
THE CHAMOIS STRAINER

Jesus said "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and *when* thou hast shut thy door, pray . . ." When the door is closed, not before it is closed, not while it remains open, but after the door is closed, then and then only is the time to pray.

Most of us have been trying to pray with the door open, generally wide open, with consciousness largely filled with error or evil. This prayer is inefficacious, for the door must be closed. Curiously enough when this door is closed to evil, it is open to Truth, Spirit. Really it is an open door.

In the early days of motoring, the car owner was considered fair game for the cunning garage man. Among other schemes he would dilute the gasoline with water. One would drive up to the gas station, have his tank filled, drive away, and in a short period of time, his carburetor would begin to sputter, the engine would falter, come to a stop, and the car would be at a standstill. So the car owner had a chamois strainer placed over the intake to the tank, and when the gasoline was poured into it, the pure gasoline filtered through the chamois strainer into the tank, while the water was rejected. From this pure gas came the power to drive the engine.

Similarly we find the devil or the human mind is trying at all times to swindle us. It would dilute the Spirit. It tries to fill consciousness or the "think-tank" with evil suggestions, with the human mind, rather than the pure Spirit.

When Jesus said, "enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door", he doubtless made his point perfectly clear, but it was lost to the world until Mrs. Eddy received her revelation from God, and explained it. She says:—"The closet typifies the sanctuary of Spirit, the door of which shuts out sinful sense but lets in Truth, Life, and Love. Closed to error, it is open to Truth, and *vice versa* . . . To enter into the heart of prayer, the door of the erring senses must be closed. Lips must be mute and materialism silent, that man may have audience with Spirit, the divine Principle, Love, which

destroys all error" (S & H 15). In other words the closet is consciousness, and the door is the intake thereto, whence enters Truth or error, good or evil, Spirit or matter. When this door is closed to error it is open to Truth, closed to matter it is open to Spirit, closed to evil it is open to good. Like the chamois strainer which rejected the water or other impurities and let in the pure gasoline.

We must "stand porter at the door of thought" (S & H 392) and refuse to admit error or evil into consciousness, while good, God or Spirit not only passes the porter but is welcomed in. Jesus said this in his inimitable way:—"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber—the human mind or evil which cannot pass the porter at the door, and if it gets in it must sneak in some other way—through a hole punched in the strainer—for it cannot go through the strainer—he goes on:—but He (the Christ or divine Mind or Spirit) that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep—the only thing that can go through the strainer is pure Spirit—To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out; and when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

It is well to recollect that all error operates the same way. No matter what may be the form of error or evil, its approach is never but this one way. Which is why in Deuteronomy 28 we find this statement:—"The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way and flee before thee seven ways". For many years the world failed to understand what was meant when it said "they shall come up against thee one way" for surely it seemed as though evil came up against us in thousands of ways. Science and Health on page 252 says "A knowledge of error and of its operations must precede that understanding of Truth which destroys error". Surely if this be true, we should know this one way by which error operates in order to be freed from evil. We are generally aware of evil after it has us in its toils; but few are aware

just how the evil approaches us. Once however this is perceived, it is easy to handle evil, and the way to do so is obvious. It is not then lack of understanding, but unwillingness, which prevents one from successfully coping with evil suggestions. "The Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Error operates invariably as suggestion. Never any other way. If you refuse to accept the suggestions of evil, evil dies. Suppose error says, "Get drunk", or mayhap more subtly "Let us have a drink, it will brace us up, and cool us off." These are suggestions. If you refuse to take either of them in, those evil suggestions die then and there, so far as you are concerned. If you accept the suggestion or take it in, you may get drunk, but not otherwise. Every other kind of evil operates the same way, as suggestion. It matters not in the least what the evil may be. If you refuse to accept the suggestion of evil, whatever it may be, whether sin, disease, death, poverty, or other trouble, that evil dies, or falls by its own weight. Most of us not only open the door and let in the suggestions, but try to pray with the door wide open and consciousness generously filled with them. How often have we all tried to pray to God with our consciousness fairly reeking with error, filled to the limit with the knowledge of evil doing whatever it may have been, vainly expecting or anyway hoping for relief? when the obvious thing to do was to close the door against the evil presenting itself through suggestions, whereupon the Spirit which automatically entered, would make intercession for us, as Paul says.

Jesus was a past master in standing at the door of thought to prevent the inflow of evil suggestions. Finally he came to the place where he could say "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me." In other words he refused to let in evil suggestions, whereupon so far as he was concerned, evil died. To close the door or intake into consciousness, to use this chamois strainer, as it were, and so refuse to let evil suggestions enter, is our work. Whereupon evil will die to whoever does this. Then will it be that "the Kingdoms of this world are become the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever and ever."

