beds of parasitic activities with some nests having up to 50 organisms all busily preying on each other. (Something like Wall Street?)

The book I have describing WOWBugs and giving classroom experiments that I can adapt is called *WOWBugs: New Life for Science*. It lists a number of advantages to working with the WOW's, all of which I have found to be useful. They are abundant, they are easy to maintain, they don't need any special environment in terms of heat humidity etc. like some seeds do, they don't pose any environmental risks if some get away or fly out a window, they take very little space, they are inexpensive compared to other research organisms, they are easy to raise, they are reliable performers – in other words they don't differ much in their individual behavior which makes them easy to study in the lab. Also they are easy to handle – I pick them up with a paintbrush or pipe cleaner, - and they are easy to observe, they have a rapid life cycle, you can very easily tell the males and females apart, they have an unusual chemical communication system that is simple enough to study, their courtship is elaborate and observable, the males are highly competitive and even cannibalistic – so we may see if prayer changes that – and they don't have to be fed as adults. Besides, all that, they're kind of cute, at least the females. And though they have a stinger it is too small to sting humans with.

The males are almost cartoonish in their “bad guy” characteristics and I am not quite sure yet what to make of them. They are easy to spot because they are so much bigger than the females and they look quite different. They do very little but fight and mate.

One of the pre-conceived notions I had to give up was the Noah's ark thing, the strong notion that there should be one male to one female in terms of population ratios. I was surprised to find that even in the human species this is not so. There are more males born than females, though the higher percentage is small.

With WOWBugs 95 per cent of the eggs that hatch will be females. Not only that but the females can produce a few male eggs parthenogenitcally (without help from a male.) They will then mate with their sons after which they can lay a normal mixed group cluster of eggs. They can also withhold eggs up to 200days if conditions – basically temperature – are not favorable. I wanted to see if prayer would change the

ratio of male to female, but I had no working hypothesis that was specific enough to be useful and I did not have enough expertise in hand rearing them to get the numbers I needed to design an experiment.

The entire WOWBug life cycle is only three weeks. They are fun to watch. They hop, they play possum, and they do things I cannot yet find explanations for. They are not boring by any means.

Children in the Lab

One experiment I did involved offering sensory choices to the unmated females. Besides myself I had four children acting as prayer providers for these organisms. Since I was working with young people I let them help me set up this test. The classroom book I was using states that:

“By grades 5-8, students can begin to recognize ways that explanation and evidence are related. They need opportunities to develop and refine this recognition, and should be given as many occasions as possible to engage in full and partial inquiries. In high school and beyond these opportunities should continue and whenever possible, accelerate. The WOWBug’s activities in this book present many engaging opportunities for both levels of inquiry.” (p.9)

I could easily re-write this paragraph this way:

“Once students begin to recognize that the explanations in *Science and Health* and some of the stories in the Bible are related to evidence they need immediate opportunities to develop and refine this recognition. They should be given as many occasions as possible to engage in full and partial inquiries into the healings of Jesus and the hypotheses in *Science and Health* by engaging in entry level experimentation with spiritual healing. In high school and beyond these opportunities should continue and whenever possible, accelerate. The simpler prayer research activities in the SILO program present many engaging opportunities for both levels of inquiry.”

It is vital that children learn spiritual healing hands-on, that they discover for themselves the cause and effect relationships of how thought produces healing, rather than learning this only as a “head thing”, learning this only as Bible stories and as theory or “the letter of Christian Science.” This is what science is. We can be grateful that the original researchers at Spindrift took seriously Eddy’s claim of the unity of “Christian” and Science.”

Although the SILO program is being suspended I hope to continue to mentor youngsters in hands-on-healing, where they themselves can make that vital connection between what they read in the Bible and what they experience. This will be done by involving them in pioneering forms of the healing practice.

The WOWBug book also tells us:

“Since insects can’t talk to us, we must design experiments that let us clearly recognize when communication is taking place. Such experiments usually involve a bioassay – a test in which an organism is offered a choice of stimuli that may have significance in its biology, and its reaction to the various stimuli is measured.

The choice of which stimuli to use in a bioassay is critical. By its behavior in a bioassay, the insects tell the scientists which of the choices offered is more important and relevant to it. But if all of the choices are biological nonsense, it is possible to get results that look plausible, but are nonsense as well.” (p.44)

It seemed unlikely to my young researchers that the WOWBugs communicate much by vision or touch, at least the unmated females searching for a mate. This is because they mate while they are still within the body of their host, and while they are still blind. They will not open their eyes until after they emerge.

As for touch, with 95 per cent of their siblings being female it does not seem an efficient or quick way of finding a mate.

The kids did bioassays anyway to determine if unmated females communicated through touch or hearing at this point and determined through hands-on experimentation that they do not, at least not in any significant ways. Narrowing things down further the kids correctly determined, by further hands-on inquiry, that scent was the most significant sense employed in finding a mate.

At that point we tried a prayer experiment.

For the experiment commercial bioassay chambers were used to definitely rule out any cracks of light or deviation of temperature that might affect the results. A less expensive version of this test can be done without professional bioassay chambers. A Petri dish set up with drinking straws as tunnels and kept covered in a dark box is effective when working with children at home.

In our test the chambers were rotated between control and treated in-between each experiment, just in case any of them were defective and we didn't know it. 80 unmated WOWBug females, kept in the dark to simulate being within the host's body, were used in each run, 40 treated and 40 control. I did 103 runs per prayer provider before stopping. In other words we tested just over 41,000 WOWBugs. Each chamber took ten bugs at a time so we ran them through two chambers (treated and control) 4 times per run, and left them in for three minutes per grouping.

In the experiment a technician put a live male WOWBug in one tunnel of the chamber and an equivalent amount of a "come hither" male pheromone (the scent of a male wasp but no wasp) in another tunnel. With WOWBugs it isn't the male that pursues the female but the female that pursues the male, another thing I had to get used to.

The technician left the other tunnels empty. The females were then placed in the middle of the dark chamber and allowed to choose which tunnel to travel down.

All five prayer providers (myself and the four youngsters) did 103 runs. The technician handling the WOWBugs was in his home on the east coast. We were all in Wisconsin and we prayed for the bugs via webcam. We were not able to see the actual WOWBugs while praying, just the bioassay chambers. We did not know the results until the end of all 103 runs (515 runs total).

In the experiment 14 per cent more of the prayed for wasps, as compared to the control, avoided the pheromone and made the tunnel with the real mate in it their first choice.

The prayed for bugs were less easily fooled. Perhaps we should all pray before listening to advertisements, and before listening to political speeches. Or, as the kids pointed out, before dating online. Hmmm.

Art and Science



One of the really fun things I did with the children was to have them draw a picture of a wasp before they worked with the WOWBugs, and again after they got to know the WOWBugs, and finally once more after they prayed for WOWBugs.

I had been reading some interesting literature on this in the WOWBug workbook and also in some related articles. Although I only had only a few children to work with I had written criteria based on similar artwork from children in studies that were published.

Specifically 3 studies encouraged me to try this artwork. *Stereotypic Images of the Scientist: The Draw-A-Scientist Test*. *Science Education* 67(2):255-265 showed preconceived notions that people have about science, interpreted from their drawings.

Olkowski, H., and Olkowski, W., (1976) *Entomophobia in the urban ecosystem, some observations and suggestions*, *Bulletin of the Entomological Society of America*, 22:313-317 talked about how a child's fear of bugs develops and how it shows up in their artwork.

Finally, a paper presented at the annual meeting of the *National Association for Research in Science Teaching* (St. Louis Mo.) By R. W. Peterson (in 1996) showed

how children's science related artwork shows glimpses of visual/spatial competence and development.

With the children I worked with their initial drawings of wasps were negative. Most people have negative views of wasps, not realizing perhaps that the majority of wasps do not sting and are considered beneficial to humans.

The first drawings by the children had prominent stingers. They were also biologically incorrect with huge legs placed in odd places.

The second round of drawings, after they had worked with and observed the WOWBug, were minus the stingers (although WOWBugs do have small observable stingers, too small to sting people with) and were much more "correct" biologically speaking in terms of where the body parts were located.

The drawings had one common non-scientific feature; a human type face was drawn on the wasp (eyes nose, or in one drawing a smiling mouth). It may have been coincidence that the Spindrift kids drew human faces; the book seemed to feel that those children who did were indicating a friendlier feeling toward the wasp.

No instructions were given to the children other than to draw a wasp.

In the third set of drawings, drawings done after the children had experienced praying for the WOWBugs often enough to get a measurable effect, three common features of their new drawings were that the human faces disappeared, the eyes became larger and the bugs became more rounded although biologically WOWBugs are not rounded.

I don't know what this means because there are no criteria in the book for drawings produced after praying for wasps and I had only a couple of children to try this with.

I am interested in artwork as a way of communicating with non-verbal patients, or with patients who have difficulty communicating verbally, because in the future patients may participate in prayer research and also because it helps me simply in communicating with them about the Holy. I would also love it if someday someone would follow up on this to learn more about a child's developing spirituality so that we can figure out more about why they start out able to get an IFT healing effect but lose that ability before they hit their teens. At least so far that has been my experience. Children cannot articulate why but maybe there is some clue to that in their artwork.

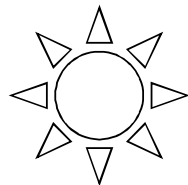
Inconclusiv



As these tests draw to a close in mid-July I will be sorry to see them end. It has been a very humbling experience to realize how little I know about prayer and about the unsuspected worlds it can affect.

I do feel I learned a lot about the defense mechanisms (mental resistance to prayer) during the last two and a half years and that this will be a help to me in pioneering new forms of the healing work. I also think that some of the defense mechanism blocking the Spindrift research have been taken down and that this will be a help in going forward. Time will tell. Society has built up consequences to its actions that make things difficult, yet some specific defense mechanisms have come down. The days ahead will be interesting.

I am left with no conclusive research results but with an enormous sense of gratitude for having been involved in this work.



The Spindrift Papers

Excerpts from a Review of *The Spindrift Papers: Exploring Prayer and Healing Through the Experimental Test, 1975-1993*. By Dr. Theodore Rockwell, 1993.

The Spindrift Papers are available from Deborah Klingbeil at cost.

“...Spindrift is a small group exploring ways to measure physically the effects of prayer on healing. The key researchers were Christian Science practitioners, whose full-time profession and sole source of income was from spiritual healing. Unexpectedly, they ran into violent opposition from their church for this work, and volunteers of other faiths who joined in the experiments were also severely persecuted by their respective churches...

...They achieved what appear to be extraordinarily robust and repeatable experimental results, predicted in considerable detail from their conceptual model of how God, consciousness, and the physical world interact. These results would not be expected from the experimental and analytical procedures used by others, yet it is not clear what errors, if any, the Spindrifters have made. Starting with seeds and yeast, they went on to cards, dice, and finally random event generators, (REG's)....

...At the end of April 1993, Spindrift pulled all of their 18 years of work together in a 406 page report, *The Spindrift Papers*, which contained the experimental reports, the theoretical concepts, and some philosophical commentaries. Bruce Klingbeil and his son John, who were the brains, the sweat, and the major reporters of the work, told me,

“We’ve put it all down. We’ve answered all the questions and criticisms we can. We’ve condensed and rewritten for clarity. There is really nothing more we can do on our own. There is no point in our running more and more of these same tests. If anything comes of this, it will have to be by replication and extension and revisions by others. We can do no more.”

Some of the experimental work appears to lend itself to easy replication...Bruce Klingbeil once said to me,

“We Christian Scientists tend to be an isolated lot, raised on the measured cadences of the King James Bible and the Victorian prose of Mary Baker Eddy.”

The early Spindrift reports reflected that fact. They were hard to tune into. The ideas were so densely packed, and the thought processes so different, that you could read them only with intense concentration. The Klingbeils worked hard to overcome that obstacle, listening patiently to hours of input and rewriting prodigiously.

The final cumulative volume of the Spindrift work shows the result of that effort. It is easier to read and to follow than most of the topical reports that preceded it. It is a good summary of the program. The feeling is almost of a journal in which the reader is

led along from step to step in the research, privy to the thoughts of the researchers and sharing their excitement as each new turn in the path is revealed. As they dig for meaning in each new batch of data, the reader seems to be present as the experimenters say, "Let's try this next!"

Yet the format of the report is functional, not purely chronological, following the development of idea, not just the passage of time. Each type of test is discussed in its own section, and the order is rational. In the appendices there are some philosophical musings as to the significance of some of the findings and some discussion of the historical and sociological aspects of the work. But if you want to refer back to a particular incident or quotation that caught your attention, you may have trouble finding it. There is a detailed Table of Contents but no Index. However, I found the format and the rhetoric an excellent balance of all the various factors that go into making such a decision.

The universe pictured by the Spindrift people is filled with a pattern-generating, pattern-mending presence, a force or field which guides embryos toward birth and fulfillment, and which helps the sick and the wounded. This force affects the inanimate as well as the living, forming the patterns in snowflakes and diamonds....Such a nurturing, supporting healing force they equate with goodness and mercy. The forces which tend to destroy and distort pattern they associate with evil. (They point out that the fact that this is an essentially religious view does not thereby make it scientifically invalid.) They go on to postulate that through prayer we can tune into, or resonate with, that primal healing force and help focus it onto an entity needing mending (e.g. a sick person)..

...The Spindrifters have examined this concept in detail, followed its implications out into many new trails and gathered a significant amount of quantitative data on what they have found.

...For Spindrift, healing prayer is not a matter of the healer's mind "pushing" the body of the sick person toward what the healer envisions as a healthy condition. Nor is it a matter of asking God to do so. Christian Science prayer, as I understand it, is a very special and specific technique, requiring one to associate oneself mentally with the patient and then, holding the patient in mind, to associate one's mind with the attributes and qualities of God. They call this *holy* or *qualitative* thought, and attribute *spiritual healing* to that process.

On the other hand, ordinary petitionary prayer, asking God to do something and having faith that it will be done, they consider to be a very different mental state, which has the power to accomplish *faith healing* and the *placebo* effect. They acknowledge that faith healing and the placebo effect are often effective, and the Spindrift experiments are designed to distinguish between faith healing and spiritual healing. The *experimenter effect* of parapsychology they consider to be a kind of placebo effect.

At this point, most of us tend to say, “Yeah, yeah, but let’s talk about the experimental protocols and the data handling techniques.” And then we keep brushing aside as post hoc guesswork the many kinds of patterns that Spindrift’s conceptual model led the experimenters to look for and find. The authors note that if you believe light is wave-like, you can design experiments to prove it. Not until you decide it may be particulate will you be able to devise experiments to demonstrate the totally different particulate characteristics of light. So until you can see, feel and “believe” (for purposes of discussion) in the sort of universe the Spindrifters envision, and try to understand how everything in such a universe will act and interact, you are talking at cross-purposes with those who take it almost as a given...

...People have not been interested in following the detail of how the Spindrift people see the interplay among God, human consciousness, and the physical world. Yet this is the searchlight and the Rosetta Stone that guided the experiments and explained the data. It may be wrong, but it does seem to be coherent and to provide a consistent explanation of the findings. This becomes clearer as we explore the next part of the Spindrift worldview.

In addition to the cosmic pattern-making, pattern-mending force, the Spindrifters attribute some powers to the human mind, noting that quantum mechanics requires that human consciousness interact with the physical world, that purely passive interaction is not possible.

John Wheeler, the eminent physicist has said: “In ways we don’t fully understand, observation seems to be a participatory process.” I previously mentioned the ability of the mind to call on, focus, and direct the healing force to some degree....The Spindrift experiments seem to show that even the unconscious mind, without apparent intent or focus, can exhibit such powers.

In addition to these positive powers of the mind, Spindrift describes defense mechanisms whose function is to hide from us the fact and extent of our mental abilities. If the mind creates order from a few random digits as they emerge from the

random event generator, the defense mechanism disorder a few...The defense mechanism has an easy job here – it just has to keep the total number of “misses” about equal to the number of “hits”.

The Spindrifters decided to go after the defense mechanism, to smoke it out into the open. Instead of just totaling up the series of ones and zeros in a block of REG output, they began to look at the sequential data points as they emerged. If the defense mechanism chose to follow up each bit of psi ordering with an equal and opposite burst of disordered points, such a pattern would be easily detectable. So they set up experimental protocols that gave the defense mechanism a minimum of options, and they felt they were finally able to catch it *in delicto flagrante*. To understand how they did this we have to back up and look at how they defined *order* and *disorder* in such a system.

The Spindrifters decided that the natural order for a system of ones and zeros was a simple alternating series: 1,0,1,0,1,0...and the maximum disorder would be: 1,1,1,1, or 0,0,0,0. Although one could view this exactly oppositely, (“I’ll get these all in order by grouping all the ones together, then all the zeros.”), the idea of *naturalness* seems to predominate the Spindrift thinking. They argue that if one saw a series of all zeros or all ones coming from a random event generator, one would consider that very unnatural and one would assume that something had distorted the natural pattern, just as one would re-shuffle a deck of playing cards upon finding too many cards of one type in a row.

This idea of a natural, or naturally optimum, pattern derives from the Spindrift approach to healing. Their premise is that the omnipresent ordering force works to maintain the natural pattern, which is a healthy organism, functioning with full vigor and vitality, and that sickness is a departure from this naturally optimum pattern. It is assumed that this matter of orderliness applies to all parts of the system: in a person, the entire body has an optimum pattern, so does each organ and each substructure within the organ. Similarly, in a string of numbers produced by an REG, one looks for patterns in each pair of digits in the sequence, (are they *orderly*, 0,1 or 1,0 or are they *disordrly*1,1 or 0,0?) But one can also look for order in groups of four, rather than in pairs, and in groups of eight and in groups of twelve. And one can also look for pairs of pairs etc.

The purpose of looking for order in such small details of structure is to catch the defense mechanism at work. As previously noted the defense mechanism would not be very effective at hiding the ordering process if it merely let some order show itself

and then compensated by producing exactly the same amount and same kind of disorder. Such a pattern could be detected easily, so the defense effect is more subtle. If we look at the “normal” Gaussian curve predicted by statistics we see a bell-shaped curve with the maximum number of ones or zeros at the expected middle point and lesser numbers for values on each side of the mid-point. The ordering force pushes the center of this curve up a little, and the defense mechanism raises the “tail” of the curve; that is, it produces more extreme deviations on either side of the mean than would be expected, to counter-balance the increased number of points “right on” the expected target.

There were other characteristics of the defense mechanism that were predicted from the Spindrift model that were shown up by this kind of analysis. And there were other by-products as well. For example, as previously mentioned, the Spindrift approach to prayer is not goal-oriented (“Heal, damn it, heal”) but is an effort to align oneself with the attributes or qualities of God, the Pattern-Maker, and to associate those qualities with the patient (“Not my will, but Thy will be done.”)

They refer to this as *qualitative* thought or *qualitative* prayer and call these studies *qualitative* research. Some scientists (this reviewer for one) felt this term might cause confusion among scientists, who are used to seeing the term qualitative used almost as a demeaning term, meaning something that is dealt with only in a vague way, as opposed to research in which parameters are actually measured and dealt with quantitatively (*cf. qualitative* chemical analysis, which is taught in elementary science classes, and *quantitative* analysis, which is an advanced chemistry course in college). The Spindrift authors, therefore, have generally avoided that terminology in these papers, although it is the common term in their own healing community.

As a means of distinguishing between the effectiveness of qualitative or holy prayer and goal-directed prayer, the Spindrifters set up the following types of experiments. They had been measuring the effect of prayer on the rate of growth of soy beans and of mung beans, having first “injured” the beans by saline solution or other means. Growth was generally manifested by an increase of weight. To distinguish between the two types of prayer, they first soaked the beans thoroughly in water, so that they needed to lose some water before optimum growth could begin.

The goal-directed prayers sought to increase weight, whereas the holy prayers merely sought whatever was best for the beans. The tests showed that the goal-directed prayers did indeed promote growth as compared to the control group but that holy prayer did so to a greater degree. The authors claim that:

“The patterning power is not elusive to those who have developed the ability to embrace in thought and in living the spiritually minded mental state involved. This includes the ability to put off human will. While developing spiritual healing ability involves considerable discipline and selflessness, it can certainly be done. Thus it should be possible to repeatedly demonstrate the patterning power...As individuals become aware of both the faith and the patterning power in their thoughts, and how to distinguish between them, they will be able to consistently heal under conditions where will couldn't operate.” (Appendix, pp. F-3, F-4)

They carried this idea a step further, with an intriguing result. Some environmentalists have argued that new plant strains created by genetic engineering may not be “in tune” with the rest of nature and may raise unanticipated problems. On a hunch the Spindrifters decided to test triticale, a genetically-synthesized blend of wheat and rye. They found that, “the same qualitative or holy treatment suppressed triticale seed germination but boosted both wheat and rye germination.” (Appendix, p.J-4) Of course one cannot rule out the experimenters' feelings on the matter (although the essence of holy prayer is to do just that) but the data raise an interesting question. The procedures and resulting data are given in the report.

After twelve years of work with various living organisms, the Spindrifters decided to change course. In the Forward to their report they write:

“By late 1987 it was clear that the research done with simple organic systems, with germinating seeds and the carbon dioxide production of yeast cells, was never going to attract attention. Many years of deep thought, more than a decade of experimental work, and many remarkable discoveries seemed about to slip into oblivion. A make-or-break strategy was devised and for the next five years all efforts were devoted to devising a simple, powerful, repeatable, anyone-can-do-it test, a test which clearly demonstrated the power of thought apart from the mediation of the human nervous system. (p.ix)

They in fact came up with two such types of tests. One they call the VIUR, for Visual Image, Unconscious Response...They say this should take about twenty hours of effort...

...Noting that even this modest amount of effort might dissuade potential replicators they devised a second test...

...In a letter dated 2 April 1993, Dean Radin raised the question of the effect of the closed deck correction on the VIUR test conclusions. Bruce Klingbeil responded 20

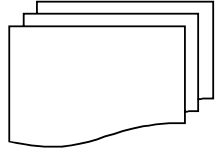
April: “Yes, the significant VIUR effects still remain after the closed deck bias is taken into account. Also, the defense mechanisms still remain. The fact that the results of your replication vanish when you use the empirical chance expectation rate (or our calculated adjusted value) may be because you are not looking in the right places for the effect.” In other correspondence and in oral discussions the Klingbeils repeated their belief that they understood the effect of applying the closed deck correction and that it did not invalidate their conclusions. Yet they did not demonstrate that in their report...

...Dean Radin was convinced that this did invalidate the VIUR conclusions. Yet again, this has not been clearly played out numerically. Both of the statisticians called in to referee this work have expressed concern with the data handling but have not explicitly pointed out any errors or flaws in the reasoning or the analysis.

What is needed is a clear demonstration that applying this correction (or any other necessary revision) changes the numbers in such a way as to invalidate the conclusions. Alternatively, if the data were analyzed in another way that would specifically invalidate the findings that might also be conclusive. There is also a lingering uncertainty about randomizing circuitry and software supplied to the Klingbeils and later found by them to be defective. This led to some failure-to-replicate before it was found to be faulty.

In conclusion, no one can yet say whether *The Spindrift Papers* accurately describe the role of consciousness in the physical world. That judgment awaits application of the scientific review process to this work, which has not been systematic. What is clear so far is that the scientific community has had trouble coming to grips with work of this sort, tending to worry over its form rather than dealing with its substance...

...I suggest it may be well worth our while to try to understand it and to see if it tells us anything new about the subtle and complex interaction of the human mind with the physical world. After all, its claim to have highly repeatable, large psi effects is exactly what the field has been trying to achieve for these past decades. And its arguments that such effects show up only when one separates the psi effect from the defense mechanism is, on its face, a reasonable one. If the experimental controls or the statistical analyses are faulty, and if these faults invalidate the findings, that should be demonstrable without requiring that the work be structured differently...It would be a shame to let the Spindrift work go unevaluated merely because it is, in effect, written in waltz time and we are used to the march.



**PIXE
IS**

25 years before Lynn McTaggart wrote *The Field* John Klingbeil, a Spindrift researcher, wrote this:

“What most people want out of religion is the presence of Love in their lives. Rightly so, of course. If you can’t feel the presence of God’s love what’s the good of it all? But the other questions are there too. And very few people want to wrestle with the great intellectual questions raised by the religious mind, or struggle with the fearsome problems raised by the possible illusory nature of the physical universe.”

Lynn McTaggart, wrote about research in physics in her book *The Field*, Such research is going on now.

