**THE "SECOND COMING"**

ALBERT F. GILMORE

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A PROBLEM which has commanded the closest examination of theologians and all students of the Bible from the first century to the present time, concerns the "second coming," as it is commonly termed. The belief usually held is that this coming pertains to the return of Christ Jesus to earth.

A wide divergence of opinion arises from the various interpretations of the Scriptural references relating to this subject. Was Jesus himself the Messiah, the personal Saviour, who had taught as none other had ever taught, and who had wrought wonders of healing as none other had ever wrought them, was he, the "Son of man," to return "in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory"? Probably the disciples and early apostles looked for the literal fulfillment of this prophetic statement by the Master, and, in fact, many have even to the present day believed that the personal Jesus was again to appear "with power and great glory." And those who have been imbued with this expectancy have had no satisfactory explanation for his nonappearance.

The difficulty has arisen from misinterpretation of Jesus' words, due to a confusion of thought regarding Jesus and Christ. This confusion Christian Science perfectly clears up. Jesus was human, born of a virgin, and partaking in some measure of the fleshly conditions which attach to the belief of material birth. Christ was his divine or spiritual nature, God's perfect idea, which Jesus so thoroughly understood, and with which he so completely identified himself that he became known as the Christ, or the Messiah, the Saviour of mankind from all its earthly burdens. Christ, Truth, the spiritual idea of God, was and is the Holy Ghost or Divine Comforter which Jesus promised should come. In fact, this spirit of Truth has ever been present, knocking at the door of human consciousness, waiting for admission. The situation is perfectly expressed in words recorded in the book of Revelation: "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Words could scarcely convey more clearly the fact of Christ's ever-presence.

The Christ, the full expression of the Godhead, has forever been available to the receptive heart. Two who were prepared to receive and entertain and witness to this most welcome of all visitors, two who could interpret this spiritual visitor to a needy world, were Jesus, the revelator and demonstrator of God's presence and the power of His Christ, and Mary Baker Eddy, who has given to the world the Science and art of that which Jesus first revealed and demonstrated. Mrs. Eddy has interpreted the significance of his words and works, and through Christian Science has supplemented and completed the revelation of the fullness of the Godhead. The revelation of the divine presence, therefore, is forever complete in this "second coming" of Christ. Truth in its infinity has been revealed, and the "second coming" of Christ is the advent of Christian Science.

As Jesus' advent marked what may be designated the "first coming" of the Christ, so no less certainly Mary Baker Eddy's discovery of Christian Science fulfilled the prophecy of the "second coming." Thus, the oneness of the Christ now stands revealed in its completeness, for the blessing and salvation of all humanity. The need of humanity is to awake to this sublime fact, to lay hold of and utilize it, thereby gaining the fullness of salvation whereby the perfect man in God's likeness appears.

These statements are fully authenticated in the Holy Scriptures. In Genesis the record stands out in letters of light that God made man in His image, "male and female." Thus the divine fatherhood and motherhood of God appeared. Christ as "the divine manifestation of God" ([Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mrs. Eddy, p. 583](http://journal.christianscience.com/concordapi/view?q=the+divine+manifestation+of+God&book=tfccs.main.sh)) represents the fullness of His nature, including the qualities termed masculine and feminine. Such representation implies that God is both Father and Mother, thus showing the completeness of the Godhead.

Christian Scientists agree unequivocally that Jesus exemplified the fatherhood of God. No less assuredly do they accept Mrs. Eddy as having revealed the motherhood of the Godhead. Did God possess only the qualities or attributes of the Father, He could scarcely be the creator of man as both male and female. His fullness includes both—all—and this allness has its two witnesses—the one who named the Christian era and the other who came in the fullness of time to complete the revelation.

The record in Genesis has its counterpart in the Apocalypse. In the "new heaven" and "new earth," which the spiritually prepared perceive, is the woman of the Apocalypse—"the spiritual ideal as a woman clothed in light, a bride coming down from heaven, wedded to the Lamb of Love" [(*ibid.,* p. 561)](http://journal.christianscience.com/concordapi/view?q=SH+561%3A11-13+spiritual+&book=tfccs.main.sh). This "spiritual ideal" was humanly represented in this age by Mary Baker Eddy, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science ([see Science and Health 565:18-19](http://journal.christianscience.com/concordapi/view?q=spiritual+ideal&book=tfccs.main.sh)).

This conclusion is fully substantiated by the works wrought in Christian Science. Jesus established proof of his Messiahship by his many wondrous works. Without his demonstration of the divine power to destroy error in its manifold forms, he would scarcely have become the Saviour and Way-shower to mankind. Precious were his words, and they had the substantiation of works to establish his spiritual identity as the Messiah. Search the complete annals of the nineteen centuries that have passed since Jesus left the earth, and no record of achievement, after the style of the Master's works, is comparable with the works of Mary Baker Eddy and those of her consecrated followers. Her works furnish positive proof of her position as the revelator—the woman representative—of the Christ in this age, through whom the prophecy of the "second coming" is fulfilled.

