

“DEFINITIONS”—STUDY AIDS

The following partial explanations of symbolic terms used by Mrs. Eddy may prove helpful:

Ascending: As we ascend we are laying off mortality, separating ourselves from materiality, gaining a little each day in the right direction. Jesus' mission was an ascending mission. His ascending “manhood” steps involved labor, cross-bearing, forsaking a matter point of view, denials, persecution for righteousness' sake, crucifixion—the whole struggle to achieve oneness with God.

In his *second* coming the “ascending” steps are *woman's manhood* steps which Mary Baker Eddy took in fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy (John 14:26) that the Comforter, Divine Science, would “bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.” Since the “Bride,” the teaching of Mary Baker Eddy, was the compound of the masculine and feminine nature of God, she had to lay her own foundations (manhood). When the city foursquare came down from heaven, as Bride, she brought her foundations (her manhood—intelligence, logic, divine reasoning) with her. Her ascending manhood steps had been the gradual relinquishing of all materiality in accordance with Science and Health p. 353:18-19.

Branch: A symbol for the Bride, or for “Principle and its idea is one.” Branch-idea stands for that which is self-existent and self-expressed. The Branch or Branch Church symbolizes man as God's idea—God and man as one, indivisible. The five extra stars on woman's crown represent this concept.

The Branch is a symbol for the Bride-consciousness where every thought starts from God, descendingly, and conceives man in the idea of God.

The Branch is also called “the Lamb's wife,” which Mrs. Eddy interprets as presenting the unity of male and female, as two individual natures in one consciousness. This means each one of us must include both the masculine teaching of Jesus and the masculine-feminine teaching of Science and Health; in no other way can the law of Love be fulfilled. The Branch symbolizes the fact that Science must encompass Christianity (manhood) in fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophecy (31:22), “A woman shall compass a man.”

The BRANCH represents all the God-crowned woman stands for.

Bride: “Purity and innocence, conceiving man in the idea of God . . .” (582:14). Bride is a symbol for Principle when it includes the other six synonymous terms (see My. 225:30).

Bride, the Lamb's wife, presents the unity of male and female as two individual natures in one. (577:4). Bride symbolizes our compound spiritual individuality in which there is no impediment to eternal bliss. (ibid)

Bride is equated with “the Lord God Almighty” (576:8-11).

The Bride-consciousness is Science understood spiritually; it is our spiritual divinely scientific consciousness. (See definition of *Branch*.)

The Bride as the Branch-idea, as “the man whose name is the BRANCH,” alone conceives, for Mrs. Eddy defines “Bride” as conceiving [generic] man in the idea of God (582:14). Since Bride as the heavenly God-crowned woman is “the spiritual idea of God” (561:22), she conceives (expands or unfolds) within her own consciousness and thus “includes the forever universe” (515:16).

The Bride is the written Word. “The written Word was necessary for the *generic* Bride who represents Love which Mrs. Eddy calls ‘ . . . the light and glory of divine Science’ (575:9). Divine Science so illumines the earth with its presence as to dissipate the symbols of sense” (Minnie Mallabar, *A Student’s Introduction to Christ and Christmas*, p. 20).

Bridegroom: “Spiritual understanding; the pure consciousness that God, the divine Principle, creates man as His own spiritual idea and that God is the only creative power” (582:17).

Jesus called himself the “bridegroom” (Matt. 9:15). There are twenty-four references to bridegroom in the Bible.

Bridegroom refers to the ascending thought, to that which is responsible for separating ourselves from the mortal viewpoint, and laying down the mortal in preparation for our wedding with God. Mrs. Eddy’s wilderness-woman phase was her manhood or *bridegroom* aspect. Under the regime of the bridegroom all things material continue to disappear until perfection appears and reality is reached. Compare “*ascending*” mission of Jesus.

Descending: Refers to the Bride state which starts every thought from God. We can only *descend* when the structure of our consciousness is identical with the structure of God’s consciousness. When we descend we experience “the Word and the wedding of that Word to all human thought and action” (My. 153:28). The descent requires a spiritual understanding of Mary Baker Eddy’s seven synonymous terms for God and how they operate on the four levels of spiritual consciousness.

Extension: The Extension (to The Mother Church) symbolized the end of human motherhood, and the realization that man is the reflection of the incorporeal, divine, supreme, infinite Mind, Spirit, Soul, Principle, Life, Truth, and Love.

The Extension represents catching a glimpse of the oneness of manhood and womanhood as two individual natures in one compounded spiritual individuality, where there is no impediment to eternal bliss.