After some foot-dragging, *Physical Review*, a very prestigious mainstream physics journal, published the paper unchanged in February 1994. The paper demonstrated that the property of inertia possessed by all objects in the physical universe was simply resistance to being accelerated through the Zero Point Field...What this was basically saying is that the corporeal stuff we call matter and to which all physicists since Newton have attributed an innate mass was an illusion...What they were all getting at, in the mid-mannered neutral language of physics, was that matter is not a fundamental property of physics. The Einstein equation was simply a recipe for the amount of energy necessary to create the appearance of mass...fundamentally, there is no mass.

And for our CS readers here is a pixel from Bruce Klingbeil, who was a Christian Science practitioner and the inventor of the Spindrift methodology

Newton couldn't have done what he did if he hadn't invented calculus. My idea of using the normative characteristics of pattern as mathematical zero points for looking at experimental data may seem simple but it's foundational. Mrs. Eddy pointed out the relationship between her concepts and mathematical ones, for example when she quotes De Quincey in the [Christian Science] textbook. All I did was uncover a direction she had charted, a direction the apathy of the human mind and the resistance of the Church has covered over. Christian Scientists cannot rest on what our Leader did for us. We've got t carry her vision forward.

And from Mrs. Eddy herself

"I know that my mission is for all the earth, not alone for just my dear devoted followers of Christian Science. All my work, all my efforts, all my prayers and tears are for humanity and the spread of peace and love among mankind."

Mary Baker Eddy

THE PRAYER TRACKER

A murder mystery by Deborah Klingbeil © 2007 Wisconsin

pulp fiction for the religiously
pulp fiction for the religiously
minded

Editor's Note: Some of you have objected to the fact that the main character in this story uses mild profanity. I have left it in because as far as I know no children are reading this story and because the main character is not a Christian Scientist. He is an ex-Marine who has seen combat and it seems unrealistic to me to have him say "dang" when his life is threatened.

The story is certainly not meant to be profound. It is designed as comic relief from the present realities of prayer research. I hope it's fun to read because it's been dang good fun to write.

SYNOPSIS

Should prayer be tested in a laboratory? Keith Redland thinks so. He is a professional prayer researcher who works at a laboratory where simple organisms are prayed for in controlled settings. During the winter he leads a quiet contemplative life, praying for his research organisms. In the summer he is "out in the world" running a liberal non-denominational summer camp called Camp Prayer Tracker.

Keith is accused of murdering George Lucor, a member of an ultra conservative group that violently opposes his work. He finds the body in a cabin at Camp Prayer Tracker,

has no alibi, and has had run-ins with this group before. Though his current lifestyle is quiet he is an ex-Marine and a Viet Nam vet who knows his way around a gun. In fact he owns several guns, and does regular target practice.

When the media begins calling him a cult figure his summer camp is forced to shut down. Keith's already troubled relationship with April, his evangelical daughter, begins to fall apart. He begins receiving death threats. Some of the threats are aimed not only at him but also at Callie, a 14-year-old girl who attends Camp Prayer Tracker.

Keith struggles to solve the murder in order to save Callie's life, his own life, to win back his daughter, and to preserve his life work. Keith's daughter April loves her dad but disapproves of his research. Keith missed her wedding because he'd been shot with bee bees and landed in the hospital. Just days before the wedding Keith found the body of George Lucor on the grounds of Camp Prayer Tracker where George had been renting a cabin. George had been murdered; shot through the back of the head through an open screened in window.

Keith quickly became the main suspect when it was discovered that George was a member of a group called The Defenders of God, a group that hates the kind of prayer research Keith is involved in. George was about to buy the farm next to Camp Prayer Tracker. Unknown to Keith he was buying it for the sole purpose of harassing Keith's work.

There are other suspects. Mahlon Mompers, a man who has made millions running a flypaper company, was also renting a cabin at Camp Prayer Tracker at the time of the murder. He had also wanted to buy the farm next door but lost out to George's earlier bid. The farm does not appear to be valuable but Keith wonders if there is something at the farm that no one knows about that Mahlon wants. With George out of the way Mahlon is in line to buy the farm. Keith has discovered that Mahlon found the bone of a woolly mammoth either on his property or Heartha's property and had secretly sent it in to the university for identification – but he doesn't see how this might be tied to the murder.

Also, George was about to get an inheritance. His mom was the illegitimate child of a Depression era peddler named Harry Apple with whom the inheritance originated. Just before she passed away Keith found out that Callie's grandma had been raped by Harry Apple as a young girl. (Callie Cooper is the 14 year old girl who attends Camp Prayer Tracker and whose dad is the local Methodist Minister.)

When Granny Brodell was raped back in the 1930's the resulting baby had been given up for adoption, but now the daughter of that baby, a beautiful young woman named Samantha Apple, has shown up in town. The police at first thought it was possible that Samantha killed George to get the inheritance that originated with the promiscuous peddler Harry Apple. Instead we found out in our last segment that George was trying to kill Samantha at the very moment that he was killed.

George was "Internet hunting" at the time of his death. When the story took place in 2005 such hunting was legal in Wisconsin though it has since been banned. Internet hunting means shooting a real animal via remote control over an internet hunting site. Samantha worked at the game reserve in Texas that he was on site with and he was trying to activate the guns through a computer virus to kill her "accidentally". Could George's murderer have known that and killed George to keep him from killing Samantha?

Matt, Mahlon's nephew, is a vegetarian and an environmentalist who strongly opposes Internet hunting. Could he have shot George?

As the story progresses Keith begins getting short notes or "bug bytes" mocking some prayer experiments he is doing with houseflies as the research organism. The notes also threaten his life and the life of Callie.

Rev. Cooper is officiating at April's wedding. He is having a very difficult week. Mother's day is Sunday and he has to deal with memories of his wife (Callie's mom) who died years before in a traffic accident. And now not only has his daughter been threatened but his mother-in-law (Callie's grandma) has died and her funeral is on Mother's Day.

The whole town used to call Callie's Grandma "Granny", even Keith, because she was a sympathetic person - the kind of woman who bakes cookies and makes you a nice cup of tea. Rev. Cooper has to deal not only with her death but with the news that she was raped as a young girl and that the new woman in town is her granddaughter.

Complicating the story is another elderly woman named Heartha, the crude and simple minded farm woman who lives next to Keith. People feel sorry for her as she just came home from the hospital but she seems like such a throw-back to a long gone generation that it's hard for people to make friends with her.

Callie has landed a summer job helping out at Heartha's, Heartha would have been about ten years old when Harry Apple disappeared in 1935, and Keith knows that

Apple stopped at Heartha's farm to sell things to her mom, but Heartha claims not to remember this.

On the day of April's wedding Keith receives a 'bug byte' titled "Final Warning". It makes it clear that whoever wrote the note – which may or may not be the same person that murdered George – is someone Keith has met before. Years earlier a member of the Defenders had entered his house and killed Keith's dog. The note tells Keith he's come back and this time to shoot him and not the dog.

Alec, a former police officer and a friend that Keith served with in Viet Nam, is on the way to the town of Goosehoot where Keith lives in order to help him solve the murder but he does not make it in time. As Keith was dressing for his daughter's wedding, he was shot in the back with a bee bee gun. He figures out an important clue – that the shooter is allergic to pets – but before he can figure out who it might be he loses consciousness.

When he wakes up he is in the hospital and Alec is there. Everyone comes to visit, even his ex-wife and her current husband Brian.

Shortly after Keith is released from the hospital he meets Samantha Apple. He also gets an excommunication letter from his church. He and his friend Roy and Alec visit Heartha but get no new information on Harry Apple. As they walk home through the woods they hear the screams of a woman coming from the direction of Mahlon's cottage.

The screams are coming from Dolly Lucor the widow of the murder victim. It appears that she was having an affair with Mahlon Mompers at the time of her husband's death. This gives both her and Mahlon a possible motive for her husband's murder. At the moment however she is hysterical because she has found Samantha Apple in bed with Mahlon. Not only has Sam walked off with her lover but it now appears she will also get the inheritance her husband had been in line to get.

Keith calms everyone down and then, while his friends Alec and Roy are off investigating the case, Keith sits down to think through all the clues and comes up with an alarming conclusion. He thinks that perhaps Brian Molbec, his daughter's stepdad, could be the man who tried to murder him and also the man who sent him the threatening notes or "bug bytes." Could his daughter have possibly been raised by a murderer and did he walk away and allow this to happen?

In our last segment we left Keith, armed only with a rock and a knife, setting out to confront Brian.

Part Four



Saturday May 7, 2005

Brian admitted everything, all with a cool urbane smile on his face. Yes, he had targeted me from the beginning, singling out my wife and child while I was in Viet Nam and purposely taking them from me. "Not that there is anything wrong with saving women and children from the devil." he said coolly. "And yes, I love Rene and April. I've made them into people worth loving. I have followed the Bible in this house."

Yes, he had shot my dog and intended to kill me too, "when the Lord allows." Yes, he had sent the threatening notes - those "bug bytes" that threatened not only me but Callie. "I don't intend to kill her." he explained. "But reprogramming is in order. She will be saved"

The shadow I had seen in the woods the night of the murder had been him watching Callie. He had actually had a van ready to take her and would have grabbed her if he hadn't heard the shot that killed George Lucor.

The shot that killed George Lucor had saved Callie from being kidnapped, and had possibly saved the life of Samantha. According to the police if he had lived another minute George would have tried to kill Sam through his scheme of activating the guns at the game reserve via an Internet virus. In fact he had tried. The police had said Sam

had a bullet graze on her shoulder. The shot that had killed George must have thrown off his aim.

Brain's voice broke into my horrified reverie.

"And no Keith," he was saying, "There is no point at all in going to the police. They'll never believe you. Why should they believe a murderer?"

Brian believed that I had murdered George Lucor, his fellow member of the Defender's of God.

I had not. Who had?

I had not killed George but I had allowed my daughter to be raised by a murderer and by a man to whom the life of Jesus Christ was a dogmatic personal emotional faith used to justify a violent ugly and self-deceived personal agenda.

How could I have walked away from her because of my own petty emotions? How could I have neglected to expose her to other interpretations of faith? How could I have not given her what I had growing up? How could I have selfishly stayed so far away from the child I loved to not see what was happening? I walked away and left her to be raised by a man capable of pre-meditated murder.

Waves of self-revulsion poured through me like vomit that filled and refilled my mouth but that I couldn't eject.

My hand tightened around the rock I carried. A slight noise occurred behind me but I did not turn to look. Probably the creaking of the old house; all old houses creak and groan.

Brian smiled handsomely and said to me, "I could finish this off right now you know, and claim self-defense." Still smiling, never taking his eyes off of me, he reached slowly toward the desk he sat behind and started to open a drawer.

Did he have a gun in the drawer? I wasn't going to wait to find out. In one quick action I rose and hit him with my rock, knocking him backwards. The bastard barely flinched. He almost laughed, but checked himself as I looked down at his smiling bloody face while hearing a scream behind me. It was a scream that I will never forget.

"Daddy! Daddy, no!"

It was April. She had forgotten her credit card and come home to get it. She had arrived just in time to see me viciously attack her stepdad, apparently without

provocation. Obviously he had heard her, or maybe seen her from the window across from him, and had baited me. Successfully.

The police were called. I was taken to the Police Station at Two Loons. Brian was taken to the hospital and released. He later came to the station and “magnanimously” dropped the charges.

With his bloodied face on parade – for heaven sakes, didn’t the man own a washcloth? - he gave an interview to a cable news outlet explaining that I had always been insanely jealous of his wife’s remarriage, had never even visited my little girl when she was a child, and had been unable to handle the pressures of Viet Nam. The implication that “after spending years in bizarre isolation as a religious fanatic praying for flies” I had been unable to handle the “real world” and had killed George Lucor was too obvious to need stating..

When they came to get me at the Police Station Roy and Alec were not amused although concern showed in their eyes. I had acted unprofessionally. The charges were serious. I had to stop going off like a wild cannon. They were right.

“I think you should let me drive.” said Roy nudging me gently away from the driver’s side of the truck.

April would not speak to me.

The police had taken my rock away.

Interest in me as a murder suspect immediately ballooned with the police and in the media. But I had not done it which meant that someone else had. That someone else was not Brian and was probably not a Defender of God. Who had murdered George Lucor? And why?

When I got home from the Police Station I went out back to feed my chickens. As usual the little garden statue of St. Francis, which had stood for years outside the coop, greeted me with his cheerfully stereotyped inexpensive little face. A bird sat sweetly on his shoulder and he held a chipmunk in his hand.

The real St. Francis was kind to animals but he didn’t spend his life standing around feeding chipmunks. In real life, because of his religious fervor, he was beaten in public by his dad and then disowned and left in poverty. He begged door to door. He spent years in illness. He started Lazar houses where he cared directly for those with the

dreaded contagious disease of leprosy. He was once shipwrecked off the Dalmatian coast. He once spent a grueling year in a military prison. At another time he went to Egypt and told the Sultan that he would walk through a fire but that if he came out unharmed the Sultan should accept Christ. The Sultan backed off from his proposal but was said to be impressed by the courage of the spunky little monk.

Suddenly the statue outraged me. Who had sanitized a real life saint reducing his life to a fake little statue suitable for gardens? I picked the statue up and threw it as hard as I could against the coop watching with satisfaction as its head fell off. My three red chickens, Faith, Hope and Charity, fluttered into the air and clucked loudly.

“Keith.” said a quiet voice behind me. It was Alec. He picked up the broken statuary, looked at the pieces without comment, and laid them neatly in the grass. “I think you should come inside and rest.”

Inside he made me a grilled cheese sandwich but I could not eat. Finally, at his urging, I downed half a banana. It felt like dry cement in my mouth and was hard to swallow.

“Have a glass of milk.” Alec suggested.

“I don’t want any damn milk.”

“OK. Why don’t you lie down for a while?”

Ashamed of my rudeness I consented. It seemed the only thing left to do.

I had wrenched my still un-healed back when I hit Brian. “Lying down” I thought to myself miserably, “is going to hurt as much as staying awake.” In my mind there echoed back the increasingly loud taunt, “It’s your own fault you idiot, it’s your own fault, your own fault, you screwed up and you can’t do anything to make it right anymore.”

I don’t know how much later it was when I woke up. The sheets were damp. I realized that I was so scared that even the backs of my legs were sweating. Scared? Hell yes. I was afraid of going to prison for a crime I didn’t commit. I was afraid of losing my daughter, afraid of losing my work, afraid of my own rage, afraid of losing my soul.

I woke up on and off during the night. I remember shouting, “Our Father who art in heaven.” Whether that was verbally or in a dream I do not know.

At some point I dreamed that I heard the dying puppy-like cry of a baby porcupine. Was it Gaagoon looking for her mother Phoebe? No, that couldn't be. Gaagoon was grown now and had her own den that Callie had found in the old horse stall at Heartha's. Yet it must be Gaagoon. It sounded just like her. Why didn't Phoebe come before a predator heard that wrenching little wail that lost babies make just before they die of cold and hunger?

How often had I heard that cry from baby coons, squirrels and other little ones that had fallen from a nest or crawled too far away from their mother, or whose mother had been killed on the road and never came back.

In my dream I went outside in the dark and found the place where the cry was coming from but there was no baby porcupine. I was barefoot and the ground was cold with sharp pebbles. I felt with my hands all around where the crying was. My hands grew numb. The half frozen grass felt like razor blades as I kept searching, but there was nothing there but the persistent wailing.

Then I understood. The cry was coming from me. My faith, the pathetic little amount there was of it, had fallen out of me onto the ground. My faith was dying. This time I had gone too far. I was out of range. I could no longer make it back to the nest, if there even was a nest.

The sound increased from a wail to a scream.

"Our Father! Our Father!"

A complex sensation, like something licking my face, generated a kinetic concert of small pings of shocking relief, sharp tingles punching minute holes of light through my entire body. I felt immense paws tucking me safely beneath the shining underbelly of the sacred. The ordeal was over. I was safe.

When I woke up my sense of safety diminished but a slight shadow of it remained and enabled me to function.

Sunday May 8, 2005

I stayed away from church on Sunday but in the afternoon I went to the funeral of Callie's granny, who had been such a good friend to me. I had no chance to speak

alone to Callie. The congregation avoided me, slithering away to the safety of the normal people in the pews. Rev. Cooper, almost in a state of shock with grief, was enough of a Pastor to ask me, "Have you considered counseling? My door is always open." before turning back to the open coffin, to his silent daughter and to his obvious grief.

I stood in the back of the church and then on the outer rim of the gathering at the graveside. Everyone stood unmoving intense and silent like water-birds in still water. Callie was as erect as a heron and completely dry-eyed. I knew her well enough to know that meant trouble. Her dad was taking her on a vacation to Yellowstone Park on Tuesday. He would certainly not welcome a visit from me today, especially with my current pariah standing in the community, yet I needed to see Callie before they left. I would visit her tomorrow while she worked at Heartha's.

Later that evening Roy Alec and I went over the murder suspects once again trying to reason out who it could be that killed George Lucor and why. It seemed obvious now that the Defenders of God had not killed George. He was one of their own. Their involvement had been limited to threatening me, both because of my work and because they thought I was the killer.

Matt Huck, the teenaged nephew of Mahlon Mompers had never been a serious suspect in my mind. He may have disliked George with a teenage passion but it takes real emotional depravity to cross the line into killing, and the kid didn't have that in him.

Dolly Lucor theoretically could have killed her husband so that she could run off with the rich Mahlon Mompers with whom she was having an affair but it was a stretch. I simply couldn't imagine a murderer covered in pink bows. The way those bows flew off at any provocation – she left a trail of fluff whenever she walked in the woods - we surely would have found one at the scene.

"But even leaving Dolly out of it," Alec said, "Mahlon could have murdered George so he could buy Heartha's farm instead of George. Which, by the way, he is doing."

"Mahlon has too much money to make him credible." I said.

Mahlon apparently was as interested in the woolly mammoth that he believes was buried on Heartha's property as a child infatuated with a new toy. Alec had found out that he had been tipped off that the farm was a possible site for excavation before he ever came to Goosehoot.

“He may want to buy Heartha’s farm and turn it into a museum,” I said, “but even if George had bought the property Mahlon could have easily bought George out had he gone high enough. Mahlon wouldn’t kill for something like that.” I insisted.

“I don’t know.” Roy said. “There were tool marks on those mammoth bones which may turn out to show that Native Americans were in Wisconsin much earlier than expected. It could be a significant find, one worth killing for.”

Yeah, well, Roy was a paleontologist and that’s what I’d expect him to say. Mahlon was no scientist. He was just a shyster. Roy might murder for a mammoth, were he that kind of person, but I couldn’t see it as a motive for Mahlon.

“That brings us back to the promiscuous peddler” Alec pointed out. “We know he spawned at least two kids out of wedlock, George’s mom and Samantha’s mom. Sam has been cleared. Could there be another illegitimate heir to the inheritance? How big is this supposed inheritance anyway?”

“It seems to me that we’re littering up the place with too many illegitimate kids to be statistically probable.” I said.

“When you’re talking about sex you can forget statistics.” said Roy.

“The guy seems to have been a sexual predator.” said Alec. “There could be dozens of victims. I’d like to know what happened to this guy Harry Apple and why he just suddenly disappeared. Not that he didn’t have good reason for disappearing, but you have to wonder too if some husband came home and found him in bed with his wife and ended the whole thing with a shotgun.”

“I wonder why Heartha claims she doesn’t remember Harry Apple.” I said, thinking aloud. “We know that Harry visited her farm and that her mom bought things from him. I think she’s lying.”

“She was only a kid.” reminded Roy, “What was she, ten years old or something?”

“That’s old enough to remember the peddlers.” I said, being old enough to remember one or two of them myself, specifically the man who sold rags and sharpened knives.

“Any visitor to the farm back in those days was an event for a kid,” Alec said, “and peddlers often gave away candy or small toys. She’s lying all right. Didn’t you tell me that at her competency hearing she got confused and thought she had been arrested and was going to jail? Is there any chance at all that the old lady could have shot George to prevent him from buying her farm and that’s why she thought she was

arrested? An old lady like that who never had a TV wouldn't have exposure to *Perry Mason* or *Murder She Wrote* or know anything about the modern court system, wouldn't know about fingerprints or worry about forensics or wearing gloves. Maybe to her simple mind killing George was a simple solution. Maybe this whole thing is real simple and we're making it too difficult."

"You told me all the farm ladies around here have guns" he continued, "and we know from her own words that she knows how to use one. She said she used to celebrate the fourth of July by shooting her gun. She was limber enough to climb over the bed rail at the hospital so she could certainly have walked over to the Camp, and she was released on the morning of the day George was killed. With her somewhat limited outlook why wouldn't it make sense to her to just walk over to Camp Prayer Tracker and do it?"

"You're blaming the murder on a little old lady in sensible shoes?" asked Roy incredulously.

"The competency hearing was a week before George was shot." I reminded Alec. "She couldn't have thought she was being arrested for shooting George a week before he was murdered."

"Oh yeah," Alec said crest-fallen. "I forgot. But I still think she's lying about not remembering Harry Apple."

"I'm going up to Heartha's tomorrow" I said, "to say good-bye to Callie before she goes on vacation. "I'll ask Heartha again and this time I'll push her a little harder. Maybe she knows something that will help us solve the case. Heaven knows we could use a break."

Monday May 9, 2005

Callie hugged me when I came in so apparently she wasn't buying the community's view of me as a bully and a murderer. Emily, the housekeeper, came out to stare at me with more curiosity than disapproval. At least she didn't kick me out as I had half suspected she would, but I noticed that she kept a cautious eye on me through the kitchen door and put a large rolling pin within reach when Callie hugged me. She kept her voice friendly. She knew how close Callie was to me and knew Callie

was vulnerable after the loss of her granny. She wasn't going to interfere with my saying good-bye, for Callie's sake I suppose, but she wasn't taking any chances either.

I got nothing out of Heartha during the visit. She was playing Scrabble with Callie when I arrived and eating a stale cookie.

"I wanted to thank her for the cookies but they told me she was dead." pronounced Heartha.

From Callie's grimace and from Emily's muted explanation I came to understand that the cookies were ones Callie's grandma had made before she went into the hospital. Callie had found them and brought them along.

Turning down both the cookies and a chance to play Scrabble I settled on the floor to watch the game. I wanted to question Heartha and talk privately to Callie but no easy opportunity presented itself. Emily wasn't likely to leave me alone with either one.

Heartha was studying the playing board and finally .made the word "pinch ".

"You aren't a real Grandma," Callie blurted out.

Heartha's eyes snapped.

"I never had no children."

"That's not what I mean."

Heartha reached out and pinched Callie's arm slow and hard. Callie did not pull away. I was too surprised to interfere before it was over.

"Pinch." Heartha said again.

Then she stood up and went into her bedroom emerging with a torn green sweater.

"Heartha honey" called Emily from the kitchen where she was unpacking some new jelly jars. "Don't wear that old thing. Don't you want to look pretty dear? Now go and get that nice pink sweater that Mrs. Peardon gave you. You haven't worn it since the day she gave it to you at that little party when you came home from the hospital."

"I got it for free" Heartha said before she obediently returned to her room and changed sweaters.

"I have to pee," she said. "Those pills make me pee like a horse."

I cringed at her crudity which offended me more than the actual physical act of a physical horse would have.

“Have you seen the new shower?” Heartha asked me.

“Yes.”

“It’s got a spigot where the water comes out and Emily puts it on my hair.”

As she turned and walked to the bathroom Callie saw that a piece of flypaper was stuck to the back of the pink sweater. The small loop of red string that you use to hang it with lay like a drop of blood against the pink.

“Oh dear” said Emily helping her to remove it and trying not to damage the delicate fiber of the sweater.

Once Heartha was in the bathroom Emily, using vegetable oil to get the glue off her fingers, said to Callie, “Isn’t that cute how proud she is of that new shower? Imagine her using an outhouse for so many years and having no indoor plumbing.”

Callie jumped up. “I’m leaving,” she said to Emily “and I’m not coming back. She’s a wicked old woman. After I go on vacation I’m not coming back. She’s mean.”

“Callie!” Emily exclaimed, genuinely shocked. “That’s an awful thing to say.” Then she softened. “You’re still upset by your grandma’s death.”

“I don’t care what you say or what my dad says or this whole crazy town. Heartha’s fooling all of you. She’s mean to her chickens and she’s mean to me. I hate that she’s alive and my granny is dead. I hate it, hate it, hate it. And don’t tell me that she’s old and that I have to be nice to her” she said glaring at me, even though I had no intention of telling her any such thing, “because it doesn’t matter how old she is. That doesn’t make her nice. Doesn’t anybody get it?”

“Is your dad coming for you?” was all the housekeeper said in response.