That Mrs. Eddy has not been generally so recognized, has no weight of denial of her spiritual status. Few beyond the immediate beneficiaries of Jesus' spiritual understanding recognized his Messiahship. Mrs. Eddy has many thousands of followers who have seen demonstrated in goodly measure the holy purpose of her transcendent experience. By their works as beneficiaries of her revelation is the character of that revelation to be judged.

There is abundant proof that Mrs. Eddy was aware of her unique work in relation to revelation, else she could scarcely have developed the sublime faith in the authority of her words which enabled her to go forward under extremely adverse circumstances. In the discussion of Jesus' admonition to his disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees ([*ibid.,* pp. 117, 118](http://journal.christianscience.com/concordapi/view?q=SH+117%3A31-118%3A5+&book=tfccs.main.sh)), Mrs. Eddy states, "His parable of the 'leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened,' impels the inference that the spiritual leaven signifies the Science of Christ and its spiritual interpretation,—an inference far above the merely ecclesiastical and formal applications of the illustration." And she adds these significant words: "Did not this parable point a moral with a prophecy, foretelling the second appearing in the flesh of the Christ, Truth, hidden in sacred secrecy from the visible world?" Convinced that her discovery, Christian Science, is the leaven of Truth, she could scarcely fail to recognize the spiritual position of its Discoverer.

Further corroboration of Mrs. Eddy's concept of the importance of her discovery and the status of the Discoverer is found in her autobiography, "Retrospection and Introspection" ([p. 70](http://journal.christianscience.com/concordapi/view?q=No+person+can+take+the+place+of+the+author+of+Science+and+Health%2C+the+Discoverer+and+Founder+of+Christian+Science.+Each+individual+must+fill+his+own+niche+in+time+and+eternity.+The+second+appearing+of+Jesus+is%2C+unquestionably%2C+the+spiritual+advent+of+the+advancing+idea+of+God%2C+as+in+Christian+Science.&book=tfccs.main.pw.ret)). After declaring that the place of Jesus cannot be filled by another, she writes: "No person can take the place of the author of Science and Health, the Discoverer and Founder of Christian Science. Each individual must fill his own niche in time and eternity. The second appearing of Jesus is, unquestionably, the spiritual advent of the advancing idea of God, as in Christian Science." This statement in no way implies that Mrs. Eddy considered herself another Christ ([see "Pulpit and Press," pp. 74, 75](http://journal.christianscience.com/concordapi/view?q=Pul.+74%3A1-75%3A12+&book=tfccs.main.pw.pul)), but she had no slightest doubt that Christian Science is the Comforter that was to come, of the nature and importance of her discovery, and of the place it would fill in bringing full salvation to receptive hearts.

In her address to The Mother Church for the year 1900 Mrs. Eddy writes ([p. 6](http://journal.christianscience.com/concordapi/view?q=Some+modern+exegesis+on+the+prophetic+Scriptures+cites+1875+as+the+year+of+the+second+coming+of+Christ.&book=tfccs.main.pw.m00)), "Some modern exegesis on the prophetic Scriptures cites 1875 as the year of the second coming of Christ." She points out that this was the year of the publication of Science and Health, and she cites several subsequent events which prove the advent of the leaven of Truth hid by a woman in human consciousness.

There is, indeed, but one Christ, the infinite idea of divine Mind; but it became necessary, in the unfoldment of divine purpose, for the Christ to have its second presentation in Christian Science, in order that its fullness and completeness might appear.

Many of the Scriptural references to the "second coming" indicate a sudden appearance of the Christ, perhaps when least expected. Christian Science makes clear that the Christ is the universal truth, the truth about God, the universe, and man—the truth about all things real; and that Christ, Truth, comes to every individual consciousness when prepared to receive it. In this advent alone is salvation experienced by the individual.

Christ Jesus became known to men as the Christ because of the fullness of his reception to this "angel visitant" ([Science and Health, p. 224](http://journal.christianscience.com/concordapi/view?q=angel+visitant&book=tfccs.main.sh)). This has been termed the "first coming," although in all ages, even before the advent of Jesus, holy men had in some measure laid hold of spiritual truth, and it determined their way of life. In that degree did they express the Christ. But it remained for Jesus to make the fuller demonstration. Manifestly, the Master did not regard his demonstration as final. He declared that greater works even than those he wrought would follow. Those greater works, greater in extent, have resulted because of the discovery of Christian Science. What more just, what more logical, than to recognize the spiritual status of Mary Baker Eddy, the revelator of Truth in this age, of that which constitutes the full and complete manifestation of the divine nature?

In proportion as students of Christian Science recognize, express, and wisely proclaim the truth about their Leader, will they progress in the demonstration of her discovery. To become the true beneficiaries of Christian Science, acknowledgment of the spiritual status of its Discoverer and Founder in history and prophecy must be made.