The Extension stands for the crown of Christian endeavor (see

583:14-19). It is that which is always unfolding the highway of hope, faith, understanding.

God-crowned Woman (Rev. 12:1) signifies the complete and ever-present perfection of man which was revealed to Mary Baker Eddy.

Lamb: “The spiritual idea of Love; self-immolation; innocence and purity; sacrifice” (590:9). The Lamb of God is that which has totally sacrificed the mortal sense of life. The Lamb stands for the purified human consciousness.

Mrs. Eddy explained that the “Lamb *slain* from the foundation of the world” refers to the sex act, or “the spiritual sense of Love that is slain from the foundation of a material sense of sexuality” (DCC. 101). The Lamb *slain* is the Pandora box from which stem all of humanity’s ills.

Man Child: The man child is actually understanding. It is TRUTH. It is sometimes called divine Science. Mrs. Eddy’s mental and spiritual conception of Jesus—of what Jesus was as God knows Jesus—is called the “man child.” It is also called the Lamb of God, Lamb of Love, Bridegroom, purified human consciousness. In the system of Science it is the calculus of Spirit and Truth.

The Tree of the knowledge of good and evil has only been Adam’s labored human demonstration of Eve’s higher and higher human conceptions until woman, as the Bride, divine Motherhood (see 582:14-16 and 592:16-17; Rev. chapters 21 and 22) brought forth *THE* man child—the Tree of Life, the generic form of human good, instead of *A* man child, human wilderness-Motherhood conception (Rev. 12th chapter). The former was Bride’s conception “conceiving man [generic man, the whole of Jesus’ teaching] in the idea of God” (582:14). The Bride includes Truth, the man child.

Mortal Mind: is defined in the Glossary (591:25) as “nothing *claiming* to be something . . . ; mythology; error creating other errors; a suppositional material sense, alias the belief that sensation is in matter, which is sensationless; a *belief* that life, substance and intelligence are in and of matter; the opposite of Spirit and therefore the opposite of God or good; the belief that life has a beginning and therefore an end; the *belief* that man is the offspring of mortals; the belief that there can be more than one creator . . . ”

Mortal mind is all those false *beliefs* coming to the surface, all that ancient mythology, those universal and collective, conscious and subconscious beliefs that make up the mortal mentality. Jesus termed these beliefs the “liar,” and “a murderer from the beginning,” because believing in a flesh, blood, and bones creation always ends in death. It is “idolatry; the subjective states of error; material senses; that which neither exists in Science nor can be recognized by the spiritual sense; sin; sickness; death.”

Only Science can free us from the domination of mortal mind.

Time, Times, and Half A Time: (Rev. 12:14) *Time* refers to the establishment of the Branch-idea (the Bride concept; Mrs. Eddy established the Branch church-idea thirteen years before the institution of The Mother Church.) The Branch is a symbol for the Bride or Principle (God) and idea (man) one. (465:17)

Times (plural) was the part of the prophecy that was fulfilled in the Mother and man child phase of Mrs. Eddy's mission, the "wilderness-Mother" phase.

Half a time: Mrs. Eddy's "half a time" began with the twentieth century after her Motherhood in the Word and "church" had been fulfilled. She was then no longer involved in the affairs of the church in any way other than through her written and published rules (My. 359:8). In the twentieth century there was a short period of Leadership after which both Motherhood and Leadership yielded to the other "half a time"—to the descending Bride, her Word.

Wilderness Woman and Wilderness Mother are the same. They symbolize the *manhood* phase of Mrs. Eddy's mission, the *ascending* phase where the separation from all materiality takes place. Each one must go through this motherhood travail of separating himself from materiality, where we continually detach mortal thought from all material conceptions—from the belief of a selfhood apart from God. Much of what was set forth in Mrs. Eddy's 432 editions of the textbook was devoted to her manhood phase of detaching mortal thought from all material conceptions even though hers was a descending mission.

While the God-crowned woman sees only flawless perfection, the *wilderness woman* had to uncover error and show it to be pure illusion. Mrs. Eddy could uncover error only because the structure of her consciousness was the same as the structure of God's consciousness. She looked out from immaculate being and started every thought from God.

Woman: The Bride-consciousness. Mrs. Eddy's marvelous revelation in the Key to the Scriptures was her only message as *Woman*. No one before Mrs. Eddy had even faintly discerned these glorious revelations. In this "Key," Genesis is again manhood and the Apocalypse is Womanhood. However, as Woman must encompass man, she compassed, in her founding, the teaching of the Bible. Woman corresponds to Life and to Love which encompass Truth. The manhood of Woman revealed itself in her wilderness-Mother role. Woman is a symbol for Science.