“No, he’s got Parish Council Meeting until late tonight. Anyway it’s not a school night because dad is taking me on vacation tomorrow and I’m done with school for the year. I’m going down to the barn and then I’m going out for pizza with my friends and I’m never coming back here not ever except to see Gaagoon so don’t follow me.”

Suddenly she began to cry. She then seemed to be upset by her own show of weakness. Callie was never one to play the maiden in distress. “This place just totally

creeps me out” she shouted, making a fist, and running out the door before I could comfort her.

“She’s going out with that boy I bet.” said Emily in a neighborly enough tone after picking up the rolling pin, “and much too young too. Who on earth is Gangoon?” she continued, mispronouncing the little porcupine’s name. “I hope it’s not some foreign person. There seem to be so many foreigners in the schools these days. Oh well, preacher’s kids, they’re always the worst. I imagine when she gets back from Yellowstone and has had a nice vacation she’ll feel better.” Then she added as an after- thought. “Do you think I should go after her before I leave?”

“No,” I said, “she probably needs time alone.” Mindful of the rolling pin I did not mention to Emily that I would come back in a little while and talk to Callie alone.”

Instead I said, “I better get on home.” I heard a noise and looked around to see that Heartha had the bathroom door cracked open and had been listening.

“Pinch.” she said and closed the door.

Emily stood outside on the kitchen stoop when I left looking thoughtful rather than acting scared of being alone with me. She seemed to want to ask me something but remained silent. Her apron puffed out in the breeze and she ran her hand up and down the rolling pin watching me until I was off the property.

Walking back to Camp Prayer Tracker I suddenly felt hot and tired. I decided to wash my face in cold water. The outdoor shower room near the cabin that George had stayed in no longer had police tape around it. It wasn’t likely that the murderer would have parked his gun and stopped to go the bathroom or take a shower anyway, besides the place was filled with too many fingerprints to be useful. We all used that bathroom on occasion as it was handy.

As I entered I looked over at the cabin where George Lucor had been shot and shuddered. I had not had the screen fixed yet.

I have often seen Phoebe in full battle gear with her quills erect. As I entered the bathroom I had an odd sensation as though my mind had quills and each one was activated. The first thing I saw inside the bathroom was three strips of flypaper. I felt a flame of rage.

I ripped the flypaper strips off the wall getting glue on my hands and wondering who had hung them. This was Camp Prayer Tracker and I owned it and paid taxes on it and damn it all if I wanted flies to be safe here they would be safe here. George had probably hung them. I felt annoyed with him even though he was dead and being angry at dead people is ridiculous.

Suddenly my mind prickles tingled once more. I stared at the red loops of string at the end of the strips. It was the same kind of red string attached to the piece of flypaper that I had just seen on Heartha's sweater, the sweater that Emily said Heartha had not worn since the day of the murder.

Only Heartha never used store bought flypaper. She made her own. She didn't use red string for a loop. I distinctly remembered Samantha telling me the first night that I met her that Heartha had wanted her to cut twine for her flypaper. I had seen the home-made flypaper with brown twine on it when I visited the barn and they were hanging it.

Mahlon's free samples of flypaper came in a four-pack. I had three strips in my hand. I looked at the wall more carefully. There was a fourth push pin with a tiny bit of red string attached to it, as though the rest had torn off.

Every one of my mind prickles told me that Heartha had been here wearing her pink sweater and had backed up to that piece of flypaper, carrying it away with her without knowing. The last time she had had that sweater on was the day George was murdered.

As I tried in vain to wash the glue from the flypaper off my hands with soap I shook my head, not able to figure it out. Could Heartha really have murdered George just because he was trying to buy her land? Everyone always talked about how Heartha loved her land but I suspected that she both loved and hated it. The farm had trapped her for years and deprived her of a normal life, yet it was the only place that Heartha felt safe.

Her water pills made her need the bathroom frequently. She could reasonably have come in here before or after killing George. Could an elderly lady really so easily cross the line into physical violence? It is not an easy thing emotionally to kill someone if you've never killed before.

The thing was possible but it seemed far-fetched. Maybe Heartha had been here for some other reason and seen someone else kill George. Yet I had never known her to

visit the Camp. Unless she went for a ride with someone or went to church I had never even known her even to leave her farm.

My heart jerked suddenly, causing me chest pain. Callie was still at Heartha's. If there was any chance at all that Heartha had murdered George then Callie was in danger. Heartha had had the bathroom door open and heard Callie say that she thought Heartha was a wicked old woman and that even if she fooled the whole town she didn't fool Callie. If there was any chance that Heartha was guilty how easily she might misinterpret Callie's emotion over the death of her granny!

The wooden bathroom door snapped on its hinge as I sprinted for Heartha's barn.

Everything looked normal as I approached. A black hen wandered in the yard, pecking at bugs. As I slowly opened the sliding door to the old barn Heartha suddenly came barreling out and pushed me into the barn before I could catch my breath. I heard the latch of the barn door catch behind me but it hardly registered.

Insects were attacking my eyebrows, pulling out the hair, and climbing down into my eyes so that I could not see.

After a single moment of terror I realized that this was not true. I had walked into a strip of flypaper in the shadowy barn and it was stuck to my eyebrows.

A small body ran toward me like a bullet and stuck to me, literally, being also covered in the smelly flypaper.

"Heartha's going to kill me." came Callie's voice. "I don't know why but she's going to burn the barn down and Emily already left. I told my dad he should have bought me a cell phone." she ended with a sob.

I knew she was serious about Heartha. I could smell gasoline.

A cell phone! I didn't have mine with me. I wasn't used to talking on the phone. I suppose that came from being a contemplative but I certainly regretted it now. Unlike other people I didn't automatically carry my cell.

"Where did she pour the gas? I asked.

Callie pointed to some bales of hay where a small beam of sunlight coming from a knothole illuminated an old gas can.

“I was in the horse stall looking for Gaagoon when I smelled it and came in to see what she was doing,” said Callie Her little voice was strong despite hiccups.

“I need a weapon to knock her out with if she comes back in.” I whispered, in case Heartha was in earshot. “Any ideas?”

Callie looked around and handed me an old coffee can.

“It’s too light.” I said. “I need something heavier.”

Just then, riding the single full beam of sunlight, a very small fly began to fly toward a strip of flypaper. Callie caught the baby fly in the coffee can and quickly snapped on the lid, automatically taking a pencil from her pocket and poking air holes in it, although the tiny fly had plenty of air in the can.

“At least this baby fly won’t die.” she sobbed. “At least she won’t stick to that horrible flypaper.”

“I need something heavy Callie.”

“Gaagon dragged an old bone home and has been chewing on it. It’s small but pretty heavy.”

“Go get it” I whispered again and she ran off to the horse stall and came back with the bone. It would have to do.

Suddenly we heard Heartha’s voice disembodied in the air around us. We both jumped. She had returned and was standing right outside the barn wall where we were huddled.

“During the Depression” Heartha said as though thinking out loud, “we had to sell the icebox so we couldn’t keep fresh meat. I used to club the raccoons. I don’t kill things because I want to, just if I have to. I never enjoy killing my chickens though I like to see them run with their heads cut off. That’s the only part I like.”

I looked up at the knothole in the wall. Her voice sounded so close that I wondered if Heartha was talking through the hole.

I saw nothing but the spot of light that came in from the knothole and played on the blue gray wood of the weathered barn. There were smaller shafts of light from small

cracks in the barn wall and the shadows played eerily on the old wood. The wood was very beautiful. It was also dried out and flammable. Certainly the barn was so old that the wood had never been treated with a fire retardant. There was no sprinkler system and the barn was filled with old dry brittle hay.

“Susie she was a mean dog” Heartha continued apparently talking to herself, “but I never had no trouble with her. She didn’t like my Uncle Herbert. I don’t know why; he liked dogs pretty good. If a burglar had come Susie would have taken the seat of his pants off and a little more besides. Yes, I guess they would have left with less, not more, than they came in with. Hah!” Her laughter grated.

“Why is she talking?” Callie whispered to me huddling closer. I hunched my shoulders to show that I did not know and listened for some clue to what was in Heartha’s mind, listened for some spot where I could enter the conversation and talk with her, reason with her, get her to open the door.

“When Papa died” she plodded on, “we sold the sulky plow and horses. It was the Depression don’t you know; we couldn’t feed them. They ate them for horsemeat. They lied to me. They promised to use them to plow. We had a hired man for a few months but he went to the Catholic Church and his mom was always on his hinder about working for a Protestant family. So we lost him. I worked awful hard as a girl.”

“I’m sure you did Heartha.” I cut in using the most sympathetic voice I could manage under the circumstances. “But there must have been good things too about growing up on the farm.” I was trying to draw her out, trying to buy time, trying to understand what was motivating her. “What do you miss about growing up?”

She was silent for a long minute and then peered in at us like at cat at a mouse hole. Her eye, framed by the knothole, looked enormous. The shadows in the barn seemed to walk toward us until finally her eye disappeared and the spot of light expanded once more.

“I miss the peddlers.” she finally said with her disembodied voice hovering in the air. “There was a peddler that sold sewing things and one that sold rags, and pots and pans. Then there was Mr. Apple selling Murphy’s Mineral. He always gave me candy and told me I was prettier than the other girls were. He liked to touch my hair. Nobody else ever said that I was pretty.”

She paused and the eye reappeared at the knothole swinging from one side to the other. "His leather jacket smelled real oily when I laid my head against it. But he didn't have the jacket on when he coughed and started bleeding and then he died."

"You told me that you didn't know Harry Apple." I protested. "Don't you remember? I asked you and you told me that you didn't know anything about him."

Good Lord, Heartha had only been ten and the perverted old peddler had been touching her hair. Callie was 14 and quite modern but like all young girls she was vulnerable. I shuddered thinking of how pretty Callie's red hair was.

"You were there when he died?" It had taken me a moment to register what she had said.

"It was like an accident." she said in a matter-of-fact voice. "I didn't want to kill him. I wish he hadn't made me have to. He always touched my hair real soft don't you know."

"You killed Harry Apple?"

It was a dumb thing to say but I was stunned. The possibility had never occurred to me. George had been wearing Harry's hunting jacket when he showed up to buy Heartha's farm. It must have been a shock to Heartha to see the old familiar jacket and then have George ask in his loud dominating voice to buy the farm.

Had Heartha assumed that George knew something about the old murder? Maybe she thought that he would expose her for killing Harry if she didn't give him the farm. How many years had she been scared for? How many years had she been worried that someone would find out and tell? No wonder when she had appeared in court for her competency hearing she was afraid she would be arrested. She had murdered a man years ago and that man's grandson George had shown up wearing his dead grandpa's jacket and demanding her land.

What memories that jacket must have set off for Heartha!

I felt Callie leaning in as close to me as she could. She trembled against my side and I was reminded of a shivering little piece of hay moving slightly under the warm breath of a horse leaning down to eat it. She certainly felt as light as a broken piece of straw. I put my arm around her even though she was covered in flypaper. Heartha began to talk again.

“Papa took care of it. But then Papa collapsed in the doorway a month later and died, and that’s when it all started. It weren’t never the same after that. Nothin’ did go right after that.”

“You killed George didn’t you? You walked over to my Camp and killed George. Why, Heartha, why?”

“I killed George because I had to not because I wanted to. Mr. Apple’s right there by you, buried under the horse stall. I watched Papa pour the cement over him. Callie knows. Callie is always in the barn. She talks to Mr. Apple too. Mr. Apple thinks her hair is pretty. My hair is gray but it used to be brown. I’m not going to kill you and Callie because I want to, just because I have to. It don’t hurt to watch though.”

Callie made a frightened noise. Obviously Heartha had misinterpreted the time Callie spent in the horse stall. Callie often talked to Gaagoon and if Heartha, standing at the door of the barn, did not know about the porcupine nest it must have seemed to her that Callie was talking to herself – or, in her imagination – to the dead Harry Apple.

Wouldn't you know that despite having acres and acres to choose from the little porcupine would make her nest in the horse stall where Harry Apple was buried? It must have made Heartha very nervous to have Callie always poking around. During her outburst earlier in the day, while Heartha had had the bathroom door open and was listening, Callie had called Heartha a wicked woman and had said that Heartha didn't fool her. No wonder Heartha thought Callie had discovered something.

With Callie leaving on vacation tomorrow now was Heartha’s only chance. The fact that she couldn’t possibly pass it off as an accident would never occur to the stolid Heartha who still lived in a former century and whose knowledge of forensics was zilch.

Heartha's eye played peek-a-boo at the hole and we both froze. Then the large eye floated away again. I could hear a click, and I knew without a doubt that she had opened her purse. It’s surprising that such a simple sound can be so distinctive.

“No, oh no,” Callie breathed out involuntarily then squeaked in my ear explaining “She’s got a box of matches in her purse.”

“I won’t touch you or Callie till you don’t live no more.” said Heartha. “But it don’t hurt nothing to watch.”

I listened so hard that my ears ached. Either the match didn’t catch or the wind had blown it out but I was sure that I had heard the faint raspy sound of the match on the

box, as faint as the sound of a snake's stomach crawling across the cement of the barn floor.

"I like to watch." continued Heartha as though she were talking about fireworks or a ballgame. "It gives me something to do. I watched the pastor once when high winds broke the handle of the pump and the windmill kept running and you couldn't turn the pump off. It just kept running all over the yard and froze in one big sheet of ice. The pastor came to bring us a sausage. It was a long time ago. He slipped and broke his leg and jerked a long while. His coat was blowing. He looked like a crow. It was an awful good sausage. I remember that it was an awful good sausage."

While she was talking I had finally moved into action; my shock had been broken by the sound of the match. I motioned Callie to go as far back in the barn as she could after untangling where our flypaper had stuck together as she leaned against my side. I could feel some of the flies still moving under my hand. "Stay in the back of the barn, no matter what happens, and hunch down." I whispered to Callie nudging her into action. She went.

"Yes, I miss the peddlers." Heartha continued. The lust of anticipated murder was making her talkative. She was speaking in a flat voice but when the large eye reappeared at the knothole I could see that it was wet with excitement.

"McKinnon, he sold lineaments and spices" she continued speaking faster. "I locked him in the barn a little while and watched him from the horse stall. When I let him out I said, 'Oh, the wind must have blown the latch.' That was funny. But now not so many people come that I can keep here long. There's not much to watch. Farming is lonelier today than it was when I was a girl."

The raspy sound came again and I saw a flame dart like a snake's tongue through the knothole.

"You left your new pink sweater in here" I said.

"Someone gave it to me. I don't know who. I got it for free." The match burned out with a tiny hiss.

"A sweater like this is worth about 20 dollars Heartha. They sell them for 20 bucks in Two Loons. I've seen them."

Heartha had been raised in the Depression. She got upset even when Emily poured the water from boiling potatoes down the drain. Water was precious. Water was life

and you could still use it after you boiled the potatoes, to add to soup, and with any left to add to the bread dough and with any left to clean the floor in the chicken coop, and then to throw on the garden. Heartha thought that people shouldn't throw water away. It made her mad.

"It's a shame to burn 20 whole dollars." I continued. The sweater was a desperate last resort; an idea that had flickered into my head as the match had flickered at the knothole.

"I 'm not going to burn it." she said. "It's mine. I have a gun so don't try to keep my sweater".

I heard her heavy walk plodding methodically toward the door. Quickly I checked that Callie was still as far back as she could go, uttered a silent prayer of thanks that an idea had come to me of how to get Heartha to open the barn door, and made my way the short distance to the door, hiding just behind it. My back ached. Heartha was an old lady and ought to be an easy hit but she was a good 70 pounds heavier than I was and she was emotionally pumped up while I felt weak and shaky.

I had been weak that way once before, weak because I'd been hit with shrapnel. My back had hurt then like it hurt now. Yes I knew what to do. The enemy kept coming; I could hear his boots, the plodding of her steps. I willed all the strength of my body into my trigger finger until that finger became my entire fist wrapped around Gaagoon's snack bone. My body seemed to float in the air, it had no substance at all for my whole being was in that trigger finger that had turned into a fist.

As I heard the door open it did not occur to me that my victim was a little old lady in a frumpy blouse and sensible shoes, a woman so simple that she did not know that that she was walking into a trap. I saw only the enemy. My soul was in my fist and it was primed to kill.

The barn door creaked open. Light flooded the barn like liquid corn syrup flowing out of a bottle. It coated the fuzzy pink sweater and ran down the bale of hay the sweater sat on glowing like a piece of fuzzy pink bait. I saw Heartha's purse swinging forward and then the arm it was on and then her body. I hit her hard from behind. She fell down in a blob, wobbling to rest on her side. She looked up at me with one large eye. She might not be smart but she was cunning and deadly. For a moment the eye spit hatred and then suddenly it closed. Was I in country?

“Yes,” she continued with her eye closed as though nothing had happened. “Farming is lonelier today than it was when I was a girl.” Then her head lolled to one side. Her huge eye, like a bloated tick, crept under her eyelid and she lost consciousness.

Callie ran forward and threw herself at me, crying. Roy appeared out of nowhere and for a moment, hearing his voice I thought I really was in Viet Nam. Feeling dizzy I gently disengaged Callie and leaned back against the bale of hay and the pink sweater. Roy looked at us both standing there with flypaper stuck to our hair and said “What the...” and then he came toward us, tripping over the bone I had used to knock Heartha out with. He picked it up to get it out of the way just as I started to keel over. “Good Lord it’s the bone of a baby!” I heard him exclaim just before he saw me falling. He lurched to catch me. I saw his hands reaching out and I saw Callie hugging the coffee can with the baby fly in it and then I didn’t see anything. From far away I heard Callie squeaking and Roy’s voice fading in and out calling, “Keith, are you all right? Are you all right? All right? All right? All right?”

Where was he? Who had a baby? Why were the snipers carrying purses? Did Callie float away? Did someone kill the eye? And why was there a palm tree in the corner of the barn?

I guess it was right about then that I passed out.

To be continued.

Editor’s Note: Although in this episode we discovered who the murderer is the story doesn’t end here. There is one more episode and I promise you it will end with a bang.

Section Two: Of Special Interest To Families



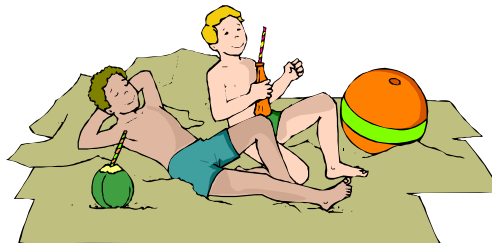
Every time a caterpillar sheds its skin and grows this is called an instar. The IFT Instar section of this publication was created to help families teach their children and grandchildren the Bible and also the basics of good prayer tracking, in other words:

- Care
- Prayer
- Empathy for living beings
- Respect for organic and inorganic systems
- Good measurement skills
- The joyful, hands-on, inquiry-based approach to living embodied in the scientific method

Final Raccoon Report



For those of you who have been keeping track of our raccoons Peppy (formerly Royce) and Rosie emerged from their dens early this year due to a mild winter and early spring. Rosie apparently found a boyfriend (I didn't even know she was dating!) because the Monday after Easter she gave birth to five kits in the hayloft. I am writing this at the end of April so the kits are not out yet but in the next issue, which will include our last report on the raccoons, I will have some photos for you plus a raccoon prayer activity for the children. Thanks for keeping them in your prayers.



Soaking Up Love

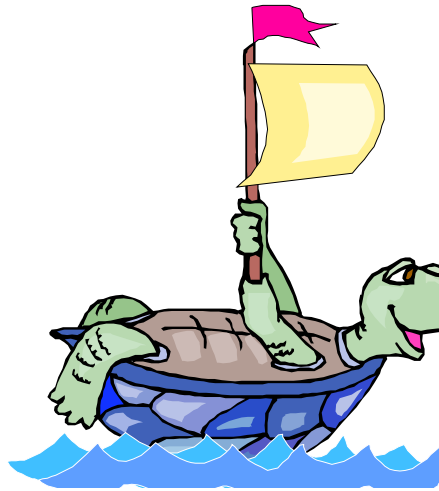
This time of year people in many parts of the country begin going to the beach. You can teach your children that God is like the sun and that you can soak up God's love just like you soak up sun at the beach. The only difference is you don't need suntan lotion because God can't hurt or burn you. God's love just soaks into us and makes us feel warm and good.

For an activity make gingerbread cookies or any kind of cut-out sugar cookies using a gingerbread man type cookie cutter. Use canned or home-made frosting to frost the cookies and those small tubes of frosting to add bathing suits and bathing trunks to your gingerbread people. Raisins can be used for sunglasses. Place the people on brightly colored oblong party napkins as beach towels. Take the small umbrellas used in cocktails and stick them in gumdrops to make beach umbrellas.

Finally make a small sign that says "Soaking up Love", tape it onto a toothpick, and place it into a gumdrop. If you are adventurous and have no problems with ants you can place these cookies in the top of a shirt box filled with yellow decorating sugar – or for less expensive sugar make your own with regular sugar and a few drops of yellow food coloring to make the sugar look like sand.

Remind your children that whenever they feel the sun on their face when riding their bike or sunbathing in the sand or playing at the beach they can remember how God is Love and how we soak up God's Love all over and it feels good.

Happy beach days!

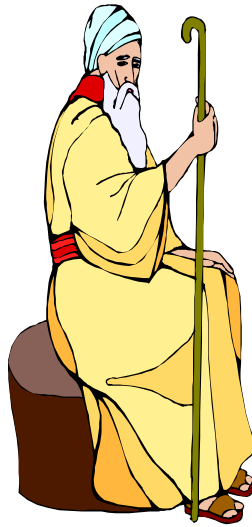


**Section Three: Of Special Interest
To our Christian Readers**

MOSE

By John Klingbeil

Continued from the last issue



THE RED SEA

It was well into the last watch of the night when Eli and Rachel were wakened by shouts outside their tent. Eli groaned and rolled over, realizing his name was being called, then reluctantly struggled to his feet and began to dress. Moments later, he was outside.

Still sleep-dazed, he looked at the two men. Neither Joshua nor Caleb were wearing cloaks, although the night was cool; obviously they had been running, the sweat still dripped from their foreheads.

"Is there trouble?" he asked. "Is Pharaoh pursuing?" He pulled his cloak tighter about him.

"Not yet," Caleb replied cryptically, as Joshua began to explain that Moses wanted a vanguard, a rearguard, and left and right flanking guards. Each of the twelve tribes was to furnish two hundred armed men.

Eli turned to Rachel who had followed him out of the tent. "Get Hezekiah. Tell him I want him."

"Also," Joshua continued, "can you circulate the message among your people: David, son of Mordechi, is about half an hour out with a six hundred donkey caravan and will make camp next to you. He is carrying provisions so Moses will put off our leaving until midday."

Eli sighed wearily. "He wants all the provisioning done in one morning?"

"The tribes were supposed to be totally provisioned when we left. He is allowing a morning for the initial contingent of armed men to be organized, for the tribes to be given their places in the march, for the Elders to arrange for runners between themselves and for those fools who did not pack properly to get provisioned."

Eli nodded. "In one morning?"

"Yes," Joshua replied. "David will follow only till we come near the Red Sea, then we part. But I take your point." He multiplied the amount of one hundred and fifty pounds of merchandise on each of six hundred donkeys. "It is a lot of merchandise to move in a few hours. Many of the people are badly provisioned and will be eager to buy. But the people have much distance to travel in the next few days and they were supposed to have come prepared. It's the best that we can do."

Eli looked sharply at the battle ax Caleb carried and at the khopesh and dagger Joshua wore, then turned as he heard Hezekiah approach. "Ah, Hezekiah, this is Joshua. He is organizing our Army and I see he wears the weapons of Moses. Wake and arm two hundred men immediately."

Hezekiah made no move to go. Eli cleared his throat. "Guards are being set up. Our men are to obey Joshua. If any are reluctant, they will deal with me. Is that clear?"

Hezekiah departed, followed by Caleb and Joshua. Eli sighed and returned to the tent. Once within he turned again to his wife. "Rachel, tell Samuel to come. Wake him if need be." She smiled and left for the tent of their eldest son.

By the time she returned, the night sky was lightening although the fiery cloud above them still burned brightly. Eli's face creased with pleasure as his wife and son entered the tent. "David approaches with six hundred donkeys. He should be almost here by this time."

Samuel looked a question at his father. "David will follow as we approach the Red Sea and then will leave us. Moses does not give the people much time to buy. David will not want to waste time following a moving people either, he will want to sell and depart as quickly as he can." Already Samuel was beginning to appreciate his father's outlook. "I'll get the family going."

"Good," Eli returned. "Take your sons and help David settle next to us. Then offer to take provisions at a bulk price. Offer for the donkeys, too. Six hundred donkeys is a lot for David; he'll probably be willing to give a good price to get rid of part of them quickly and easily. He'll have enough packing and unpacking to do."