Evil cannot operate without a body or organs. In fact evil is

nobody, no-body; nothing, no-thing. It has no body to act with, no ears to hear with, no eyes to see with, no legs to walk with, no mouth to speak with, etc. You have the privilege to refuse it a body, or to furnish it with one. "Evil comes to you for life; and you give it all the life it has," says the Word of God revealed through Mrs. Eddy. Evil cannot live without a body. If you do not furnish this body to evil, do not give it eyes, ears, feet, mouth, etc. whereby it may act, then evil simply dies, disappears. Evil is nothing at all. No body. It therefore cannot supply itself with a body, or organs of a body to act with. Nothing cannot produce something; no-body cannot produce a body. If however you let in the evil suggestions, if you supply ears to hear evil, eyes to see evil, a body to act evil, then you are in trouble. Refuse a body however to evil, then to you evil or error dies, and you find yourself well.

Why is this? Because God or Spirit has to have a body to live or express Himself or Itself. Everything has to be expressed, and if it is not expressed, it has no existence. You would be an odd sort if you had no body, were not expressed, would you not? You wouldn't know that you existed, nor would anyone else know it, nor in fact would you be existent. If you were not expressed, then you simply wouldn't be. Neither would God, Spirit, be, unless He were expressed. Moreover if you refuse to express evil, refuse it a body, then the body which God made will appear. Why so? Because God, Spirit, Mind, is and always has been in expression, and this expression or body or creation is no longer materially camouflaged, and error, evil, disease, or whatever it may be is no longer superimposed upon God's creation. Jesus saw the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appeared to mortals. Sinning mortal man appeared to the other fellow, because the other's consciousness was filled with evil suggestions, while Jesus' door of consciousness was barred securely against such, and open to Truth, or Spirit; whereupon this Spirit, or the Father within, functioning for Jesus, enabled him to see the perfect man, or perfect creation, in spite of the camouflage. Spirit, God "is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look upon iniquity". The other had provided a body for evil, and so he gave it all the life it had, and to him it appeared to live. This hid from him or camouflaged the real man, who was there all the while, but unseen to him who beheld

the evil man or sick man. Not so however to Jesus, whose consciousness was filled with Spirit only, which revealed realities all about him.

Jesus said "The son of man cometh, (or the real man will appear) at an hour, when ye think not." Not when ye think, but when ye think not. For when you still the human mind, "silence the material senses" (S & H 15), or refuse to think, then does this Christ-Mind arise in you, or the Spirit rests upon you; whereupon does this Christ-Mind or Father within, or the Spirit, which never believes but knows, beholds the perfect man, or "the son of man cometh".

It must be clear that when you yourself think, you must use the human mind, for it is the only thing you have at your disposal to think with; yet this human mind is nothing, or evil, coming to you to give it life; and if you yourself commence to think, you then provide a body (brains) for evil to function with, and which is the very thing you ought not to do. This is why Jesus said "Take NO thought", and why Mrs. Eddy said to "silence the material senses". The Spirit or Christ-Mind is not for your use, you do not direct it, but when you have this Mind in you which was also in Christ-Jesus, then this Christ-Mind directs you. Solomon said "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (Do not rely on your own thinking which is done with the human mind) In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." The Christ said: "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will (not to follow the dictates of the human mind) but the will of Him that sent me." Your thinking with the human mind is nought but a lot of suggestions, fruits of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil", or of right thinking and wrong thinking, and this tree must be cut down root and branch. This is done when and as you still the human mind, or stop your own thinking, whereupon does this Christ-Mind arise in you or the Spirit rests upon you, and guides you into harmony.

Because God is something,—not nothing like error,—God, Spirit, makes His own body, His creation, or expresses Himself. If evil is expressed you or another must express it, or furnish it a body, for evil cannot express itself. Therefore as previously stated

when you refuse to express it, evil dies or disappears to you. God however expresses Himself, therefore if you refuse to let in suggestions of evil, there will appear to you God's man, and which was there all the while, and when anyone turns to you or enters your consciousness, that one will see God's man also.

Let us go back to the car again. The gas tank is now filled with pure gasoline, and this is the power which drives the engine and the car. Similarly your "think-tank" or consciousness is filled with pure Spirit; and this is the power which makes things go, you and everything in your consciousness. "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit", saith the Lord". "It is the Spirit that quickeneth (does things) the flesh profiteth nothing (the fleshly body or fleshly mind does nothing); the words I speak unto you they are Spirit and they are Life".

In the tank is pure gas, all water or other impurities have been excluded, and now the gas acts. It explodes and generates the power which is delivered to the engine. It cannot generate steam, for there is no longer any water in the tank. Previously when water was there, it may have generated steam power, but being a gas engine steam power was of no use. Now however the gas according to law explodes and delivers the power.

Likewise in your consciousness there is now nought but the pure Spirit. No evil is there. This Spirit, functioning under law, acts, explodes, or blesses all, delivers this power of God, Spirit, and so everything goes along harmoniously. It cannot generate evil power, for there is no evil in consciousness, and if it did so the body would not act properly with evil power any more than a gas engine with steam power. It however operates perfectly under the power of God, which the Spirit delivers and all is well.