**Notes and research on: God gave man dominion**

“*Dominion* in Hebrew is *radah* which means to tread down (as a winepress, with the feet) to subjugate, subdue; to rule, cause to rule; have dominion, reign (Gen 1:26) to prevail against, to take possession of” (*Hebrew-Greek Key* 1659).

“*dominion*. This verbal root occurs in two senses. One is the root word for *tread* or *tread down* and is used in this sense only once. The second meaning is *to rule* and is used some twenty-two times in the OT, occurring in every section and type of context” (*TWOT* 833).

Ps 8:5 For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.

Ps 8:6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all *things* under his feet:

“Man, made in His likeness, possesses and reflects God’s dominion over all the earth” (*S&H* 516:19-21).

“Man is not made to till the soil. His birthright is dominion, not subjection. He is lord of the belief in earth and heaven,-- himself subordinate alone to his Maker. This is the Science of being” (*S&H* 517:31).

Dominion over the fish of the sea:

“In the perverted sense of creation or the unreal history of mortal man the sea since primitive time has stood as a type of evil, and ‘the fish of the sea’ may well be taken to represent the activities of mortal mind. Considered materially, both the sea and the fish are unreal counterfeits of God’s creation, all of whose ideas or activities are expressions of Mind” (Mace 9). (Mace, Nellie B. “The Sign of the Fish,” *The Christian Science Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 1, April 1917.)

“. . . water symbolizes the elements of Mind” (*S&H* 507:1-3).

“ . . . When this is read from the standpoint of material sense we think of God as an enlarged personality, and man in His image as a material personality, given dominion over all material creatures, -- fish, fowl, and beast; and in the darkness of this material concept man’s dominion degenerates into mere domination. He makes himself the ruler of the humbler creatures, using them merely for self-gratification, and then, as the law of righteousness is ever operative, his domination falls upon this rock and is ground to power. . . . Thus it follows that domination sown reaps its own reward, and behold the result: in place of dominion we see mankind dominated by every ill to which flesh is heir.

“A statement from Science and Health, however, changes the whole aspect of the case. Mrs. Eddy says (p. 123), ‘Divine Science . . . resolves *things* into *thoughts.’* With this in mind the verse from Genesis is seen in a new light. God is seen to be divine Mind, man an idea reflecting the qualities of Mind, and his dominion is exercised over the various phases of thought. Now ‘the fish of the sea’ may be said to typify the thoughts that float in the ocean of consciousness, coming and going apparently without effort. In grace and beauty they move in the under-current of human consciousness. Intuitions and aspirations may first be seen as the fish moving gently . . . the silent and unspeakable ideas of love, reflecting the infinite intelligence of Mind” (Gilbreath 516-517). (Gilbreath, Etta M. “Dominion,” *The Christian Science Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 9, December 1916.)

Dominion over the *fowl of the air:*

“The fowls, which fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven, correspond to aspirations soaring beyond and above corporeality to the understanding of the incorporeal   
and divine Principle, Love” (*S&H* 511:28).

Dominion over the *cattle*:

The mortal view of the cattle might be lumbering thoughts, thoughts that lie down in consciousness; and we ruminate over and over them like a cow chewing its cud. We push these mortal thoughts down, and they seem to come up again and again until we finally realize our dominion over them.

“In the figurative transmission from the divine thought to the human, diligence, promptness, and perseverance are likened to ‘the cattle upon a thousand   
hills.’ They carry the baggage of stern resolve, and keep pace with highest purpose” (*S&H* 514:14-18).

“Dominion over the cattle gives us a chance to prove that divine Love is manifested here and now in practical ways. . . . In diligence we find activity and energy that have no thought of selfish ease. In promptness we are considerate of others and put aside thoughts of selfish convenience. In perseverance we yield to no suggestion of apathy or discouragement, carrying our ‘baggage’ (the work committed to our care) to its safe destination. Here is proved at every step the scientific and demonstrable truth that the true concept of dominion begins and ends in the realm of infinite Mind. We thus learn that man has dominion over all his thoughts . . .” (Gilbreath 517-518). (Gilbreath, Etta M. “Dominion,” *The Christian Science Journal*, Vol. 34, No. 9, December 1916.)

*In Webster’s 1828 dictionary, the definition of dominion is, in part, “the power to direct, control, use . . . .” The Bible states that God gave man dominion over His entire spiritual creation. For the first time, I considered that dominion is much more than an inflated sense of self-confidence; it means that man is empowered by God to actively express God’s directing, controlling, and using of His creation.*

*After considering this definition for awhile, I began to wonder why the writer of Genesis felt it necessary to record that God gave man dominion over fish, birds, cattle, and creeping things. They sounded like pretty harmless creatures! Why didn’t He specify dominion over animals like grizzly bears and tigers? I turned to God in prayer and asked Him. And the answer wasn’t long in coming: “I gave man dominion over the deepest thoughts and the most ethereal ideas in My creation. And I also gave him dominion over the most mundane ideas. There is no concept that is too deep for man to understand, or beyond his reach, or too small to be considered. My Word is as natural to man as a mother’s milk is to a baby.”*

*Now my prayers always include the affirmation that man has the ability to understand God, and the affirmation that Christian Science is understandable and practical. Having dominion means that man is not subject to the claims of sickness, sin, and death, but the really good news is that we have the God-given power and authority to put Godlike qualities to work in our daily lives. It means that our holiest desires are not out of reach.*

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Domination is of human origin. Dominion is God-directed and inspired, and therefore is good in its intent and result. The quality of dominion may be said to be operative in two ways: first, the dominion that man has over evil, including sin and disease; secondly, the dominion that implies the embracing in consciousness of right ideas. In the first instance we may clearly see that the very unknowing of discord, of whatever nature or name, and the recognizing of the presence of perfect harmony constitute a power which is God-inspired, and against which so-called evil wars in vain. In the second instance the truth is discerned; then there follows the ejection of error from human consciousness; and this is spiritual dominion.

Man being the complete emanation of infinite Spirit, there is no quality or idea that is not embraced in his being. Error has no place in it, and cannot in reality be attached to any person or locality. The affirmation of Truth and the denial of error go hand in hand; and in Christian Science treatment this procedure operates to the glory of God.

Dominion signifies, among other things, the complete elimination of fear. Through the understanding and application of the truths of being, mortals are freed from the limiting fears that would bind them. Spiritual understanding coupled with faith is invincible; no phase of error can stand before it. Every false belief dispelled and replaced with a true idea constitutes a step higher in spiritual attainment; and every such step is taken in recognition of the present perfection of God's universe, in which man has dominion. ( Dominion, Herbert Bucher, May 2, 1931, CSS)