Samuel began considering prices in his mind; a large and profitable piece of business was at hand. His attention shifted as his father spoke again.

"Send one of the boys back to report all your purchases to your mother. We ourselves are fully provisioned; what we buy will be strictly investment and I don't want to be too heavily into any one thing."

He looked at Rachel and smiled appreciatively. "Your mother sent the servants through the camp last night to check the provisioning of the people. She has a good idea of what they will probably buy and will tell you what is most needed."

After Samuel had left, Eli sat in thought, then walked to the door of the tent and gazed at the fiery pillar above them. The encampment was bustling with activity and excitement; both men and women were making an early start. Even the daily grinding of the meal for baking had begun.

He stepped outside and faced the light that made the early activity possible, the fiery pillar that had preyed on his mind through all the wakeful hours of the night. Somehow the light in the sky and the actions of Moses were a mixture that led to trouble.

Initially there was the matter of appointing Joshua to lead the armies of Israel. The Israelites had always fought by tribes; a single leader was trouble enough, a leader as young as Joshua was compounding the problems involved. Moreover, it had been many

generations since fighting of an organized kind had been done at all. To begin the process of building a fighting spirit and a fighting force with a political blunder was not good.

He turned the matter over and over in his mind and could see no way Joshua could weld the men of Israel into a fighting force any more than there was any way Aaron could gather enough power into his own hands to provide a political base for the authority of Moses. In their present mood the people were feeling very free, very rich, and in no mood to give loyalty to anyone, except perhaps to family and, by consensus, to the Elders.

He shook his head and stroked his beard. Soon the people would realize that they did not need Moses any longer. If, then, he tried to hold them or mold them, the long knives would be out for the very man who had led them to freedom.

The bustling encampment moved around Eli respectfully as he walked further outside the tent and gazed in rapt contemplation at the fiery pillar. With his eyes turned toward the cloud it seemed he was unaware of their activities. But he knew. He knew they ground meal, prepared armed men to follow Joshua and made ready to buy from David -- all by the light of God's angel in the sky. He knew, too, they were more thankful for the light that made their work easy than for the sight of the hand of the Lord.

"Let my people go!" God had said to Pharaoh, but to the children of Israel His words had been: "I will free you from your bonds that you may serve Me." A bargain had been struck, and he, Eli, knew a bargain when he saw one. Now that God had delivered, He would expect the people to do the same.

Again he shook his head, marveled at the fiery pillar above them, and wondered who had gotten the better deal, God or the Israelites. As he looked at the glowing ember of a cloud now slowly changing to fleecy white, he could feel in his bones the cost of the bargain that had been struck. Already the Elders were each making their own political plans for the time ahead, making their plans with a blind unawareness of the bargain. And all the while God's hand lay burning over them, reminding them, and they saw but did not understand.

Slowly he turned and walked toward his tent. Moses could not succeed by any political power Aaron could accumulate, nor by any military power Joshua could hope to build. But burning above them was the continual reminder of the bargain that had been struck. God alone knew what trouble lay ahead, but any fool could see that it would be both bitter and violent.

He entered the tent and Rachel, waiting patiently, heard him mutter, "mazel und brachah," luck and blessing, as he looked over his shoulder one more time at the cloudy pillar. The twinkle in his eyes was unmistakable, but the cagey look he usually wore when he spoke the traditional words of a bargain struck was missing. She handed him a skin of wine and he drank deeply.

"Rachel," he said as he returned the skin, "I've never gone back on a bargain no matter what it cost me."

"Of course not, Eli," she said in an attempt to sooth. Yet, she did not know why he was troubled, except that the cloud preyed on his mind.

Thea woke slowly, and to an awareness of the peace of her tent and the sounds of activity around it. Leisurely she dressed, spoke several thoughts of gratitude to her new-found God and stepped outside. The fiery pillar of the night before was changing from a fading glow into a brilliant white in the newly born light of dawn.

She drank in the sight. The cloud was redolent with peace, majesty, awe; it was a sign of God's care for His people and of His care for her. Again she gave thanks.

Quickly she walked to Leah's tent, listened for signs of activity within, then called softly. Almost instantly Leah's face appeared at the door and a welcoming smile swept her inside.

"The very person I wanted to see! Joshua's been in and out all night -- something that didn't make his father very happy, he's such a light sleeper you know -- and the last time he was here he said he wanted to talk to you." She looked at Thea with an expression of confiding motherliness, "He always was a hard child to keep track of."

They looked at each other and laughed together as the tent door opened and Joshua and Caleb entered, sank to the floor of the tent and stretched out wearily. After a moment Joshua pulled himself to a sitting position and turned to Thea. "Do you know where we tied the donkeys last night?"

She shook her head in acknowledgement and he continued. "Good. Moses wants the ones that he and I and you and Caleb will use separated from the others that he bought for Aaron and Elisheba and Miriam. Also the sheep and the goats and the gear. Everyone needs to be self-sufficient but Moses and Caleb and I don't have any women to set up for us." He looked at his mother and grinned as she made a horrified mock face at him.

"Also, we're going to have to hire someone to look after our livestock and yours." He looked over to Caleb who handed him a pouch which he then handed to Thea. "Could you take care of it?" he asked almost pleadingly.

"Joshua," she said gently, "it will be done."

Hesitantly, almost timidly, Caleb turned to her. "Moses is setting me up and all and I was going to work the forge, but now Joshua and I've got our hands full. Could you sell the forge and put the money in for us?"

She nodded again as Joshua began to explain his own and Moses' activities and David's incoming caravan concluding with, "If there's anything we've missed, buy what we need; if there're things we don't need, sell what you can."

As she headed for the donkeys she glanced inside the purse. It contained gold, not foolishly ornate things, but easily carried and easily traded items. Her mind whirled; this had been given her for provisioning and for investment and when this journey was over she was determined to be able to give back profit and a good accounting.

As she thought about it, the forge was no bad possession. Even if there were no battles on their journey -- an almost unthinkable thing -- it would still be in full use every time the company halted long enough to set it up. Without it, weapons could not be made and mended and plows could not be fashioned. It could prove to be a very good investment.

Passing the tents she evaluated the provisioning of the people. She was astounded to see that many had not really prepared for the desert; they were obviously unable to carry their city ways over into the kind of preparation that was needed. Those who had lived in tents and had tended flocks were different, but most were simply not ready. Much of what they had was not needed; much of what they needed they did not have.

By the time she came to the market her decisions had been made. The smallest and purest of the gold would be kept. The rest would go into sheep, goats, donkeys and provisions. First she needed to look at what Moses had already brought.

Nathan, followed by his entourage, strode into Eli's encampment and caught sight of the crafty old trader outside his tent. Like his own, the tent was well-worn and the families used to the nomadic way of life. The camps he had just come through had new tents

everywhere; there had been much confusion of guide ropes and stakes and packing and unpacking of belongings.

Eli beckoned to his friend as he approached, greetings were exchanged and the two men moved apart from the crowd before Nathan vented his wrath.

"Do you know where I've been?"

Eli smiled. "I'd be there myself if the caravan hadn't come in. I'm told he looks much better with a beard?" His rising inflection turned the statement into a query.

"How should I know; I haven't seen him," said Nathan bitterly. "He was gone and Aaron was in his place oozing good will, along with that bitch Miriam playing the role of leader of the pack for all it was worth." He spat on the ground.

Eli considered the matter. Was it a calculated affront? He did not think so. "What took Moses from his tent this morning of all mornings?"

"Who can tell? People kept coming and going and Aaron was evasive. Moreover we leave at noon, I understand." He grunted in disgust.

Long after Nathan had gone Eli thought about Moses and the Bargain represented by the cloud hanging in the sky. Moses was closer to the Source of the power of the cloud than anyone else. Moreover, he was a man of military skills, of education, and of political acumen. He played an unusual game and he represented a Power with which the Elders had not reckoned. Indeed, there was trouble ahead.

His thoughts left their track as the dusty and barefoot child that was his favorite grandson came running up to him, stopped and caught his breath.

"Ah, Gideon, to what do I owe the pleasure?"

"Grandpa, you told me yesterday to let you know if a black woman showed up at Moses' donkeys. Well, she's there. She's sorting them and she's sorting them good."

He ran an affectionate hand through Gideon's hair and followed him to where the donkeys were tied. As they approached he could see the woman whom he knew to have been steward of a noble Egyptian house. Whatever usefulness she may have in handling Moses' and Joshua's affairs was more than offset by the political difficulty of a non-Israeli woman in the camp and in a position of authority. Yet, the inclusion of the woman in the group that traveled with Moses was a decision that seemed typical of the man. Eli

congratulated himself that he had foreseen the possibility that Thea would have something to do with Moses' provisioning and that he, Eli, had acted accordingly.

Thea had four groups and a larger fifth group of donkeys. The best donkeys were on the left and each group declined in quality until the large group on the right was reached. Gideon spoke very low, "Moses left, Joshua next, then Caleb, then her. The rest for the others."

Eli grinned in appreciation. "Gideon, you're right, she knows donkeys." Politics be damned, he thought to himself, there're not many women in the world who can sort donkeys, and fewer still who can do it with dignity.

"You are Thea?" he asked as he walked up to her.

She inclined her head. "Yes."

"I am Eli. I would offer to be of assistance, but I see you need no help in sorting donkeys."

"Joshua has told me of you," she answered thoughtfully, "and praise from you is praise indeed."

He made a wry face that signified agreement, then asked more bluntly, "May I be of any help?"

She did not hesitate. "I would hire three servant girls. Moses' tent, Joshua's tent, and Caleb's tent will need setting up. Their cooking needs to be done and such chores that need doing must be attended to."

He was silent a moment, then furtively glanced over his shoulder at the cloud.

"Gideon, go to my tent and tell your grandmother I require Esther and two other girls. Bring them immediately.

"Esther?"

"Yes, you rascal, and hurry."

He turned back to Thea and lifted his brows. "Next?"

"Two things. Moses has flocks but I wish to invest in more. Yet there are none to look after them. Something could be arranged?"

He paused a moment. Any steward of a large household was a hard and seasoned bargainer. Terms with her would allow of little profit; yet larger interests were at stake. "No problem," he said.

She was caught a little off guard. Joshua had occasionally jested of Eli's love of a bargain, of his trading ability, and his insistence on dotting all i's and crossing all t's. She had expected a different reply. She looked at him a long time and came to her decision.

"I also have a forge."

"A forge?"

"Yes."

He rubbed his beard. "Could be useful."

She laughed with delight; this was the Eli she had expected. "I'm not selling so don't tell me how heavy they are or that they take a long time to set up. I'm intending to keep it but rent it out to someone who can handle the business."

He was both amused and pleased. "Fifty-fifty we could work something out."

The two were coming to understand each other; she nodded in agreement.

"You traveled part way with Moses, I understand."

A little hesitantly she agreed.

"They tell me he has a beard now."

They also told you he traveled part of the way with me she thought, but the things you really wanted to know they couldn't tell you. Her alertness to the probing for information she knew was coming faded into amusement.

"It's growing well."

"Ah, he must look much better. I haven't seen him since the calling of all the Elders out into the wilderness to see his miracles."

Here it comes, she thought. How can he keep a straight face?

"I was going to see him this morning, but I was told he was not there. I wonder what could have called him away?"

Their eyes met for a moment and Eli minutely, infinitesimally, shrugged his shoulders at the transparency of his remark.

With a smile she gave in, the hint of the gesture was enough. "I'm told he felt it was his only chance to go among the people and observe and talk before he was known and his position hindered it."

This time when their eyes met it was Thea whose eyes twinkled and Eli wondered not only what to make of Moses, but also what to make of Thea.

As the two young girls and Gideon packed the donkeys Thea walked with Esther to the unloading caravan. The two other girls that had returned with Gideon were the expected servant types; Esther was beautiful, poised, and slightly older than the others. Thea had been shaken when Eli had introduced her as his granddaughter.

Esther moved freely through the camp, acknowledging the many greetings and pausing as Samuel came up to her. "My uncle," she said, turning to Thea, "and he looks for thee."

Samuel smiled warmly. "Joshua bade me seek thee. David has brought eight laden donkeys that Moses asked of him. You will want to go through the packs before the donkeys are packed once more."

Quickly she followed Esther and Samuel through the crowd to where the packs were being opened. There were querns for grinding grain, ovens, two horizontal looms for weaving, spindles and whorls for spinning, dried fruit, grain, and clothing. As the men continued to unpack for her inspection it became thoroughly clear that Moses knew well how a household was set up. She nodded appreciatively at the additional waterbags, gave her instructions to Esther, and returned to her tent.

Leah turned from the door of the tent to her husband. "A messenger is here and he seeks thee."

Nun rose to greet the guest and Leah retired to that partitioned part of the tent reserved for women and sat where she could hear most easily.

"Aaron sits in the tent of Moses and asks of thee if thou wilt come to him."

Nun stared in astonishment at the messenger, absorbing the importance of the request.

"Does he seek my counsel?"

"No, he seeks to honor thee."

Nun began tying on his sandals. "Tell him I come at once."

As soon as the messenger was out the door, Leah was at her husband's side. "Be careful what you get into," she said.

He nodded, smiled genially, and left.

Aaron looked up as Nun was ushered in. It had been a busy morning, although thoroughly enjoyable. Just this one last piece of business to do before departing. He looked at the man standing before him, the man with the wistful face and gentle smile. "Sit, my friend," he said, with a gesture that implied magnanimity of purpose and of mind.

Nun sat across from him, the attendant took his place outside the door and Aaron smiled at Nun with friendly camaraderie. "Four hundred and thirty years ago, even to the selfsame day that we departed, the children of Israel came to Egypt. And now we depart to go to the land which God swore to our fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

Nun nodded gravely; the importance of the occasion was not lost on him.

"God," Aaron continued, "led Joseph into Egypt that our people not be slain by famine. And Joseph, knowing that God would lead his people up again into the land of promise, required an oath of them saying 'God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence.'"

Nun looked at Aaron curiously. "I am aware," he said.

"It is now the duty of our people to fulfill that oath. The pledge must be fulfilled and it is our honor to fulfill it."

Slowly Nun began to understand; his gaze went past Aaron to the long box in the back of the tent.

"Joseph was the highest person in the land in the days when he was among us, second only to Pharaoh himself. Naturally, when he died, he was not buried as his fathers

before him were. He was embalmed as the Egyptians do to their dead, and put in a coffin in Egypt."

Again Nun's eyes strayed to the long box in the back of the tent.

Aaron looked at his guest with the benign gaze of one who bestows a kingdom. "Moses realized that heavy metal would be beyond the capacity of a donkey to carry; he had a traveling coffin made of the most precious woods and of the best workmanship. Unfortunately, Joseph is long and a donkey is short, an equipage has been provided whereby the coffin can be carried."

Comprehension was full. "I see," said Nun.

"Naturally," Aaron responded, "to one of us must fall the honor of fulfilling for the people the pledge of the people. We have sought for one who is worthy among us."

"I am honored," Nun replied, and looked at the box behind Aaron with deep misgiving.

After Thea returned she went to the tent of Moses. He smiled as she entered and graciously motioned for her to sit, but the sadness in his face was unmistakable. Seeing the question on her face and in her eyes, he answered.

"Forty years I was among the Egyptians and knew not my people. Forty years I was among their brethren, the Midianites, and knew not my people. Then I was in the courts of Pharaoh gaining their freedom, and still I knew not my people. Now I have seen them and spoken with them, and I am sorely wounded."

"They are your blood and bones," she answered, "but your spirit is not in them."

His placed his arms around his legs and his chin upon his knees. "If Egypt had not broken, she would have been destroyed. The pattern of the plagues was the pattern of healing for, however bitter the price, the body of Egypt was saved. Had God asked of Egypt what He asks of Israel, Egypt would have died."

"And you are afraid," she said, "that Israel will die."

He lifted his chin from his knees far enough to shake his head solemnly, then returned it. "The people are like the scholars in the temple schools when they are released from their studies. It is picnic and carnival everywhere. The purpose of the Lord shines above them in His cloud and they use the light to play by."

He unclasped his hands and shifted position. "Late tonight we camp in Etham, at the edge of the wilderness. We will travel long before our evening meal. Joshua and Caleb will meet with me in my tent when we have encamped. If the day has not been too tiring, join us there."

"I will come," she answered, then added, "servants have been hired, there will be food for all before we leave and when we are encamped again."

A gentle smile of appreciation flitted across his face. "Now, tell me," he said, "how the affairs of the day have gone."

The business of the morning had been done and the tents were being struck. Eli, deep in thought, walked to Nathan's tent. Coming up behind him he slapped an arm around his shoulders.

"A day like this and you're cheerful?" was Nathan's gloomy response. "It's not every day a nation goes free."

"That's just it, Eli, it's been little more than a day and already Moses has made enough mistakes to destroy the entire enterprise."

"I know," said Eli. "But we haven't heard his side of the story. The reason he was gone this morning was because he went among the people unknown, before he was widely recognized."

Nathan stared at him. "How do you know?"

"My granddaughter attends his household," he replied, letting the implication answer the question ambiguously. "And," he continued, "I have a suggestion. Let us ride with Moses this afternoon. He will be behind the vanguard, perhaps we can clear the air."

His friend looked at him doubtfully. "Perhaps," he said.

The vanguard moved steadily out of the encampment with the first of the tribes to follow falling in behind it. Between the vanguard and the long line of people emerging from the encampment behind them rode Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Caleb, Nun with the coffin of Joseph strapped to the donkey beside him, and the women of their group. On one side of Moses rode Eli, on the other Nathan, who had joined them as the great mass of people began to surge toward the wilderness.

The great sea of black and brown goat hair tents was rapidly disappearing; the dust of the immense column was rising toward the sky. Not far from them and moving in the same direction was David's caravan, much diminished in size and with almost empty packs. Before them went the cloud of shining white.

As the tempo of the march settled into a steady rhythm Nathan turned to Moses. "As you said when you called us together, Moses, so has it been."

"Egypt is behind us, but this is only the beginning."

Nathan looked closely at the enigmatic man who rode beside him. The meekness of Moses had shone through even the garments and manners of the Egyptian prince, it was yet more apparent to him today. The mixture of authority and selflessness that seemed to characterize the man was disconcerting; it was a way of thought that he had never dealt with.

"Moses," he began, "the appointment of Joshua to lead the armies of Israel, is it final?"

"It is of God and it will stand. God requires of such a man a power of thought as well as of action, for the armies are His and must respond to Him."

Eli smiled at the reply. The argument was a hard one to answer; he expected Nathan to try a different approach.

"The armies of Israel fight as tribes."

"Yes," Moses replied, "and the nature of our military organization can reflect this. It is not an insurmountable problem."

Nathan was becoming irritated. "Perhaps not in your eyes. But when a leader is placed over armies that have not been trained, do not even exist except in name only, and there has been no process of selection or consultation, how can you expect the cooperation necessary to pull an organization together?"

"There are few who are qualified," Moses replied calmly, "we must do the best we can."

"The best we can!" Nathan exploded. "It is the Elders who have been on the backs of the people to see that they were armed; it is the Elders who persuaded them to run the risk of leaving Egypt with weapons; it is the Elders who will bear the burden if anything goes awry! Singly you make the decisions; collectively we must bear the burdens."

Moses looked at Nathan whose anger and hurt of the morning were shining in his eyes. "You call this preparation?" he asked, waving at the column behind them. "It is a carnival and picnic for the people. You talk about arming them; do you think you can train them? Who among them has ever drawn a weapon? Only a few who have practiced at night and in the wilderness. Do you wish to take the credit for preparing a people who cannot even fold a tent properly?"

Eli, slightly behind the two, permitted himself a larger smile than before. The more the two of them argued, the better they would get along. He glanced at Nathan as his friend began to speak.

"Moses, did you expect us to provision and train a people at night and behind the backs of the Egyptians?"

"If," said Moses, "the Elders are simply leading the people where they want to go, then no complaints are in order. But then, no great credit can be taken either. If a man would lead, then he must mold and strengthen the people and push them to the limits of endurance."

"People aren't clay," Nathan shot back, restraining his impatience. "They are flesh and blood and have a say in their own destinies."

"If they had their say, they would be slaves forever," Moses responded. "It is not I who would lead them to a world beyond themselves; my task is more thankless than your own."

Eli nodded soberly; he couldn't agree more. He listened as the conversation changed character; Nathan was attempting to draw him out. He rode on in silence as Nathan spoke of flocks and of herds and Moses responded in kind. It came as an agreeable surprise that Moses knew more of animals and of pastures than any of them.

Slowly day faded into night, the fleecy whiteness of the cloud changed into the fiery glow now becoming so familiar. The light was sufficient to travel by and to make camp as they came to Etham and Moses gave the signal to settle for the night.

Nathan turned to Eli as they parted from Moses. "Hur, Nun, and perhaps Joshua will meet tonight in my tent. I'm counting on you, too. There is much we must discuss."

"This morning Joshua, tonight you," said Eli long-sufferingly. "It makes for a long day."

The same night that lay deep around the fiery light of the Israelites lay also over Egypt. Meneptah sat brooding on his throne, turned to an advisor and said, "Call me Imhotep."

By the time Imhotep reached Pharaoh the great armory near the palace had been thrown open and soldiers were beginning to arrive. "What is this?" the general asked as he entered the throne room.

"The Israelites have not returned from their sacrifice in the desert. We go to fetch them."

Imhotep barely contained his surprise, then sadness overwhelmed him. As he had served Ramses, so he would serve Meneptah; yet he had no taste for leading an army into certain defeat.

"Are the officers prepared?"

"Yes, and eager to go."

"Well," said Imhotep circumspectly, "they will pluck the fruits of their enthusiasm." Reluctantly, he followed Pharaoh to the armory.

In the blaze of the lamps on the walls Pharaoh took his position on the dais, took the salute, and received the addresses of his officers. Then he spoke in the ritualistic words that invoked priesthood, military glory, and personal valor.

Stacked around him in overflowing piles were the different weapons to be issued: helmets, javelins, triangular bows, quivers, battle axes and swords. As Pharaoh watched from the dais, the soldiers came forward in single file, received their issue of arms and moved on.

By morning all available chariots were at hand; a captain had been provided for each of them. Pharaoh, followed by Imhotep, walked to the royal chariot, the six hundred chosen chariots of the Royal Armory fell in behind them, the chariots of the Main Guard followed after.

From the roof of the temple Senmut watched the column drive out of the city; the entire scene was foolishness compounded unto idiocy. Egypt had paid a price which more than justified the political act of Meneptah in freeing the children of Israel. The entire unfortunate episode could have been dismissed with honor. Now, not only the first born of Egypt, but

the best and finest of her troops would pass from the land of the living into the spirit world of the dead.

Impassively he watched the departing column. First the single chariot bearing the standard of the sacred ram crowned with the disk, placing the army under the protection of the god of Thebes. Then a second group of officers followed by the royal chariot driven by Meneptah himself. Even the unleashed lion that Ramses had favored walked beside the chariot of Pharaoh.

He sighed deeply; all the efforts of Moses, of the Council, and of Pharaoh's advisors could not save Meneptah from himself nor could they save Egypt from Meneptah. From what had been and from what was to come, Egypt would never fully recover and neither would Meneptah.

Thea was grateful that the women Eli had provided were familiar with the desert ways. The tents of her group had been positioned quickly; the evening meal was well under way and food would be served shortly. She checked again with Esther and walked to Moses tent.

He smiled as she entered; fatigue shown in his face. "I have heard from Joshua that you have done much for us. Please know that I am grateful."

"I will help in whatever ways I can. You had no peace today, even on the march."

He smiled ruefully. "Nathan was hurting inside; he was hurting even more when we parted than when he came."

"Is his authority being challenged?"

"He has little enough authority and he knows it. He would build consensus within the tribes and from this consensus forge a common purpose and thus a nation."

"There is a logic to his approach."

"Yes, but there are many questions crying out for answers."

"And have you begun to get a feel for the answers?"

The question was insightful; he felt the depth behind it. "No, not really; we are not yet through with Pharaoh."

She started, and the tent seemed to swim around her. "There is more to come?"

He sensed her fear and spoke reassuringly. "God will not send us into battle before we are ready. God will fight for us."

Her poise returned quickly. "Like you, Moses, I have seen the people and I am hurt to the quick. The Egyptians, for all their ruthlessness, have moved toward their goals with energy and efficiency. This people is as unstable as the sands and the sea."

"Beyond that, Thea," he answered, "they take the gift of freedom without gratitude, they go to Canaan as if on a lark, expecting to receive more good things. They would reap without sowing, seek return without toil, and ask freedom without responsibility. Why God chose such a people, I don't know."

"In all the world, only they know the One God," she answered gently.

Tension seemed to fall away; slowly he began to relax. "Yes," he said simply, "there is no one else."

Moses listened carefully as Caleb went over the details of the armed guard's performance during the day. Then he turned to Joshua.

"Have you thought about the route we travel?"

"Not really," he admitted ruefully.

"Our best route to Canaan would have been through the land of the Philistines, but God led us not in that way."

"Why not?"

"Lest the people have turned back to Egypt when they saw war. And now," said Moses, drawing on the sand, "we must turn from the route we follow and encamp before Pihahiroth, between the fortress Migdal and the sea, over against Baalzephon."

Caleb rose and looked at the drawing. "It is not a good place to be," he said.

"Rightly spoken, and thus Pharaoh will say," Moses answered. "He will say 'They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in.'"

Joshua looked inquiringly at Moses. "Yet we go there?"

"Tomorrow's march should bring us here," he indicated with his finger, and we will camp. "As darkness comes, Pharaoh's men will be seen approaching. They, too, will camp, intending to fall upon us with the morning light."

Caleb remained standing, looking at the map in the sand. "It's a bad place to be," he repeated. "On one side the fortress of the Egyptians, on one side the sea, behind us the land of the Egyptians. If Pharaoh were here," and he pointed with his finger, "we would be trapped."

"Our time to fight will come," Moses answered, turning to Caleb as he sat down again. "But this battle is the Lord's."

After the men had gone Thea turned to Moses. "I would ask thee one thing before I leave."

"Ask what you will."

"How will you cross the sea?"

"I don't know."

"But you will cross?"

"Yes."

"If you know the one, why is the other hidden?"

He sank into deep thoughtfulness. "The world of thought and the world around us are intertwined and our mind, like our eyes, can only see so far. Some things, like mountain peaks, can be seen from a distance, others cannot. And beyond all that, the future is constantly being shaped and changed by what we do and what we think. Only the purpose of God is beyond change."

"And He seeks always to work His will in the world?"

"Yes, He seeks always those who listen and obey."

"Moses, what does this God of ours look like?"

With his hand Moses indicated the map upon the sand. "As I draw any likeness I please, so He who can mold the world to His will presents Himself in any form He chooses. When first I saw Him, He was a burning bush."

"A bush in flames?" she asked incredulously.

"Yes, indeed. A bush that burned and was not consumed. Not one ash or cinder fell to the ground and yet the bush blazed furiously."

"And why a bush that burns?"

"Because I turned aside to see this great thing that was happening. God drew me to Him." He looked at her with all the emotions of the day pressing hard upon him. "We are led to Him because we permit ourselves to be, because we seek Him. If we don't seek Him we are forced to Him through even greater agony of heart and mind and body."

"He must love us very much," she answered simply, "to work so hard to draw us to Him."

Slowly Joshua made his way past the tents. The immense mass of people, so bustling, tumultuous, and complaining on the march was now, almost to a man, asleep or near it. He walked on, finally coming to Nathan's encampment.

In the light cast by the fiery cloud and in the play of the shadows that were cast by the tents he could see the guards coming to check him. Identification made, they led him to Nathan's tent and admitted him.

The weary men exchanged greetings; Joshua managed a tired smile. Eli, Hur, Nathan were each in their accustomed places; the atmosphere, as was so often the case, radiated an unusual mixture of friendliness, grim tension, and good cheer.

He sat where he could easily see the three of them at once. He was bone tired and would be in earnest conversation with men who were strong personalities, each of them, men who were skilled political fighters, men whom, no matter how weary, would talk and act out of offensive and defensive patterns established through years of experience. They were approaching the end of their careers; he was at the beginning of his.

The presence of the guards around the tent revealed much of the atmosphere these men perceived around them. Why this perception was as it was he did not know. Freedom was such a supreme achievement, yet these men were so subdued; the atmosphere was out of joint with the times, yet he felt it as surely as they did.

Nathan handed him a skin of milk, slightly sour and greatly refreshing; he drank deeply. His eyes met his host's as he returned the skin; the smile was genuine, the friendliness sincere.

"Well, young Joshua, how are your troops?"

He shrugged. "They are there. If someone comes they will yell and very probably some may even try and defend us."

"They obey you?"

"So far they do. Why not, really? They know we need a guard. It makes sense so they do it. Moses and the Elders agree on this and Caleb is at my back. The men consider their service an honor, so mostly they do as I say." He looked up and met their gazes directly.

"That's the big question, isn't it? What the people will do now."

His host nodded. "Moses set the people free. It was a monumental accomplishment, but it also sowed the seeds of his defeat."

Both Eli and Nathan caught the sharp and questioning look from Joshua and Nathan sighed, leaned back and began a fatherly dissertation. "We were slaves. Slavery is a political system. Pharaoh is god, king, and the hierarchy goes down from there. As slaves we do as we are told.

"Now the people are free. This means they are free to choose any lifestyle, any god, any political system. Each man may make his own rules, his own laws. Have you walked among the people, Joshua? Almost half of them want to return to Egypt.

"You are surprised? These people have been slaves for hundreds of years. Some had good jobs as foremen. We were all well fed and well housed, we had no responsibility. Now all the horrors of earning a living as free men begins to come home to the people."

Nathan paused and looked at Joshua. The young man was a combination of great ability, burning idealism and, in some undefinable way he could not fathom, deep spirituality. Moses did not pick those close to him in the accepted ways, but in his own way he chose wisely. This was both strength and weakness; it also lent an element of unpredictability to the mixture of possibilities out of which the common experience of their lives was being forged.

"Joshua," he said, returning again to the conversation, "most of the people are city dwellers, the old desert ways have been long forgotten. Moses freed them, so they can

go back to Egypt if they want, or go to Midian if they so choose, or wherever they please. They are free, and that means they are free to choose their leaders, to stay or to go. God and Moses may have freed them for a purpose, but once freed they cannot be told what to do."

He looked at Joshua earnestly. "Do you understand?" For a moment the words hung in the air, then he continued. "We have gone from a slave society to anarchy, from total repression to no repression, no laws, no leaders. Anarchies are always unstable, leadership -- when it occurs -- is sporadic and charismatic in nature. One mistake and the people lose faith and leave."

As he paused, Joshua could feel the hope behind the negative and realistic appraisal, a hope made weary by years of waiting, a purpose dimmed by a sure knowledge of human nature, a dream that had almost died from lack of nourishment.

Hur moved almost imperceptibly and Joshua turned to him. He could see that in the man the brightness of the vision and a clear perception of human nature lived side by side, somehow protected from each other by an unwavering faith in the power of God to sustain the vision. He waited for him to speak.

"When Moses first came the people followed, but without the enthusiasm one might expect. The prospect of freedom was like too much wine; it led to great exhilaration but also to a realization that, after the wine wore off, the afterglow would be work, weariness, and struggle. Canaan must be reached, Canaan must be fought for and subdued. A life of centuries will be disrupted, many men will die." Hur shrugged, looked closely at Joshua, and went on.

"The people are opportunistic and self-serving, acting mostly from emotion. They look now to choose the easiest and safest lifestyle. They recognize no leaders with any authority over them."

"Don't the Elders lead?" asked Joshua abruptly. "It's the tradition I was taught."

"Power and authority are slippery things," Hur replied. "They are intangible and their essence is never the same from moment to moment. People must either give authority of their own free will or have it imposed on them. This people is in no mood for either."

Nathan agreed and added, "There is an Egyptian word you may recognize. It is 'community.' You know there is no such word among us. We are not a nation, we are a collection of individuals with a common heritage but with no common purpose. The people will not be told what to do, what to think, or how to act. If they are thus told, they will simply

disperse. And if they are not so told, they will eventually disperse anyway." Eli picked up the train of thought and said simply, "The heart of the matter is simple. We are in anarchy. The only way to influence anarchy is through mass emotion. This is because it is impossible to influence each person individually. There are no authoritative groups that can be influenced and which in turn will influence the whole. When we left Egypt all government, all law, all responsibility, ceased and there is no immediate way to re-impose it."

The starkness of the viewpoint of the assembled men began to break through to Joshua. "Moses has some control," he said, a tinge of emotion in his voice, "and so do you Elders."

Nathan shook his head with deep misgiving. "Only what the people give us. In the present emergency they give us some power. We Elders carry some traditional authority, we can exercise some practical guidance, but the children of Israel are individuals first, families second, and tribes a very distant third. They are a nation not at all."

He paused and no voice filled the silence. Then he looked at Joshua and asked bluntly: "What do they owe us Elders? What do they owe Moses? They didn't ask to be freed, they asked to be left alone. They have simply taken an opportunity and even now many regret the act."

Emotion swelled in Joshua to a breaking point and the words burst forth. "This is the hand of God! Haven't the people seen the signs and wonders? Isn't the angel of God and His cloud of fire watching over them?"

Again, words hung in the air, words intensified by the silence that framed them. Like the chill of doubt that settles on a budding faith, Hur solemnly intoned, "A miracle changes an outward condition. In the case of the Egyptians, the miracle caused pressure to be put on a people to change. But this changed the Egyptians, not the Hebrews. To us, only an outward change has taken place. To change the inner man either takes great pressure -- as with the plagues -- or it takes great inspiration."

He looked sadly at Joshua. "The masses are not inspired. And with the Egyptians there was ultimately but one mind that had to be reached, one man who had to be changed, and that man was Pharaoh. There was a system in place, a bureaucracy to lead, the means by which to achieve an end. Whether change was based on fact or on emotion was unimportant -- all power was focused on that end. How do you put a multitude of people under pressure to change them, or how do you enlighten them and so change them? Tell me, Joshua, how do you spiritualize a mob?"

Shaken and incredulous Joshua asked, "Do the miracles really mean nothing to the people?"

It was Eli who answered, "You can't rule by miracles. They change nothing over the long term. They don't change people's hearts because people are hard of heart. Hur is right. Unless miracles put pressure on a people to change, then miracles are simply a form of crisis management."

Nathan looked kindly at Joshua. "I feel the sorrow you feel, my young friend. The dream of a Nation, a people, -- it is perhaps the greatest of all dreams. But it needs foundations in place, a certain social maturity which slaves simply don't possess. It requires a maturity of mind and heart that can evaluate and judge, and then willingly surrender some authority to others in order to gain in other areas."

He stretched a little in his place and added thoughtfully, "It is a dream shared by all of us in this tent, but by few others. And there are now ethical and practical questions to consider."

Emotion had ebbed in Joshua and a deeper understanding of the problems with which the Elders wrestled began to fill his mind. Patiently he waited for Nathan to continue.

"If some practical way were found to coerce the people into giving away some measure of self-determination, who would take it? Us? Would Moses declare himself King? We just got rid of a despot, do we wish to crown another?"

Hur leaned forward and spoke with deep intensity. "Moses wishes to set up a nation devoted to God. Who gave him the right to tell the people who and what God is? What if some disagree, how will he enforce his belief -- with whips like Pharaoh? The people know not Moses. He appears from nowhere and is leading them into an inhospitable desert. Will they stay and be told by a man who is part Hebrew, part Midianite, and part Egyptian -- by a man who is a stranger -- how to think about God, how to praise God?"

The intensity of his words faded but the deep conviction lingered on as he continued to speak. "Will they let Moses lead and teach? Moses is a revolutionary, overthrowing the authority that was, destroying the icons. Moses has broken the power by which the people were governed; he cannot now take that power to himself, there is no mechanism of transition."

Joshua, staring intently at the man who spoke, could not help but see the sadness in his eyes, hear the falter in his voice as he uttered his final heartfelt words. "Moses is a Prophet of God; I feel this in my very bones. I will follow him as I would obey God. But

what rights do the people have? Surely they have the right to accept or deny a prophet. Can a prophet impose his will? Could the Elders permit this? No. And yet, with that 'no' dies all possibility of a nation, a people devoted to their God."

Silence closed in again; the curious mixture of tension and camaraderie grew stronger. Nathan called for dried fruit and wine, then turned to his friends. "A Nation with a spiritual purpose is a great dream, a glorious dream. But the requisite freedom endangers the purpose." He shook his head. "The purpose is easily lost in the freedom of the spiritual ascent. It is a great thing for one man to be holy. Can an entire nation be made holy?"

He made a sweeping gesture. "The people are intoxicated with their freedom. They will not give it up, even if they use it only to go back to Egypt and sell themselves again as slaves."

Joshua's mind was caught between numbness and explosion. "Doesn't anyone care about God?"

The query dangled, none cared to answer it. Finally Eli nudged the conversation in a different direction, yet answered the question obliquely. "The people will think about God for two or three days; they will think about being a Nation for perhaps a week. Then it is over unless there is pressure from the outside to draw them together."

For a moment Joshua was quiet, then began to smile, then laughed from deep in his belly. "Moses says that before the next day dies, as we are encamped by the Red Sea, Pharaoh comes with all his chariots and traps us there."

The three Elders sat in stunned silence, then Eli poked Nathan with his elbow. "Didn't I tell you the man was a political genius?"

As the vanguard pulled out of the encampment David sought out Moses, finding him just behind the forward guard.

"Moses," he called out as he ran toward the man on the donkey.

Recognizing the voice, Moses turned and dismounted, walking alongside the donkey with David. "I've wanted to see you, but there's been so much to do."

"For me, too," David answered.

"Where is Mordechai?"

"Camped on the other side of the Red Sea. I intended to go into the wilderness, to one of the safe fording places, cross and join him, but I understand you camp by the sea tonight."

Moses gave the young man a long and thoughtful look. "Yes, we do."

"May I come with you?" David asked eagerly.

"Do you know that the Egyptians come?"

"Yes, Joshua told me."

"There is more faith in you than in all this vast column of people who have seen God's wonders in Egypt. What about your men, won't they panic?"

"No worse than anybody else. My caravans don't attract the timid as you well understand."

"Your father would have done the same," said Moses. "Have your men follow between the rear guard and the twelfth tribe. And later today, ride with me and give me the news of Mordechai and Midian and the desert people."

The chariots of Pharaoh had halted beneath the midday sun. In the shade of the royal tent Meneptah finished a leisurely lunch with Imhotep.

"We have found them and they are entangled in the land. By nightfall we will be upon them."

"The men cannot fight in the darkness," Imhotep replied. "Let us make camp within sight of the Hebrews; they are caught where they cannot escape. With the first light of morning you can do then whatever you will."

"It is good," said Pharaoh. "The men will be rested, the slaughter of all who resist will be easy. The rest we can drive back before us."

"As you will," said Imhotep again.

Tents had been set up and the evening meal was being prepared when the chariots of Pharaoh were seen in the distance, a column of menace which bore down upon them in the shadowy and deepening darkness.

Almost instantly a great crowd gathered before the tent of Moses, an angry hateful crowd, caught between the mortal fear that was clawing at their vitals and resentment of the man who had placed them in this position.

"Were there no graves in Egypt that thou has taken us away to die in the wilderness?" they shouted. "Is not this the word that we did tell thee in Egypt, saying, 'Let us alone, that we may serve the Egyptians?' For it had been better for us to serve the Egyptians, than that we should die in the wilderness."

Tumult died as the tent door opened. Moses, staff in hand, stepped forth. As he raised his staff even the murmuring conversation ceased.

"Fear ye not, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you today; for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more forever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace."

In the tent behind him Joshua stood silent, Caleb felt the handle of his battle ax, and Thea breathed a silent prayer. Whether it was faith in Moses or the comfort of her prayer, or the touch of the God she had come to love, she did not know, but she was at peace.

Suddenly conversation rose up among the people, fingers pointed at the sky as the burning cloud moved from its place above the camp and went behind them, coming between the Egyptians and the camp of Israel.

Moses gazed out upon the people. "The cloud will be light to us and darkness to them," he said. "Strike your tents and follow the vanguard where it leads." He turned and went inside.

"We will rest when we have crossed the sea," he said. "We will cross in our usual formation, save that Joshua and Caleb will lead the guard."

In the royal tent Meneptah prepared to sleep. The night was dark; the Israelites safely entrapped. Tomorrow Moses would be dead along with many others. Egypt would be avenged and her slaves returned. He, too, was honored as a god, yet, like Moses, he was mortal. The day of death was written for all men; the time of Moses was at hand.

Moses stood by the sea, lifted up his rod for all to see, and stretched out his hand over the waters and the waters parted. Confidently Joshua strode into the parted sea; the land

was dry beneath his feet. Caleb, battle ax gleaming on his shoulder, followed. The vanguard, caught between their departing leaders and the party of Moses, hesitantly followed into the beckoning path between the surging seas which stretched on either side. Slowly the immense column began to move between the waters.

All night they traveled; the immense swollen group of people on the one shore slowly diminishing and the emptiness of the farther shore gradually becoming the counterpart of the encampment which had existed the night before. The human tide trickled through the sea and, as morning broke, was reestablished on the other side.

Imhotep stood at the door of Pharaoh's tent and called. Hurriedly Meneptah dressed and went outside.

"Is there trouble?"

"The Hebrews cross the sea."

Pharaoh stared in amazement. "How?"

"On dry land. The waters are a wall to them on the right hand and on the left."

Meneptah ran swiftly to a sloping rise in the land and gazed across the emptiness to where the encampment of the night before had been. Rage surged within him, a blind resistless rage which knew no bounds or limits. "Forward!" he cried.

Imhotep stared impassively. "Who will lead the charge?" he asked. "The chosen six hundred of the Royal Armory," Meneptah answered. "And prepare the others to follow them."

"As you will."

Moses and Joshua stood on the shore of the sea as the last of the rear guard emerged safely. A great crowd stood around them at a respectful distance for Caleb had indicated that none should approach too closely and none cared to dispute him.

Moses raised his hand, stretched it over the sea, and the walls of water collapsed upon themselves; chariots disappeared, and bodies floated to the surface. On the one shore shouts of triumph rose in a great and deafening roar; on the other shore cries of fear, the

neighing of horses and the frantic commotion of chariots and men seeking to escape the sea raised their tumult to the skies. Over the sea itself there was a still and deathly calm.

INTO THE WILDERNESS

From the opening of the sea in the darkness of the night to its closing upon the Egyptians in the early morning hours, Mordechai had watched the human wave wash up and take possession of the shore.

Try as he might, he could not assimilate the meaning, the how and the why. Such a great happening, the burning cloud above, the rent sea below, must be fraught with meaning; perhaps God was yelling at the human race in order to get their attention.

He was weary from more than loss of sleep. The discomfort of his emotions, the desire to know and yet not knowing, the effort to comprehend the incomprehensible, all had wrung him dry. In the end he sought release by cursing the Egyptian bodies floating on the sea and then dancing in the encampment with the people.

Yet, he was an old man and when his son found him he was not with the dancing mob but sitting alone on a rise of land overlooking the now still waters of the sea. His eyes twinkled when he saw his son; the soberness of contemplation had been dissipated in the excitement of the dance.

"David, my son?"

"Yes, father."

"When you traveled through the sea, high walls of water surrounding you, did you, by any chance, go to the wall and poke your finger through?"

He had not, but was silent a moment realizing that perhaps an opportunity had been missed. Then, dismissing the question, he sat down beside his father.

For a while they discussed the profit David had realized from the caravan and the supply of arms which his father, Mordechai, had brought. Even more business would be done before their empty caravans disappeared again into the wilderness. Yet business, ordinarily a consuming passion, was but a thing of passing interest in their minds on this day of all great days.

Mordechai, looking out over the sea, remembered his grandfather who had seen the waters sweep away many men and chariots of Pharaoh who had been trapped by the incoming tide. But that was nothing like this; his son would have a tale to tell for many years.

David, too, was thoughtful as he sat beside his father. He had stood near as Moses had stretched his hand over the sea and had seen Moses lead the people in the chant of victory early that morning before retiring to his tent. The sense of awe was overpowering.

"Father," he asked, "did you really cross swords with that man?"

With twinkling eyes, Mordechai temporized. "Well, son, I was much younger in those days." Then, catching the unfulfilled look in David's eyes he relented and added, "But I knew I was in trouble when I saw his eyes."

"I would damn well think so," said David.

Moses had barely entered his tent when Esther followed with food. He spoke a few words of appreciation, then added, "Bring enough food for two, and ask Thea to come."

In a few moments the tent flaps parted; he looked up at her, smiled and asked, "Where are Joshua and Caleb?"

"Each in their tent sound asleep. Even the women could not wake them when they came with food."

"And you, Thea?"

"I am weary, but not unto stupor."

"And I as well. What are the sounds I hear? I could not bring myself to go and see."

A pensive look swept across her face. "To my ears it is the sound of trouble. To others it is the sound of dancing in the streets."

"Eat, Thea," he said, "and then tell me of it."

She dipped her hand into the food and answered. "After you led the children of Israel in their song of victory this morning thy sister, Miriam, led the women into the streets for dancing. She went before them with a timbrel and she leads every female in the camp old enough to move her limbs."

"You see danger in this?"

"I do. Miriam is jealous of thee and eager to share your power. Aaron loves thee but, like water, he takes the shape of the vessel into which he is poured. Miriam will actively seek power, whether you lose by it or not; Aaron can all too easily be the hurtful instrument of deeply troubled times."

"You notice much," said Moses.

"I notice that Aaron is not often included in your councils and that Joshua is not often included in your relations with the people. Yet you have Joshua do the political infighting that lies at the heart of any balance of power. And you give him the military on which so much power depends."

She began to go on, but paused as Esther placed dried fruit before them. Then, as she disappeared into the women's portion of the tent, Thea leaned forward and said softly, "She is Eli's granddaughter, you know."

He raised his eyebrows in surprise. "No, I didn't know. Do you think he seeks information?"

"Only as a bonus. As sharp a trader as he is, he is not one for back room dealing. Joshua is the most eligible bachelor among us and Caleb is not far behind. She cannot help but be noticed."

Moses chuckled. "It will make Joshua much more regular for meals."

"I think it has already," she answered with a smile.

As sounds of singing and dancing surged more loudly around the tent a mood of reminiscence swept over Moses. "The last time I went into the desert," he said, "I was friendless and alone. Now I have an entire people with me, and half of them are singing and dancing in the streets, yet I am in more danger today than I was then."

"I feel it, too, but I cannot put it into words."

"I must mediate between God and man. God will not get all He wants and the people will surely rend me if they are pushed too far. From God I suffer harm if I do not read His will aright, from the people I will suffer, no matter what I do."

"Doesn't God always tell you what He requires?" she answered in surprise.

"In my language, yes. But the vessels of my thoughts don't hold the wine of His thoughts perfectly. No matter how great my struggles, it is in the nature of things that I will fall short."

"Oh, Moses," she answered, softly and involuntarily, and began to cry.

Caught totally off guard he waited until her tears had passed. "I didn't know that you could weep," he said.

"Not easily, and not for many, many years."

"Then why today?"

"I'm not sure. Perhaps it was the sudden realization that you are not like the agent of a king, an agent who has known and certain powers and known and certain limits of his powers. You stand in a land of light and shadows, a land where the purposes are not always clear, and even when they are, the details of their implementation are wrought out in the inner struggles of the mind and heart. This is indeed a fearful thing, an endless warfare beyond the sight of even those who stand closest to you."

"You have put it well," he answered, "and this is an insight which only God can give."

Eli stood by the shore of the sea, looking across the waters to the Egyptians faintly seen on the opposite side. What was left of the mighty chariots of Pharaoh was beginning to form into some semblance of order and begin its journey back to Egypt.

He knew the habits of the Egyptians. The return would be timed for nightfall, for it was defeat, not victory that their coming would signal. No captives would be herded before them, no warriors would be marched in bonds through the streets for the populace to see. Instead the chariots and men would go quietly to the armory and the men would then disperse to their barracks.

Then, of course, history would be rewritten. Tablets would be altered or destroyed; the entire departure of the Hebrews would disappear from history. He sighed; at least the City of the Dead would not be busy removing carvings and inscriptions as at some other rewritings of history. In this case it was slaves and not nobility who were becoming non-people. Moses' miracles in Egypt were all calculated toward an end: liberty for the Israelites. This one, this crossing of the sea, was equally calculated toward yet another end. In freeing the people forever from the Egyptians, it also made it very difficult for the

people to retrace their steps. Those who were of a mind to return to Egypt would have a long way to go, and through hostile country for the most part.

He looked up at the cloud. Did it move when Moses said to go forward, or did Moses go forward when the cloud moved? Or did God tell them both? He was not sure. He was sure the people would march with the next light of dawn; in their present mood none would be thinking much about returning. By the time the people were again complaining, not only the Red Sea but many additional miles would be between them and the land of Egypt.

Late in the day Moses woke, dressed leisurely, and stepped from the tent. It was still light and the banners of the tribes fluttered colorfully in the wind with the fiery cloud glowing above them. The camp was quiet and subdued; the march of the day and the night, followed by the merry-making of the day, had taken its toll. It was a good time to prepare for action, to strengthen the organization, to stay one step ahead. He motioned to the guard Joshua had posted at the tent.

"Is Thea awake?"

"Yes, my lord, she prepares a light meal."

"Ask her to come to me, then call Mordechai."

For a moment he watched the departing guard, then went back into his tent. In moments the tent flaps parted and Thea entered.

"My lord?"

He watched her with pleasure and with gratitude; graceful of body, keen of mind, selfless in outlook and with a readiness of spirit that anticipated needs even before he asked, he was fortunate in such a steward.

"Mordechai comes, then Joshua and Caleb, then Aaron, Eli, Hur, and Nathan. Tomorrow at the rising of the sun we march and at even camp. The Elders, in the fullness of their numbers, will then be invited to my table."

She simply nodded, knowing what would be required, smiled her ability to arrange the large and varied task of the following night and left to secure the immediate refreshments.

Led by the guard, Mordechai came to Moses' tent. As he entered he saw Moses, preoccupied in thought and with his back to the door. Quietly he walked over and put a

hand on his friend's shoulders. Moses turned and for a moment they simply smiled in the silent greeting of old friends.

Then they sat together in the fading light and each looked at the other, each trying to assimilate the immense changes that had etched their imprint in the features of them both.

Mordechai had expected an Egyptian prince, even though in Hebrew garb. Yet success had not developed the man of power he knew Moses was capable of becoming. Instead, will was fading, the meekness of the man was even more pronounced than in the closing years of his life in Midian. The face into which he gazed had abandoned human goals for linkage with a Purpose he could not comprehend.

Moses had expected the old Mordechai; there were many devout people in the camp who had been affected not at all by the miracles. Yet Mordechai, the pragmatic and opportunistic jackal of the desert, had been changed to the depths of his soul. Moses, looking into his friend's face, marveled at the sight.

Mordechai debated within himself whether or not to bring up the crossing of the sea, finally deciding against it. Although Moses had led the chant of victory he was, after all, Egyptian in many ways. Unable to speak of that, unable to articulate the wonder within himself, and unable to call forth the banter they so often engaged in, he spoke instead of the business at hand.

"I have brought the arms of the type you asked and in the quantities you desired."

Moses inclined his head in acknowledgement. "Do you and David leave in the morning?"

"Yes," said Mordechai regretfully and for a moment their eyes met. Sensing the mood of his friend, Moses spoke his heart. "Spiritual growth comes through struggle and through patient waiting. You will learn that for yourself now, for there is no turning back for you. Once the truth that lies beyond the appearance of things is glimpsed there is no rest until the heart finds rest in God. I cannot tell you more, for the revelation of that which is comes to each of us uniquely and individually."

Mordechai understood without understanding and regretted that he felt closest to his friend in what could be their day of parting. Conversation turned first to how many donkeys were needed to bear arms to the next encampment, then turned to old times, old friends, and the years in Midian.

As he rose to leave Moses walked with him to the door, took him by the arm and said, "We go to serve God on Sinai, perhaps we will meet once more."

He stood in the tent door as Mordechai walked away, saw him turn and hold up his hand, then slowly disappear among the sea of tents. He wiped a tear that trickled down his face, then turned to the guard. "Bring Joshua, and Caleb."

Caleb sat with his battle ax beside him; Joshua washed down dates and figs with sour milk and listened carefully.

"Tomorrow," said Moses, "we leave at dawn and there is much to do."

"First: Mordechai has brought arms. They are not to be distributed before we march. I wish this to happen at our next encampment. This means that we, instead of the people, will need to transport them tomorrow. This will be done in part on donkeys supplied by Mordechai. The existence of the arms must not be common knowledge before they are passed out. Eli, Hur, and Nathan will be told, so perhaps they can be of help."

"Second: Tomorrow the Elders will gather at my table. A full group, the twelve plus those with whom they each take counsel. Each of you, with Aaron, will be there."

"Third: Tomorrow on the march we will discuss all this and more. Tonight let us make such preparations as we can." He turned to Caleb. "Check over the donkeys and arms. Be sure the arms are wrapped as inconspicuously as possible."

He looked at Joshua. "Eat, and then be sure all the Elders know they are invited to my tent for feasting and discussion after the march, and be sure everyone knows we leave by morning light. But first, see if Eli, Nathan, and Hur can come to my tent later this evening and do this as quietly as possible."

Outside the tent Thea was preparing for the feast of the following evening. There were sheep to be picked out for slaughter, meal to be ground for bread, cheese and fruit to be packed so it was quickly at hand when needed, and a hundred other details.

Although she needed to oversee the milking, check the storage skins and separate out the lambs for killing, she waited until the three Elders had arrived, refreshments had been selected, and Esther had been given her instructions.

The atmosphere in the tent was pleasant, but subdued. The freedom from Egypt, now made certain by the events of the night before, brought deep contentment, yet all were well aware of the problems before them. As one people they had celebrated victory, as one people they had rejoiced, danced, and felt the thrill of triumph. While the euphoria still lived, they would push on into the wilderness; every mile that disappeared behind them lessened the options of those who would think to dissent and gradually the logic of events would become the strongest logic of all.

Slowly the small talk and the food began to disappear and attention turned to Moses. Aaron made some preliminary remarks, then quietly Moses began to speak.

"We, all of us, each individual, share a common heritage, a common tradition. Alone among the nations of the world we know and obey the One God, the God of our fathers. Our society is patriarchal and tribal. We have never allowed anyone to fully rule our people.

"Unlike Egypt and all others our people have always had a voice in their affairs. As a part of that voice, that responsibility, it is traditional that each man, not as a professional soldier but as a man of his tribe, take up arms, each one, to protect the tribe.

"Yet, tens of generations in Egypt have diluted and corrupted the people. There are beliefs in gods many, little loyalty to tribe, none to nation, and no man has taken up arms to protect tribe or nation for longer than any man's memory can reach.

"It is our common heritage that we must now build upon and strengthen. We must build a nation, and we must build that nation's obedience to God. We must purify the hearts of the people and overthrow the belief in other gods. At every opportunity we must impress upon the people our traditional tribal and patriarchal loyalties and responsibilities."

As Moses paused each waited in his own way for what was to come. Nathan wondered what move Moses would make to further draw the people and the Elders into a common purpose, Hur waited for what was to him a revelation of the will of I AM, and Eli speculated on the next round of terms in the unfolding bargain that was being struck between a reluctant people and a persistent God.

"Mordechai," said Moses, "has brought enough arms for us to arm all the people who are without them."

The Elders concealed their surprise; another shipment of arms was a coup of organization and foresight as well as bargaining skill. Eli marveled at the amount of political cunning and surreptitious transportation such an accomplishment required.

Moses seemed to sense the thought and added casually, "Many have an interest in all that weakens Egypt. Mordechai's talents were simply addressed to a common interest. A number of armories in many places have been depleted for this purpose."

Eli pulled at his beard. He had always admired the desert trader, but this called for congratulations. He would have a drink with Mordechai before they parted ways tomorrow.

Abruptly his attention returned to the business at hand as Moses began to speak again. "Just as we ate the Passover meal in such a way as to strengthen our traditional family ties and provide a common heritage of remembrance, so it might be a good idea to pass the arms to the Elders, who in turn would pass them to the patriarchs, who in turn would pass them to their families. Thus we would strengthen our traditions and be reminded of our mutual responsibilities.

"This responsibility extends to the ability to use one's arms. Men, chosen by the Elders and the patriarchs, can train under Caleb, a mighty man of valor, and under Joshua, our general, under guidelines I have, myself, established. These men can, in turn, teach others in their tribes."

Nathan smiled approvingly. The prestige of every link of the governmental chain was enhanced, the young men who lacked arms would be on an equal footing with those who had them and, like all young men, would strut and practice with them with pleasure. Staunch traditionalists, like Hur, were certain to be pleased; the positions of Joshua and Caleb would be strengthened.

He lifted a cup of wine and studied Moses' face. Again the man had asked nothing, yet which of the Elders and the families of their tribes would not pass out arms while others did? There were no strings at which the people would rebel, yet the net of unity was being tightened and a foundation was being built.

Hur spoke his thoughts. "It will be well that some among us have considered this, it will mean that we can speak for it and you will not have the entire burden of convincing the people."

Moses inclined his head in agreement. "There is also a small matter of moving the weapons inconspicuously to our next encampment," he began.

In the cool of the dawn Thea looked out from her tent door over the encampment. The people were rested but moving slowly in striking their tents. By Hur's tent the banner of

Judah had already been unfurled for the march; it shone resplendent with its emblazoned lion against a light blue sky. Eli, too, had his flag unfurled: the banner of Issachar, a black flag with moon and sun upon it.

She was always pleased to see the banners flutter as the tribes marched. Moses had been wise to ask for them; each tribe had put their best spinners, weavers, and dyers to the work. They were reminders of tribal loyalty and rallying points for each day's journey.

Soon the other banners were up, the people ready. She waited for Joshua and Caleb to return from their inspection of the guards, then went with them to the place of their group behind the vanguard.

Moses and Aaron were there before her, walking as they mostly did. Nun was leading the donkey that bore the bones of Joseph; she paused to talk to Leah.

"I have heard that thy husband has been greatly honored."

Leah smiled. "Indeed. But he has become accustomed to the honor. Every night when he retires he bows to the coffin in the corner of the tent and says, 'Good night, Joseph.' Every morning before the coffin is loaded on the donkey he stops and says 'Good morning, Joseph, every day thou comest closer to thy home.' Somehow the task has come to please him; he is as comfortable with the coffin as is a child with a doll." They smiled at one another with the intimacy of two women sharing a common secret and she moved on.

As Thea walked with the men of her group Elisheba walked beside her. Miriam, as always, rode a donkey a little apart from them. For this Thea was grateful, the presence of Miriam seemed to constrain all conversation.

In the early hours of the march talk centered on the meeting with the Elders after they encamped that evening and on the distribution of weapons the following day. Thea had heard of the arms, for the donkeys bought from Mordechai had been placed in her care.

Aaron tugged thoughtfully at his beard, then said to Moses, "A wonderful strategy, my brother, it all tends toward a common unity of purpose and builds the common defense."

Moses nodded, then turned to Caleb. "What think you of the weapons?"

The brawny man responded slowly and deliberately. "They be mostly of good quality."

"And their types?" Moses queried.

"Infantry. Which is to be expected, but, of course, we have no siege trains for besieging a city, no tools to build one, and no chariots. We will be limited by that. Cities

don't fall except one besieges them, and infantry can't be caught in open areas where chariots can go."

Moses nodded agreement. "And the blend of the weapons?"

An appreciative smile swept over the broad countenance. "Not arbitrary, not at all. They will complement each other well."

Moses turned to Joshua. "We are a rabble. By the time we come to conquer Canaan we must be an army. Armies differ from a mass of people in that, besides their skill in arms, they are trained as a unit. Discipline, organization, group loyalty, a chain of command, complimentary arms and skills, and each unit supporting the whole -- these things distinguish an army.

"In addition, with an army operating rightly, there is a plan of battle which effectively uses the parts, a knowledge of the land and of the enemy. Until these elements can be infused into those who fight, any engagement of our people in war would be simply an act of mob violence."

Aaron nodded sagely and nudged the conversation along other lines. "You advocate a national army, brother. You will never get the people to give away the authority of how they are armed and where and when they fight. You only mentioned training together and availability of weapons to the Elders."

Moses responded mildly. "A step at a time, a step at a time. To lay the foundation aright Joshua and Caleb must know what the building will look like when it is completed."

He turned again to Joshua and Caleb. "The forge Caleb brought will be essential. It will give us more freedom and mobility than we would otherwise have." He looked at the man appreciatively. "But that is later. For now, each tribe must be fully armed. Over time, some tribes will develop special skills, weapon preferences. This should be encouraged; it builds pride in the tribe. Battle plans can be adjusted accordingly. For now, plans must be laid to give the Elders the arms we want them to have so that each tribe can act as a well-balanced whole.

"Tomorrow," Moses continued, "training of all fighting men will begin. Again, it is units we are training, and this is more than the development of individual skills. The men must be taught to think, act, and respond as units, as parts of a whole. As we build an army we must also build tribal authority. Do nothing that would undercut this, for it is the foundation of a nation. Build the tribal pride, teach them to think as a tribe, and then as a nation.

"Also, tomorrow, runners should go out and spy out the lands in which we travel; we must know the geography of the land and the nature of the people as well as their numbers and their armament. Be sure to send objective men, men who have a discerning eye for the terrain."

Thea watched the men as plans for the days ahead unfolded. The dream of a nation united to serve the God that she had found -- the God who had taken her from Egypt into the wilderness -- was becoming a reality around her.

The sun was setting as Aaron prepared to leave for the tent of Moses. Both he and Elisheba had spent the day avoiding the cold rage of Miriam, a rage they both knew would explode into fury before the night was out.

"So you go to break bread with thy brother and the Elders," Miriam began, obviously opening a conversation.

"Yes," said Aaron, uttering the word in as emotionally neutral a way as possible.

"You will sit on his right, Joshua on his left, and Thea and Esther and the two serving maids will serve, I suppose?"

"I suppose," he answered non-committally.

"You fool," she screamed, the words cracking like whips. "He leads you around by the nose as he does all the others. It is Nadab, thy eldest, who should sit in Joshua's place, and it is I who should be serving in the place of honor rather than that foreign woman and the child who helps her."

"If it was thee who set up and struck three tents and packed donkeys and prepared meals, even with help, your unhappiness would simply be of a different kind," he observed.

Elisheba repressed a smile. "Aaron is right," she said. "The women who serve Moses and his men have no easy task. They were up before dawn this morning and will not rest until long after we are all asleep."

"Fools, both of you," Miriam said bitterly and spat upon the ground, then uttered not a word until Aaron was long gone.

The meal passed in easy conversation and good-natured bantering. Aaron sat on Moses' right hand, Joshua on his left. The twelve elders, all men who had known each other for many years, sat with them, and around them all and filling the tent to overflowing were the patriarchs with whom the senior Elders took their counsel. As the meal drew to a close conversation hushed and all looked at Moses. Aaron cleared his throat and began to speak.

"We left Egypt a race of slaves, we enter the wilderness a free people," he began, embarking on a recital of events. All listened patiently, knowing that the real purpose of the meeting would follow. As Aaron drew to a close Moses looked around the group.

"When we were in Egypt the Egyptians protected us," he said bluntly, "for we were their property. Now we must protect ourselves. Many of our people have weapons, some do not. And not all have weapons suitable for combat. For those that lack, weapons have been provided. Each of you, as individuals responsible to and for your families and your tribes, will find a tent set apart for your tribe at the far edge of the encampment. Tomorrow, before we march, those of you who wish to do so, may complete the arming of your people."

He turned to Joshua who began to answer questions; Aaron entered the conversation. Moses listened.

An hour later the talk was open and intense, centering on training and leadership. Only Enan was in outright opposition. "Shall one tribe make trouble and all fight?" he asked. "Each tribe must choose for itself whether it fights, or no."

Nathan skillfully laid out the guidelines of debate on the parameters of decision making and talk droned on. By the late hours of the night, consensus had been reached. The Elders and patriarchs would be at their appointed tents on the following day.

As the meeting ended and guests disappeared into the night, Eli and Nathan walked together toward their tents.

"They work smoothly," Nathan offered. "Aaron sets the tone, Joshua handles the details, and Moses holds his peace, saving his weight to use only as needed."

"Working as a team they could sell a lot of donkeys," Eli agreed.

As they came to Eli's tent and said goodnight Nathan gave Eli a quizzical smile. "Your granddaughter's serving Moses makes you a backer in a way. Do you want to place your bets so openly?"

"So who's betting?" said Eli, "it's insurance."

Slowly, very slowly, the great column moved across the desert. As water grew less, both men and animals moved more wearily until the pace became a crawl. Thea looked at Moses questioningly and he answered soberly. "I had hoped to be at the oasis known as Elim by now. There are twelve wells there and many palm trees."

"Can we survive to Elim?"

"No, the closest water now is Marah and the water is undrinkable, but we go there. God will heal the waters."

"Will the people drink of it?"

"Not without a sign, but God will give it."

"How soon do we reach Marah?"

"By nightfall."

Early the next morning Aaron was at Moses' tent. "What do we do now?" he asked. "The people stand thirsting at the well, but the Elders forbid them drink, knowing that the waters are unsafe."

"Bring thy staff and thy knife," said Moses simply, "and follow me."

By the time they reached the well animals and people were dense around the tempting source of tainted water. Aaron raised his rod and the people grew quiet. "Take of this tree that stands near the well," said Moses, "and cut a branch from it and cast it into the well."

As the branch fell into the waters Moses turned to the people and said, "God hath healed the waters and He sayeth unto thee: 'If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the Lord thy God, and wilt do that which is right in His sight, and wilt give ear to His commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians; for I am the Lord that healeth thee.'"

For a moment there was silence. The people looked from Moses to the Elders and then began crowding to the well to drink. By noon all who thirsted, both men and animals, had drunk and water bags had been filled anew. By the time of the evening meal an atmosphere of great good will had spread throughout the camp.

Eli waved a hand in friendly greeting as Joshua passed his tent. "Sit a while," he called, and Joshua smiled, turned, and sat beside him.

"The people are content again for a time, I see," he offered noncommittally.

"But only for a time," Joshua added. "In spite of all God's miracles and His goodness the people worship their bellies and the young men play with their swords as if defending their own lives and their nation was but a pleasant game."

Eli nodded peacefully. "Joshua," he asked, "do you know yet what God will demand of us?"

"Only that we are to be His people. What that means we will not know until we get to Sinai. There He will reveal His laws, and we must obey them."

The lines of the old trader's face broke into a knowing smile. "God gives us our freedom before He calls us to the Bargain. It's a fair and open thing, for there is no need for reservations; our freedom is already ours and if we want more from God we must earn it by sealing the Bargain."

"It is no small thing," Joshua answered, "to enter into Covenant with the Power of the Miracles. To know the laws and to obey them is only the beginning. As a people we must become single-minded in His service and seek to love Him as He loves us."

"Joshua," said Eli kindly, "already you begin to talk like Moses. It will be many generations, if ever, before the people burn with that kind of fire. Speaking for myself, I will seal the Bargain, and I will seal it with my whole heart. But," and he held up a warning finger, "the people will swear their allegiance as if it were but another gesture in the great game Moses has provided for them."

Joshua looked soberly at Eli. "And what would you do if you were me?"

"Weigh carefully the minds and hearts of your men at arms. Know precisely whom you can trust when the times of trouble come, for they will surely come."

"Now it is you who speak like Moses," Joshua answered with a grin. "Those who stand with God are few, but they are faithful. Even at this point Caleb and I have a good idea which of our men will stand in time of need."

"Like donkeys, like people," Eli returned. "One good one is worth ten of the rest."

Marah was left behind as in a dream, days passed as they encamped at Elim, resting and restoring themselves. Onward they traveled into the wilderness of Zin which is between Elim and Sinai and there they camped on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left the land of Egypt.

Eli gazed impassively at the two Elders seated across from him. "The answer is "No," he said bluntly. "If you could not buy from Nathan or from Hur or from Enan, why do you think you can buy from me?"

"You have more flocks than you can use, both sheep and goats. Our people have none, they simply seek for food. We have gold and we can buy."

Eli spat contemptuously. "And of what use is gold in the desert? Can it be eaten? Does it earn interest? It is of no use. It is of no use at all except to attract the violent and the slothful. It must be carried and guarded. It cannot sustain life nor is it useful."

"Come, come, Eli," Amminadab answered. "If it's bargaining you want, we will bargain."

"No," said Eli wearily, "I have no use for such bargains. Must I simply repeat what you have been told before? Your people made bricks, dug canals, and learned the city habits. Those of us who held to the old desert ways have spent our years hiding our flocks from the Egyptians and preserving as much independence as we could."

"We're not here to argue the point," Eliab interrupted, "nor to hear from you what we have already heard from the others."

Eli's face grew sober. "We are Elders, all of us. The interests of the tribe are our interests. Those of us who have followed the desert ways must indeed look out for the rest of you who have learned the ways of the Egyptians all too well, you who have despised the shepherds and the wisdom of the wilderness. You sit long and talk well; the activity of the city and the people is your meat and drink. The lonely life of the desert and the herdsmen you know not of."

"Would you teach us a lesson, then?" Amminadab asked sharply. "Yes, but not of the kind you think. Listen and be wise. We left Egypt after the time of sowing. We must live on what we have until the time of the next sowing. If Pharaoh wanted to follow us into the desert all he would have to do is follow the trail of the bones of the sheep and goats

we have left behind. Your people have feasted continually and made of our departure one giant celebration.

"Those of us more used to the desert know that when the grain is gone and the animals are gone, then we will starve. Once we take from our herds more animals than can be produced in a year, then the herds cannot be rebuilt. If we take more grain than is wise we cannot plant for the next harvesting. Already we cannot take more from our herds and we watch closely our amount of grain."

Eliab stroked his beard and replied with measured words. "Almost I believe thee, Eli. Hur and Nathan say the same, and so does Enan. But thy donkeys are heavy with grain."

"Indeed they are. None of us knows what Moses intends to do. But by the next growing season we must disperse and then regroup when our stores of food have been replenished. Already our people overtax the land. We could not increase our herds even if we so chose; there is not grazing enough to permit it. When the time of planting is upon us, where will you buy seed? From whence will come a supply large enough for all our people, even for much gold?"

"And who will feed the rest of us, while you protect your seed?" Amminadab retorted.

"We must buy what we can from the lands through which we pass," Eli responded. "And you city people must get over the idea that you may feast on meat whenever the mood is on you. As you have learned the art of pitching a tent, so you must learn the art of living in the desert."

Eliab nodded in agreement; Amminadab spat with contempt.

Enan sat with Nathan, watching the flocks. "Eliab and Amminadab have gone to buy from Eli," he said.

"He will no more sell than we will," Nathan returned.

"No, but their people become restive."

"They must learn the discipline of the desert; no body of people this large can travel together forever across the wilderness and sustain themselves. This, Enan, is why I support Moses and his efforts to bind us closely. Eventually we will have to disperse enough to enable the land to sustain us, yet we must be close enough as a people to maintain our purpose of reaching Canaan."

"Moses has power with God," said Enan evenly. "But not with the people. To throw in totally with Moses is to misread the temper of the tribes. Let them disperse, even a little, and some will go, never to return."

"Moses is a man of Egypt," Nathan returned, "but he is also a man of the desert. He knows more of flocks and herds than either you or I. He has timed our movement through the wilderness as well as any man could do. We must move at a certain rate or we overgraze the land. And he knows the times of sowing and reaping as well as anyone. I have seen him stand and count the sacks of grain as the column moves; he is not unaware."

"Can the people be forever led with miracles?" asked Enan. "I do not understand these miracles."

"Nor I," Nathan answered. "Why did God choose us? Many peoples are greater in number; the Egyptians are better builders and wiser in the ways of men."

"The peoples of this world worship anything that catches their fancy," said Enan. "We worship the God of our fathers, the God that is."

Nathan looked doubtful. "The heritage is in us, but to most of us it is simply the acceptance of what has gone before. God has placed opportunity before us, yet no prayers of gratitude ascend to Him. Rather do the people murmur continually against Moses."

Enan looked at Nathan, then at the flocks. "We have learned to herd the sheep; in like manner Moses herds Israel with his miracles. We expect no gratitude from the sheep; we do with them as we will. Yet Moses expects from the people a new heart and a new spirit. Never has this been done in the world."

"Indeed it is so," Nathan answered. "God has given Moses much power, but He has not given him the power to change the people. This they must do for themselves. Like you, I doubt the people. But, like Hur, when the vote is cast I must side with God."

Joshua and Thea sat together in the fading light of evening. From the little patch of ground they occupied the tents of the Israelites stretched round about, their dark colors fading like misty shadows into the gathering black velvet of the night.

"The time has gone swiftly since we left," said Joshua. "Is all well with thee?"

"All is well."

"You keep much to yourself."

She looked at him and smiled. "Thy mother is my friend, and a good friend indeed. Miriam dislikes me, and there are others that share her feelings simply because I am not a Hebrew and I travel in the party of Moses."

"You have more friends than you know," he answered. "None would dare speak against thee in the presence of Eli."

She looked at him curiously. "How do you know this?"

He flushed with embarrassment. "Esther tells me more, I'm sure, than she repeats to her own family."

"Eli is a good man," she answered.

"One of the best," he agreed. "I like him much. And, day by day, Nathan stands with us more openly than before."

"Joshua," she said suddenly, "those of us who are close to Moses are an island. The sea around us is sometimes calm and peaceful and sometimes threatening and forbidding. Although we rise out of the sea we are not of it."

"The sea I know not of," he answered, "save what I have heard. But your words are true. Has Moses told thee much of the Lord?"

"Yes, much."

"Never has there been such a man as Moses. The fathers of the people spoke with God, but never face to face. And never did they do such miracles."

"Yet," she answered, "Moses is a man, even though he stands in the place where God and man speak face to face. Do you know that he grooms thee to lead the people after he is gone?"

"Yes," Joshua answered to the voice in the cloud-lit darkness that was deep around them. "I know."

It was a day when the cloud moved not that Amminadab, followed by a great host of the people, came to the tents of Moses and Aaron. And they said, "Would to God we had

died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

Aaron's eyes scanned the crowd to see if any of the other Elders had come with Amminadab. Only when he saw none did he relax a little, for the mood of the crowd was ugly. He opened his mouth to speak, then thought better of it and turned to Moses.

Moses looked out at the people and wondered if it was ever possible to forge a compromise of any kind between the demands of God and the sullen self-interest of the Israelites. Yet, the people were new in the task of learning the ways of God and somehow, and in some way, all men must come to God.

He looked at Amminadab and then at the host and began to speak, "Thus saith the Lord: 'Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.'"

Amminadab began to grumble and others picked up his words. A mixture of anger and sorrow rose in Moses and he added, "This shall be, when the Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the Lord heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him; and what are we? Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord."

Little by little the grumbling turned to questioning. Where was the meat coming from? How much would there be? Moses turned and went into his tent; Aaron began to urge the people to greater fidelity and gratitude to God. Gradually the crowd dispersed.

It was not until the crowd had fully gone and even Aaron had returned to his tent that Joshua's hand slackened its grip on the hilt of his khopesh and he dismissed the added guards he had stationed near the tents of Moses' party. From the man in whose footsteps he was destined to walk he had already learned the value of being totally open to the will of God and totally defended against the will of man. At the merest whisper of a sound he turned to see Caleb approach.

"The people have returned to their tents to talk about the promised food," he reported. "Should Amminadab be watched?"

"No," said Joshua, "for God has shown me he is but a fool, more likely to fall into trouble than to cause it."

The whole of the sun was above the rim of earth when Thea stepped from her tent the next morning. Round about her, throughout the camp, the people were gathering food that lay upon the ground. She hurried to Leah's tent. "What is this they are gathering? Is this what Moses promised?"

"Yes, the people call it Manna. When the dew left it lay upon the ground, as small as the hoarfrost. We are to gather no more than one day's supply, save that on the sixth day we gather for the morrow as well, for the manna will not come on the seventh day. Go and gather, for it will melt and disappear with the waxing hot of the sun, so Moses says."

She handed Thea some of the bread which she had gathered. "See, it tastes like coriander seed and it is sweet like honey."

Bread in her hand and wonder in her heart, Thea left the tent. There would be no sowing nor reaping as they marched. There would be no economic necessity for the tribes to disperse and there would be a strong economic incentive to remain under the guidance of the cloud and share in the food supply. She also realized, with gratitude, that the arduous daily grinding of meal, the burden of women for centuries, was gone so long as the manna appeared.

Day by day the manna came. For those who gathered more than a day's supply, the manna bred worms and stank by morning, save on the seventh day when it remained whole and good.

Evening after evening quail were borne on the wind and covered the camp. When the cloud moved again, the people followed it, and the bread and the quail ceased not.

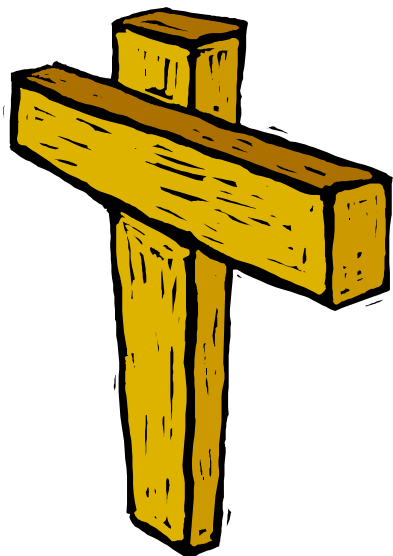
Section Four: Of Special Interest

To our Christian Science Readers

One Stupendous Whole

“As an active portion of one stupendous whole goodness identifies man with universal good. Thus may each member of this church rise above the oft-repeated inquiry, What am I? to the scientific response: I am able to impart truth, health, and happiness, and this is my rock of salvation and my reason for existing.”

Mary Baker Eddy (MY. p. 165)



A larger Vision

Recently I read the memoirs of Samuel Putnam Bancroft, an early student of Mary Baker Eddy's. He was her student during the 1870's. *Science and Health* was first published in 1875 although it had been written prior to that. During the 1870's Mrs. Eddy was actively healing and teaching, as she felt she should not publish the book until she had practiced and proven the effectiveness of its healing system.

Of course the proof standards of her day were not nearly as stringent as they are now. Today the book needs to meet more accurate standards of proof before its healing system can be effectively practiced in the 21st century and meet 21st century challenges. This is just what the Spindrift methodology allows us to do.

Bancroft, or “Putney” as Eddy refers to him affectionately in her letters, was part of the small group of students that observed Eddy as she tested her theory. He writes:

”Mrs. Eddy did not claim to be a teacher of religion but of a method of healing the sick without medicine. ...Her religious views, while not concealed, were not capitalized.” (p.vi)

I was reminded as I read of how difficult it was to publicly associate yourself with Christian Science in those days.

”This proposition of Mrs. Eddy was generally regarded as an insane idea, and both teacher and pupils were ridiculed. The M.D.’s pronounced her a swindler; the spiritualists, a medium; the church, as in league with the devil. If she had lived a generation or two earlier she probably would have been burned at the stake as a witch, so strong was public opinion against her.” (p.vi)

”Mrs. Eddy and her teachings were the subject of much public denunciation.”
(p.3)

”Those of you who call yourselves Christian Scientists, those who attend the beautiful churches which have been erected in your midst for Sunday worship and weekly testimony, can hardly realize the situation in which Mrs. Eddy and her loyal students were placed, or the sentiment with which they were regarded at that time. You are accustomed to being looked upon with respect, and sometimes with admiration. We were considered much the same as the ‘Holy Rollers’ or the ‘Howling Dervishes’ are today. We did not even have a name. To be sure, we were students of ‘Moral Science’, but moralists could not be saved, according to the prevalent idea of those who claimed to be Christians, and when the name “Christian Scientist” was adopted, we were deemed sacrilegious, and Mrs. Eddy a dangerous woman.” (p.8)

Despite the fact that they acted more bravely than many of today’s church members (who are obsessed with the image of the church and who are afraid to speak out or make waves within the church) the thing that most tugged at my heart in this memoir was the lack of vision those early students had,

”We who were associated with her at that time could not see with her prophetic vision. To us, her predictions seemed incredible.” (p.5)

”Often in the early days of her ministry she would say to us, ‘I shall have a church of my own some day.’ There was no vanity attending this remark. She may have

had a vision of the hundreds of churches now established throughout the civilized world. We deemed it just possible that she might become a settled pastor over some small congregation, eventually.” (p.10)

And that was as big as their vision of Christian Science got..

Are we not guilty of as much today? Do we not assume that perhaps a tiny bit of progress can be made in re-establishing Christian Science during our lifetime, if perhaps we make enough concessions and expect less from the church than we hope for?

Do we truly expect the truths of Christian Science to flower in a next successive stage and picture, as Mrs. Eddy asked us to do, what such a stage might look like?

Do we care enough about the world around us to want to bless it at our own expense, and to put our love of God and man ahead of our love of comfort and sentiment regarding the church?

Healing the field

In the *Course on Divinity* Mrs. Eddy is quoted as saying that we must not give in to the temptation of believing that “Christian Science is going to the dogs”. Today church members sometimes feel that they cannot do anymore because of the way Mrs. Eddy set up the church.

Mrs. Eddy did not put human will, the possibility for a festering of human power, ambition, dishonesty or corruption in the church. God certainly did not put any of that there either.

In Christian Science we believe that our bodies, and our circumstances, are a picture of our unconscious thought, and so the problems that we see in both can be helpful to us in showing us what to handle.

The Christian Science church is a graphic picture of the unconscious collective thoughts of the Christian Science field, and the problems must be handled there. Again in the *Course in Divinity* Eddy comments:

“More mental work for the field must be done.”

It begins with us. From Spindrift’s research we know that the more holy thought that is associated with a system the faster the system develops. This is true of the church.

The fact that there are problems in the field is not cause for discouragement. Yes, the church has sinned, and yes, we have sinned, and yes, there is a process to go through before healing can occur. Yes, there are consequences.

But it’s doable. We have no reason to fear the process of Christian Science healing. The Bible tells us that our sins will be removed as far as the east from the west if we want to be rid of them and that though our sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow. This is in fact the main message of the Bible, that change is possible.

Re-establishing Christian Science on a genuine basis is doable now. It does not have to take centuries. When a person is sick and needs an operation he does not enjoy surgery but he is grateful that the process is available so that he may live. It is time for us to go in and have the mental surgery the church needs. We do not have to change Boston. We simply have to change our idea of the church and if this means taking our lumps, so be it.

. We certainly don’t have to “confer with flesh and blood” or take anybody’s opinion on this great matter of the identity of Christian Science. We do need to earnestly and sincerely go down on our knees and ask God to show us what Christian Science is.

Mrs. Eddy writes:

“There is no fatal mistake; there is no unforgiveable wrong; there is no unpardonable sin; there is no permanent injury; there is no incurable disease; there is no such thing as too late.” (*Divinity* p. 205)

What is our vision of Spindrift? Do we see it as an oddity that might produce a little bit of a good image for the church if it ever proves anything? Do we see it in small terms the way Bancroft says the early students saw Christian Science, as maybe Mrs. Eddy personally having a small congregation of her own one day? In other words do we think that maybe someday Spindrift might have a little lab and do a few interesting tests?

Think a little bigger. See the IFT Testing Center as the manifestation of God's love for humanity, as the expression of the orderly nature of divine Principle revealing itself on a universal scale to all mankind. See it as the power of the identity of Eddy's healing system speaking for itself. "God is His own interpreter, and He will make it plain."

Eddy predicted that someday CS would grow up and that the babe of Christian Science healing would someday be mature enough "to speak for itself and its mother." That day is now here.

The Manual

Has it ever occurred to you that maybe Christian Scientists got it wrong, that maybe the fact that the different church offices were in court fighting each other only a few years after Mrs. Eddy's death, and the fact that the church has lost so much of its healing power and moral authority today are signs that something is wrong in our thought? Or do we just assume that Mrs. Eddy made mistakes in the way she set up the church and that the fault is not ours?

Why is there so much resistance to the spiritual interpretation of the *Manual*? Even when you read the preceding sentence do you feel a little buzz of fear, of thinking, "Oh no, the *Manual* must be taken only literally or we will lose it?" That little buzz is mesmerism. That is how the early Jews felt about circumcision and why Paul had such a fight on his hands over "the law".

Why do we think that the spiritual interpretation of the Ten Commandments and of the Bible is just fine, and does not compromise its literal meaning, yet apply a different standard to the *Manual*? Why do we insist that the *Manual* is only to be taken literally and totally miss the consciousness that it was meant to build? The City that lieth foursquare and cometh down from haven is a universal consciousness, and attaining it is what it means to build the church.

We do not insist that the Commandments are only for Jews and only for strict literal interpretation. Why do we think the *Manual* is just for us and must be narrowly interpreted?

How many Christian Scientists even admit to themselves that the *Manual* has both a spiritual and a literal meaning? Eddy writes:

“Error, contradicting Truth, is tempting Christian Scientists to form misconceptions of the first, second, and third appearing of Christ...I warn you that this evil intent, if carried out, will take away your understanding of Christian Science and check the unfolding of Truth at this period. ‘Oh, no.’ answers the zealot. ‘Christian Science has come to stay.’ I reply, ‘It never came.’ ‘Twas ever here. But you can thrust it out of your own mind and that of others by misconceiving it and misstating it.” (*Redbook* p.48)

She goes on to say that when she tells students that they have to give up their “human dream of the divine” – and I would add their human dream of the church - then they say that Eddy has taken away their Lord and they do not know where to find it. Do these statements take away your church and you do not know where to find it? Then look within.

A misunderstanding and misstatement of the church, and for that matter a misunderstanding of the advent of the Spindrift work, is “checking the unfoldment of Truth at this period.”

How many Christian Scientists have thought deeply about what Mrs. Eddy means by the first second and third appearing of Christ?

Many Christian Scientists today react with the same horror when I speak of a spiritual interpretation of the *Manual* as fundamentalist Christians do when I speak of the importance of the spiritual interpretation of the Bible.

This should make us all more humble. It should make us realize that even as we feel threatened at times, some of what we say threatens others and we need to have patience and compassion with the fears that others feel. We feel them too in a different way.

When Mrs. Eddy said that the history of Israel was no more important than the “ history of Europe or America” without its spiritual meaning (see Mis. 170) this causes a recoil from someone who believes that the Bible must be taken only literally. What if I were to say to you that the human history of the church means no more than the history of France without its spiritual development, a development that has lately been retarded in its manifestation?

Mrs. Eddy does say that Christian Science must and will have a history but this history is counted only in spiritual development. The human history of the church must be revised and, as she says in her autobiography, mortal elements must be “expunged.”

“The Scriptures [Deborah’s note; and the *Manual* By-laws too] are very sacred. Our aim must be to have them understood spiritually for only by this understanding can truth be gained. The true theory of the universe, including man, is not in material history but in spiritual development.” (*Science and Health* p. 547)

Eddy says on p.320 of *Science and Health* (only here I substitute the word “*Manual*” for the word “Bible”) that the [*Manual*] has both a literal and a spiritual meaning and that the one important interpretation of the [*Manual*] is the spiritual? She says on p. 241, that if you take away the spiritual meaning of the Bible (or *Manual*) it would be no more effective than moonbeams to melt a river of ice.

Christian Scientists obey the Commandments literally (I hope) but they do not get hung up in endless discussions of its literal meanings such as what constitutes work on the Sabbath etc. They look first to the spiritual onrushing of these mighty laws.

In the same way the endless discussions of the estoppels clauses and what we should do legally when Mrs. Eddy’s signature is required and she’s no longer her to give it would disappear if we glimpsed for one moment the mighty movement of thought that lies in the spiritual meaning of the *Manual*./The Pharisaical arguments over church law comes from a lack of vision.

The inspired word is the inspired word, be it the Bible, or writings from the early stages of Christian Science, or our own revelations in this age. The inspired word needs inspiration to be understood, whatever form it takes. It takes vision. It’s that simple.

The church that Mrs. Eddy glimpsed when she took the first organization down and rebuilt the church has not yet been seen. The first people to come into CS were mostly from hierarchal Protestant churches and unknowingly they brought their concept of hierarchy along and projected it unto administrative posts that were not meant to handle or develop human power. After the litigation that occurred prior to World War I the field assumed that the Board of Directors was the successor to Mrs. Eddy and that the *Manual* said so and they promptly deified both. This was a mistake. The consequences of that mistake have grown to mammoth proportions.

The Board of Directors was never the successor to Mary Baker Eddy. The *Manual* is not a manifesto giving power to an administrative body. It is spiritual law in action. Movement, not stagnation, is the center of every By-law. We have not obeyed the *Manual* until we demonstrate the development of good. In the squabbles and dogma of CS Pharisees our healing system has been frittered away and this has stopped the development of genuine CS in the world.

Developmen

t

Can you think of any other kind of science than Christian Science that has not developed in the last one hundred years?

Astronomy has left the earth and entered space. Physics has gone through Einstein and beyond. Medicine has gone from snake oil and patent medicines to laboratory tested procedures. Biology has discovered modern genetics, molecular biology, and biotechnology. Even math, as we have seen in our former issues of *The Standard*, has changed tremendously.

It is the nature of science to develop. Science does not stand still or retrograde. If it did it would not be science.

Why hasn't Christian Science developed? Isn't it supposed to lead the way?

If Christian Science is a real science why hasn't it developed in the last hundred years? Why hasn't our healing work seen the kind of vast improvements that we have seen in medicine or biology? Weren't we supposed to be in advance of material medicine, not behind it? Why has the movement declined instead of rapidly developing since the death of Mary Baker Eddy one hundred years ago?

Part of the answer lies in the fundamentalist view of Christian Scientists who believe that to develop is to change our basic theory. "*Science and Health* is a complete revelation" they say and no development is needed. Today accepting *Science and Health* as 'the complete revelation' is much the same as accepting Jesus as one's personal savior; it has deteriorated into dogma, into words containing intense emotional belief without intelligent thought.

Mrs. Eddy called *Science and Health with key to the Scriptures* a complete textual explanation of her theory but she never indicated that it should not develop; quite the opposite. The theory of electricity, even if complete, does not forbid the invention of computers, cell phones, light bulbs and television. One doesn't say, "Well electricity has been discovered and the discovery is complete so no more needs to be done."

Eddy strongly rebuked the state of mind which would make the church the tomb instead of the womb of CS. She never in anyway sanctioned the rot that is today at the center of the CS church.

Another reason our perception and application of CS has not developed normally is that change takes guts. It takes courage. We need more of those qualities in the Christian Science movement, if indeed it can still be called a movement. Our leader had courage. She had the guts to stand up and fight for the future of Christian Science in a needy world. She deplored apathy and indifference. She didn't shrink back when people made fun of her and neither should we.

In the book *Is God a Mathematician?* there is a reference to the kinds of mental upheavals that mathematicians have had to deal with as math developed as a science.

"In his famous book *Future Shock*, author Alvin Toffler defines the term in the title as 'the shattering stress and disorientation that we induce in individuals by subjecting them to too much change in too short a time.' In the nineteenth century, mathematicians, scientists, and philosophers experienced precisely such a shock. ...This unexpected intellectual upheaval was caused by the emergence of new types of geometries, now known as non-Euclidian geometries." (Livio, Mario, *Is God a Mathematician?*, NY, 2009, Simon & Shuster, p.150.)

Spindrift was a small part of this mathematical revolution.

Dealing with and even inducing mental upheaval is part of being a scientist. It is also part of being a Christian Scientist. They call it upheaval, we call it chemicalization, either way it's needed.

IFT Testing Center

When people object to Spindrift's work they say, "How can you turn to matter to measure Spirit?" We aren't measuring Spirit. We are looking at its effect on the material world the same way we do when we have a physical healing and rejoice or testify that it is an incarnation of God's love that helps us right where we are. At Spindrift we follow Eddy's rules (*Manual By-law*) for testifying in every lab experiment we do because each test, even the ones that don't "work" is a testimony to the yielding to Truth.

When you see a tumor gradually getting smaller and then disappearing because of prayer you may very well testify to that on a Wednesday night; I've heard many such testimonies. That's measurement. You watch, note and testify to the tumor's disappearance. If you wake up one morning and the tumor is only half the size it was the day before you give thanks. That's measurement too.

At Spindrift the measurements are more precise. Are we saying that loose measurement is OK but accurate measurement is not? That makes no sense. By measuring imprecisely, with our eyes, are we pretending that it's not really measurement? That makes no sense either. Of course the healing is a by-product and not the whole of healing, but we do see the physical healing. We notice when the tumor gets smaller or the rash starts fading or the leg "feels a lot better" even if we aren't precisely saying "the leg feels 70 per cent better." We are grateful for the changes whether we measure them loosely or precisely. That is all Spindrift is doing, the same thing CSists do every day.

We don't hook people up to bio-feedback and look at the results. Of course we don't. It is understood that to do so would focus the patient's thought on the by-product of physical symptoms disappearing rather than on the process of spiritual perception and this focus would retard or negate the CS healing effect.

But it is not wrong to look at the by-product of the spiritual process – to testify gladly to the physical healing. You get up on a Wednesday night and say, "The tumor was dissolved and I am grateful." I get up in the lab and say, "The organism was returned to its norm and I am grateful."

A CS farmer prays for his cattle which he then slaughters to eat. Many Christian Scientists have prayed for “the loaves and fishes” or merely for relief, comfort and material harmony before their motives were purified by the process of maturing as a Christian Scientist.

And by the way there is nothing wrong with praying for physical relief. It’s where we start.

The Spindrift researcher sacrifices his reputation, his comfortable life, and much more in order to demonstrate a truth with no personal gain whatsoever. Is he to be condemned as ‘too material?’ If he loves enough to keep communicating to the world in data that the world can understand, to constantly reach out to the world even though it means ridicule and rejection, is he to be considered “more material” than the patient who prays because he wants to be physically comfortable again?

A supplement is a support. When our church tells us that Mrs. Eddy’s discovery is a supplement or support to the matter based view of the world embodied by modern medicine, then is that church in any position to tell the Spindrift researchers that they are “too material” because they measure things?

The Spindrift researchers are demonstrating the identity of Christian Science to the world, showing scientifically that it is something entirely different from faith, the placebo, or matter based therapies, and identity is at the heart of spiritual healing.

Why do Christian Scientists, who are supposed to be deep thinkers, constantly reject these Spindrift tests without thinking about the issues at all? Is it right to simply shoot emotionally from the hip and say, “That doesn’t sound like Christian Science to me” repeating the old skepticism, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”

I have spoken of the mental conflict that occurs when hooking a person up to bio-feedback.

With animals you avoid some of this as the animal does not believe in anything nor does his fear manifest or focus on the process the same way ours does. However with animals you run into other logistical problems because an animal must be “sick” (deviated from his norms) in order to be healed. He can’t be healed if he is well. Since no two naturally occurring cases of disease are exactly alike medicine induces cases of disease that are exactly alike on laboratory animals. Since CS is an ethical system this is not possible in our testing. It does not work. You can’t do this healing without love and obeying the Golden Rule. It’s impossible. You can achieve effects with faith

healing this way, but you cannot get the effect with the mathematical footprint of CS in this way. It just shuts down.

Mrs. Eddy writes:

“Faith-healing is not really healing...Do not think because you can heal you are a Christian Scientist; as medicine heals as regards the senses, and so does error.” (Divinity p.190)

“I am amazed when I see how little Christian Science healing is done. So much is faith healing, little more.” (Divinity p. 198)

Something that has no conscious perception of pain or of itself, like a seed, can be deviated from a norm and you can still get an effect. Things on the border – like insects – we are still trying to figure out through testing what our system considers ethical with them and what it does not. If it's not ethical the system shuts down and the prayer doesn't work. This does not happen with faith healing.

There are also ways to get around harming an organism while still deviating it from a norm. I have done interesting tests with insects putting them to sleep with something called Flynap – a laboratory product used to keep insects still while studying them – and then monitoring how prayer affects their waking times.

The really good news is that with modern technology experimentation can be done at the cellular or even the atomic level and no mental conflicts need occur.

What does all this “fooling around with matter” have to do with Spirit? Our tests do not “outline”, they monitor many variables. They do not “tell God what to do.” Instead they look for patterns and seek to understand the orderly nature of the universe. Many of these patterns hint at a perfection and benevolence below the surface. Sometimes the results are unexplainable in terms of modern science and this serves as a “sign following” that breaks the limits of the human mind and helps the human mind free itself from the beliefs wired into it. In this way laboratory healing serves the same function as the physical healing of individuals, because it is a “sign following.”

It is a modern and relevant “sign following.” The placebo effect, which has been studied in depth for more than a half century (since the end of World War II) can often match the Christian Science healings that occur. How can you tell the difference without showing that they differ by the mathematical footprints they produce, the different way in which they produce healing, the different process going on beneath the surface?

When a genuine Christian Science healing occurs scientists, doctors, and the general public assume that it is the placebo effect. Why wouldn't they? Many Christians assume it is a supernatural miracle that proves that God is a Person able to set aside the laws of the universe at whim.

Healing sick people is no longer enough to establish the fact of genuine CS healing. We must move forward and do laboratory healing work, healing work that meets the rapidly developing standards of proof in our society.

The new and more perfect standards of proof in our society are not limiting laws of mortal mind expressed in physical rules laid down by cold and materialistic scientists. They're glimpses into the orderly, perfect and beautiful nature of spiritual law.

Of course they are currently "seen through a glass darkly" and misinterpreted but through our healing work in the science room as well as in the sick room the flawed perceptions of the scientific method itself can be improved and made more effective.

What good is the scientific method if it cannot be expanded to take the role of consciousness in the universe into account? What good is it if it cannot come close to, much less measure, reality at a deeper level?

This is what the Spindrift tests point to. They aren't simply a parlor trick to show that we can affect matter with our mind. They are a pouring out of God's love in the world, and a great crying out for truth. They are the manifestation of the very identity of Christian Science.

In the article on "praying for parasites" I quoted Eddy as saying that we need to work first to establish physical healing and then to meet the claim as it appears again in a purely mental form, this because of the world's current belief in mind and matter.

In the first stage of Christian Science it was a struggle to get the physical Mother Church built but it was done.

Now we must build it again in a mental form, meeting mental beliefs that did not exist when it was built physically.. We must bring the same dedication and urgency to this task as the early workers did..

"The work of many minds attempted to top the building of the Mother Church. That plan of M.A.M. was defeated. It is up to the students to protect that demonstration – from the enemy *within our gates.*" (*Divinity* p. 198)

What are the actual steps needed to be taken in this building project? The early workers had to do more than pray. They had to figure out the practical logistics involving the details of supplies schedules and transportation. They dealt with unions, workers, and fund raising. We have practical logistical things that we need to do also.

What practical things do we need to do?

We need to design a series of tests using the Spindrift methodology to see where IFT or CS healing is compatible with modern medicine and where it is or is not, and why. There are safety issues here because many Christian Scientists do interact with the medical system at some level and if mixing the two can be dangerous we should know where why and when.

A recent *New York Times* article apparently claimed that Christian Scientists were coming closer to adopting material or physical medicine. There was a response from the CS Board of Directors in Boston. I saw neither the article nor the response, but was told that both were confusing. Data would be helpful in making the issues clear.

If Christian Scientists go into this to prove that they are right or to improve the image of their church they will gain nothing and do little good for mankind. A spirit of learning, and the genuine desire to help people in practical ways must permeate our motives.

The desire to know and practice hands-on healing, and to explore the world of Spirit, as well as to better understand God as Principle is also a motive that helps insure success. A revival of healing is necessary to the re-establishment of CS and laboratory healing is a legitimate and vital means not only of showing that we heal, but of showing how we heal. It is part of our moral responsibility to show this. It is also a matter of accountability for us to do this. The burden of proof is on us and rightfully so.

How would such a research program operate?

- First you would need an organization to handle the money, funding, and administrative details. The organization would presumably have a board that would handle policy and overall direction issues as well as publicity and the peer-review process. The Board may need to have access once a year to a lawyer and an accountant.

There are many reasons for having a non-profit besides the need to handle the money and administrative duties professionally. I have found it very difficult to run a lab without such an organization. I cannot get the permits to use the organisms I need as

an individual. I cannot buy used lab equipment on the Internet like other non-profits can. I do not have access to many of the technical services non-profits have free of charge.

- You would need a business plan, mission statement and By-laws.
- You would need a budget and funding to cover it.
- You would also need a research director.
- The research director would probably need to hire three technicians and a statistician.
- You would need a physical place to use as a lab and some basic equipment. It does not have to be large.
- You would need a part time secretary.
- You would need a prayer director to schedule, test, hire, evaluate, and possibly train any prayer providers used. If I had a choice this is the job I would like to have.
- You would need a series of tests rather than a one-shot program. Three years would be my idea for a minimum program.
- You would need preliminary tests that established that there was a difference between the CS effect (IFT, normalcy-referenced or identity-referenced prayer) and goal-referenced prayer (or mental input). Spindrift tests are available to establish this.
- You would need about 5 prayer providers who can get such an effect in the lab under pressure. I at first thought this would be a problem and it still may be, I don't know. It is to be expected that people would at first get a volitional effect as that is what society trains us for and even what the Christian Science church has inadvertently stressed. However it appears possible with about two weeks training and orientation to help selected people get an IFT or CS effect at least temporarily.

This prayer training should be done just before the initial experiments although preliminary hands-on mentoring in healing can be done beforehand.. During these two weeks the prayer providers (practitioners) would establish a simple “prayer profile” or data sheet with their scores on five or six tests showing that they can get the results needed. They would also be trained in how to pray for research organisms and how to deal with defense mechanisms blocking the work. Mrs. Eddy speaks of how the “moral mercury” of people tends to rise and fall and I have found it true that the healing ability fluctuates which is why we want to test practitioners just before we start and make sure they are all within the same parameters.

- After that we need a few simple experiments to shed light generally on whether goal-referenced treatment (both drugs and volitional mental input are goal-referenced) and IFT (CS treatment through prayer) support each other or cancel each other out.

I cannot tell you what the results will be as few of these tests have been tried and there are many questions involved. I do know we need general tests before going on to other more advanced tests that answer specific questions concerning the care and treatment of sick patients.

Broad general tests are not hard to design. Some of you may remember the “Listerine” test that I mentioned in the first issue of *The CS Standard*. Basically you place harmful bacteria found in people’s mouths in Petri dishes and then add a pre-measured disk (which you buy from a biological company) impregnated with Listerine in some dishes and leave the other Petri dishes as a control. You can then see how the mouthwash inhibits the growth of the harmful bacteria.

IFT prayer can match this – in other words prayer also inhibits the growth of the bacteria. The Petri dishes that are prayed for react comparably to the Petri dishes with the mouthwash disk in them while the control dishes show a rapid bacterial ate not seen in the treated (by prayer or by Listerine) dishes.

Here’s the catch. If the CS practitioner is given some Petri dishes to pray for that have disks and some that don’t – and if she is not told this and she prays for them together (so they are getting exactly the same prayer) – what happens? What I have found is that the prayed for dishes without disks continue to match the un-prayed for dishes with the disks – they continue to inhibit the growth of bacteria deemed harmful . **But the prayed-for dishes with disks do not effectively inhibit bacterial growth.**

Neither the Listerine or the prayer seems to have much effect in this experiment when both are used in the same Petri dish.

Why? Are they cancelling each other out? Are they neutralizing other? What the heck is going on? If they both get a good effect when used separately shouldn't the physical agent and prayer , when used together, get double the effect?

You could perhaps blame it on mental conflicts within the practitioner's mind except that in the initial tests where I tried this she didn't know that some of the dishes she was praying for had Listerine disks in them.

And anyway, even CSers don't really see mouthwash as a drug so they don't have a conflicted feeling when using it. I'm enough of a hypocrite that even though I've tried this test I don't pray for my mouth. I buy mouthwash. It's easier. It doesn't seem like a conflict even though it might be.

We haven't done nearly enough of these tests to show a consistent pattern or to see if this is significant. To do that it would be better to use an actual medication, not a mouthwash, and do this under actual laboratory conditions and not as a home test. This is exactly what I am proposing.

In Christian Science theory we do not believe that the bacteria really does harm – we see the harm as being mental in origin and the bacteria as merely a manifestation of collective thought. In the same way we do not see the Listerine as being helpful – we see it as a medium for thought. In other words we see both the harm and the benefit as mentally induced, not needing physical agents although those agents become the medium which thought expresses itself because it is self-deceived (defended) and cannot see itself directly.

This means that we need to look deeply into test design. We cannot assume too much from any one test.

Anyone can try this test. It can be bought from the Carolina Biological Company on the web and is called the mouthwash evaluation kit.

But any real lab could come up with much better tests and if we had an IFT Testing Center we would need to come up with better tests. The principle would be the same. Such tests have not yet been designed – that needs to be done over the next three years –but the methodology is available.

This morning I talked to a friend of mine in Florida who works on a dairy farm. A salesman selling a vitamin/medicine mix to add to calf formula showed up with Petri dishes to show how his product attaches itself to E. coli helping it pass out of the calves' system before it causes Scours, a disease marked by diarrhea that often kills calves. I was not clear exactly on what happened in the dishes except when the product was added the stuff in the Petri dish turned white and apparently the salesman could explain what it meant effectively to the farm manager because he ordered some.

I wish we had some test like that where we could carry around a couple of Petri dishes and show people how prayer research works! Maybe someday we will.

Theoretically you could do the same kind of test with a product like this that I did with the Listerine test. I don't know if it would work though because I don't know whether IFT prayer would heal (prevent bloody Scours) by causing the E. coli to pass out of the calves' system or whether it would heal with the E. coli still in place. In other words prayer might heal calves without the stuff in the Petri dish turning white.

I do know that my young practitioners, some as young as 9, have healed calves of Scours when prayed for one on one.

The principle is valid though. You do not have to try this on an actual animal or person – it can be done in the laboratory. Basically you just need damaged cells, harmful bacteria, a virus, or some other “disease in a test tube” that can be treated with chemicals or drugs while in the test tube. You can then have practitioners pray for some organisms with the medicine and some without, and no one needs to know but the technician which is which.

Researchers need to beware however. The early Christians were often thrown in jail or worse for their healing work. Early Christian Scientists were also thrown in jail because when they healed someone they were told that they were practicing medicine without a license and when they lost a case they were charged with manslaughter. Christian Science healing was not legal in some states until the 1930's and it may be on the way, if used without material medicine, to becoming illegal again.

If through prayer you were to unwittingly or publicly nullify the effect of a drug that someone spent millions of dollars developing, or even nullifying a popular brand name mouthwash for demonstration purposes, you could run into lawsuits.

I've already run into problems in Iowa where, when a farmer turned to CS treatment instead of to pesticides and had pretty good results, the government assumed he had

used pesticides without applying for an (expensive!) environmental permit. Legal problems evolved. Telling the judge that we prayed for bugs did not strike him as credible.

The kind of CS healing that was done in the early days of CS has never been done in an age of mass media. Our society, including medicine, has become extremely litigious. As CS healing is defined and separated from other types of healing systems it is going to have to go through a period of transition because there are few precedents and prayer is always an emotional subject in our society. Since our prayer providers do not define God as a Person, but as a sort of benevolent intelligent Zero Point Field type force, emotions are bound to run very high.

A consciousness-based medicine is not going to come about easily. We must be modest and less adversarial than Elijah whose famous prayer experiment called down fire on the altar to the God of Israel even after he doused it with twelve barrels of water and even though the prophets of the other gods could not create fire on their dry altars.

We should not be afraid of those 12 barrels of water or cry “unfair” if we have to meet a higher standard than other methods of healing, but we should also remember that we are well past the Old Testament stage, the New Testament stage, and even the early stages of Christian Science . We are now in a new and successive stage of spiritual healing. Mrs. Eddy predicted this. Others may feel defensive, but we are not adversarial and we are not here to hurt but to help.

Spindrift has come about because of divine Love’s compassion and mercy. It is pure love. We are not selling it. We are not trying to convert people. We are simply exploring the effectiveness of spiritual healing to help, heal, comfort, and bless humanity. We are not forcing anybody to give up their physical medicine. We are creating options, and clarifying how spiritual healing works.

Once general tests are done very specific tests can be designed to explore specific questions related to the care and treatment of sick people. There are ethical problems when working directly with people when it comes to Christian Science and these questions can be explored as we go. Today technology is good enough that we can work largely in the lab, and when we do field trials we can begin with plants and animals in the agricultural sector.

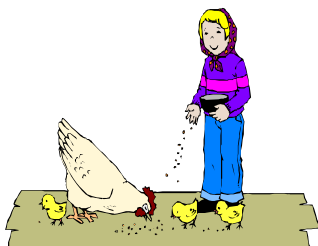
When it comes to surgery we do not need to work directly with a patient who is having surgery to do tests. Bio-engineering is a form of surgery – it is the physical genetic manipulation of an organism. Prayer sometimes causes spontaneous bio-engineering

without the physical manipulation. In other words it's a non-dramatic form of mental surgery.

Volitional healing is healing without respect to the norms of the organism, CS healing is healing measured in relation to the norms (optimum state) of the organism, and truly advanced CS healing changes the norms of the organism (see page 125 in *Science and Health*) In other words it creates a better organism.

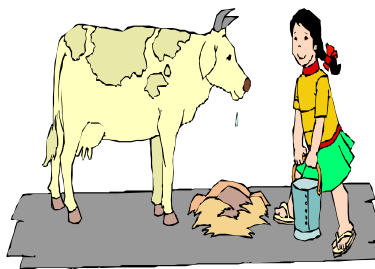
Molecular breeding “sex in a test tube”, working with life forms that have very short life spans (so “evolution” can be seen easily) makes it possible today to test how prayer affects the norms of an organism in the laboratory and whether it supports or retards physical manipulation (surgery) beginning with bio-engineering.

The primary purpose of the original SILO project was to define, develop and perpetuate the skills needed to be a Christian Science laboratory prayer provider, that is a person who prays for laboratory organisms in research projects and is able to get a CS measurable effect. Progress in Christian Science depends on demonstrating not only that Christian Science heals but also how it heals and this means laboratory tests. Progress in Spindrift nursing (CS nursing taken “to the Gentiles”) also depends on laboratory studies.



In my expanded practice I will be “going unto the Gentiles” and mentoring young healers, some of whom I worked with in the children’s programs I that I did prior to SILO. Most of these children, now young adults, did not grow up in the Christian Science tradition though they practice the basics of its healing system.

Working with children in healing and caring for animals, livestock and plants, or as we called it in our programs “care and prayer” is very rewarding. Those early Spindrift nursing children’s programs are now paying off with a new crop of young healers known affectionately as “the cow practitioners” although very little of their healing work these days is confined to cows.



I am asking the Christian Science field (its worldwide members and the Diaspora) to support laboratory testing of the Christian Science healing system. The fact that the methodology now exists to begin proving or disproving Mrs. Eddy's basic theory, and the fact that the Church refuses to do so, is an unethical stand according to Mary Baker Eddy's own statements for she said of Christian Science, "Proof is essential to a due estimate of this subject."

It is also an un-humanitarian and unkind stand because it prevents so many people from having access to a type of healing which, if proven or at least explored and identified, could be an enormous medical advance.

Christian Science is not against medicine. It is an advance in medicine. Can we not pray for an advance in medicine that will meet the need of people in better ways than the system we now have? And can we not improve as well as prove our application of CS in healing the sick?

This type of healing was first developed by Mary Baker Eddy and, as she predicted, it is now moving outside of the "temple at Jerusalem" much as Paul moved the Christian movement outside of the Jewish faith. The Spindrift work embodies this Pauline work.

Today much disease is mentally formed from causes not known before in human history. Much more disease comes from collective thought than individual thought and this is a major sea shift. The media, medical research, and other systems of collective thought are like vast mental interstate systems where cow paths once stood. No wonder the average Christian Science practitioner, clinging to his buggy like an Amish farmer, has trouble navigating these new super highways, has trouble bringing forth anything but a faith healing that clears some symptoms but does not touch the deep things of God.

Baptism of Holy Ghost

Awareness, like goodness, does not come without a struggle. I am talking here of several things; the awareness of God's presence for one, which Eddy calls "the bread of heaven" that we should ask for daily. Also the awareness of the mental and spiritual dimension of the world around us, the kind of awareness that allowed Eddy to do effective preventive work, the kind of awareness that made it easy for her to see the fear of a disease in a patient's thought before it manifested itself physically.

This kind of awareness includes the vision, the excitement, the bliss and enthusiasm that many of the early Christians apparently felt. Although it does take a struggle to achieve it it is well worth it. Spiritual healing is one of the most useful and exciting vocations on earth.

It is necessary for a revival of healing to occur but this revival must include healing in the science room as well as in the sick room, healing that addresses collective thought systems and shows how healing occurs, not just that it does.

Religions are verified in individual lives. Churches are an appropriate context for such individual development. The Christian Science church was designed to be a cradle or "nest" of spirituality, not a powerful or hierarchal human institution.

Science is verified collectively. The Spindrift work is a watershed pioneering effort because it moves Eddy's discoveries from individual bodies of knowledge formed subjectively by believers to the potential of a collective body of knowledge accessible to anyone of any background.

"Potential" is the operative word. We are still at a very primitive stage in this work. I dubbed my program "SILO" because I understand that this work is long term and that it is necessary to articulate and bring these ideas "into the silo" for future generations.

There are consequences to mistakes. Years of bitterness for the Church and for the world are ahead of us in this century but so what? It's part of the process and we can move through these years with strength and grace. We do not need to be afraid of the process of Christian Science healing. You cannot heal or reform without change, and

change is resisted. It's our job to dissolve resistance through love, not to continually try to avoid it.

The early Christians, including Paul, suffered hardships that modern Christian Scientists have not yet endured. The author of the book of Hebrews told his followers that part of the reason they did not understand his words was that, "In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of the spilling of your blood." (Hebrews 12, NIV)

The following quotes are all from the New International Version of the Bible. Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 4:

"I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court, indeed I do not judge myself...It is the Lord that judges me...We are fools for Christ...We are dishonored, to this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless, we work hard with our own hands, when we are cursed we bless, when we are persecuted we endure it, when we are slandered we answer kindly, up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world. I am not writing this to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. "

Again in Hebrews it is written:

"My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline and do not lose heart when He rebukes you because the Lord disciplines those he loves...Endure hardship as discipline. God is treating you as sons...Moreover we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live?"

In James 1 we read:

"Consider it pure joy my brothers whenever you face trials of many kinds because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance."

And In I Peter 4 we read:

"Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering as though something strange were happening to you...It is commendable if you suffer unjustly because of your remembrance of God...If you suffer as a Christian do not be ashamed but praise God that you bear that name for it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God."

Sometimes it can be said of Christian Scientists, as the angel said unto one of the churches in the book of Revelation, "Thou has forgotten thy first love". It's time to come back home to the "pure and undefiled religion" spoken of in the book of James and experience the joy of that first love once again. Although we should not be surprised when, as spiritual warriors, we encounter battles, and though we should not see this as failure but as progress, we can also expect the joy and the incredible vision that comes with such warfare.

After the resurrection Jesus found his disciples behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jews. He did not force them at that point, or even suggest to them, that they go to the temple which was such a place of fear to them. God never asks us to do that. Instead the Bible says that Jesus breathed on them and gave them the baptism of the Holy Ghost, or in modern terms, the Holy Spirit.

Mrs. Eddy calls Christian Science the Comforter or Holy Ghost. In our interpretation of things Jesus baptized his disciples not with water but with the baptism of Christian Science and this is the baptism that we too honor. At the dedication of the Mother Church these words of Mrs. Eddy were read:

"Divine presence, Breathe Thou thy blessing on every heart in this house. Speak out O Soul! This is the newborn of Spirit, this is His redeemed; this, His beloved."
(Pulpit and Press p. 10)

We are all the newborn of Spirit, the redeemed, the beloved.

After the disciples received the baptism of the Holy Spirit they went into the temple voluntarily. In fact they couldn't stay away. Yes, they were thrown in prison but what do we find them doing there? Singing! They were happy. They became freed in various ways. They kept going.

Sure Paul suffered physical hardships, but he must have "demonstrated" over them because he was obviously hale and hearty enough to travel long distances, often by foot, and to enthusiastically work what sounds to me like a grueling schedule. He was very joyful. You might say he had a good attitude but it was more than that. Mrs. Eddy called him "a great and immortal man under difficulties" and that immortal part came from his vision of what the life of Jesus had meant, a vision which was very large.

CS healing means joy despite the struggles. The struggles need to be confronted but they do not last. We should all expect, as we are healed, to receive the baptism of Christian Science. Sometimes this happens suddenly and becomes an "earnest of the

Spirit” in Paul’s words, in other words we have an experience that seems to us like a down payment on genuine CS in our lives.

At other times the process is gradual. Mrs. Eddy describes a three year period in her life that was outwardly difficult (lack of funds, having to move many times, getting a divorce) as “sweet, calm, and buoyant with hope” because that is what we do experience when we have vision. She speaks of the gradual nature of that “baptism” or immersion in Spirit on p. 109 of the textbook.

“The search was sweet, calm, and buoyant with hope, not selfish nor depressing...The revelation of Truth in the understanding came to me gradually and apparently through divine power.”

The difference between a faith healing and a CS healing is that in CS you not only get a disappearance of symptoms, you get the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the vision, the joy, the immersion. It might be gradual or it might be sudden but we should expect nothing less. Mrs. Eddy taught (*Course in Divinity* p.190):

“The difference between Science and faith-healing; one makes the healed *know God*; the other simply heals the physical”

We have a right to both, to the disappearance of symptoms and the joy or vision that comes with it. Mortal mind tries to separate the two and give us only one or the other. It is CS to have both.

The advancement of the world into a new era where consciousness instead of matter is primary and where spiritual healing is widely practiced is worthy of the same commitment from modern Christians and Christian Scientists as the commitment that was made by the early Christians. The same vision and excitement felt by those early Christians is also possible today and comes with such commitment. Mrs. Eddy makes it clear that we learn from our “joys and triumphs” as well as our hardships. (See S&H p. 41)

The Spindrift work is aimed at that silent minority that I have become aware of in my prayers and my practice, a very under-served population longing to be nurtured, longing for the genuine unity of “Christian” and “Science.” Those people are out there, and they deserve to be encouraged. I am not trying to add to their ranks, or change their religion or lack thereof. But I have seen and felt the weariness of some people who long for a loving Christianity and an objective science, and a coming together of the two great streams by which we understand truth.

Christian Scientists have this idea that “success” in Christian Science means a return of the church to its 19th century prosperity, rather than a yielding of their current sense of church to a more spiritual and larger understanding. In the same way the Jews believed that the Messiah would be a political figure and that he would kick the Romans out of Israel. Both are narrow views and require “agonizing reappraisal.”

At Spindrift we are helping people through that reappraisal process by affirming the larger picture.

Jesus and his disciple Peter interacted on this subject as described in these lovely passages by author F. B. Meyer.

(From the book *Peter* by F. B. Meyer, Christian Literature Crusade, PA. 1978 (American edition, original written earlier.)

“After the meal [where Jesus fed them in the wilderness] the crowd seems to have been swept by a sudden impulse to make Jesus their leader in a determined revolt against their Roman oppressor. They had been waiting for this hour...But he would have none of it. He had already fought this question out in the wilderness when the devil offered him the kingdoms of this world...Retiring to the mountain solitude he resolved that on the following day he would adopt a style of speech that would effectively shatter any further proposal of a worldly kingdom. (pp.45-46)

“A crisis was upon him...He must clearly undeceive them...In fellowship with His Father he gathered strength to disabuse his followers of their earth-bound views...He knew quite well how much it would cost but there was no alternative. The following morning, on the farther side, witnessed a renewal of the excitement of the preceding evening, so our Lord withdrew into the comparative seclusion of the synagogue, and delivered that marvelous discourse of John vi., which, were it not for the further disclosures of Calvary, would be the high-water mark of the New Testament. And it changed the whole tenor of his career.

We are conscious of the added interest which characterizes the report of a speech, when successive parentheses record its reception by the audience. So in the Evangelist’s narrative we can detect the effect which our Lord’s deeply spiritual words had on the crowded audience. In verse 41 they murmured at him. In verse 52 they strove among themselves. In verse 60 many, even his disciples, confessed aloud that his sayings were hard and difficult to be borne. In verse 66 many of those who had vowed their allegiance renounced him and quietly

withdrew. "They walked no more with him."...Finally the synagogue was entirely emptied except for the little group of aghast Apostles who had been the sorrowful witnesses of the shattering of the Master's popularity and of the fabric of their private ambitions. It was then that he looked round them and asked the pathetic question, "Will ye also go away?" which drew from Peter the unhesitating reply, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life and we have believed and know that thou art the holy one of God."

To whom shall we go? The question presses on us, as on Peter. He knew something of the ritualism of the Pharisee..and the crass materialism of the Romans. ...But what help or comfort did these yield to a soul weary to the point of exhaustion?...Since he had awoke to the realities of the spiritual world, all former sources of inspiration and instruction had failed to satisfy. He was conscious of an inward cry like that of the Psalmist, "My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God."...To whom shall we go when our souls have suddenly awakened to the majesty of the eternal Presence, which is hidden by the glare of pleasure but emerges in hours of loneliness, change, sorrow and loss?...To whom shall we go in the loneliness of age, in the pains of mortal sickness, in the day of account?...Peter had every warrant for his inquiry.. It expresses the agonized cry of the human, when the divine and eternal have broken in upon its insensate stupor." (pp.49-52)

Much has been accurately written in the last 40 years about the need for the Spindrift tests from the scientific and medical side, about what they might mean in those arenas, and this is important. From the purely Christian side it is to nurture those who have experienced agonized cries in the dark that the laboratory healing work of Spindrift keeps going even when the churches "walk not with us."

There are those who long for an intelligent spirituality that heals the heart as well as the body, those who are in spiritual pain, those who love science and Christ too, those whose heart and soul cries out for a divine Love that does not play favorites and is not superstitious or supernatural.

For such as these to whom the churches have lately given so little to keep them going I hope that the laboratory healing work that Spindrift makes possible will bring you hope and rest.

