**"LET THE DRY LAND APPEAR"**

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ONE evening, while visiting in the country, I noticed someone walking along a dark road with a flashlight. It seemed as though the darkness parted for the individual with the light to pass through, and then it closed in behind him again. He was literally walking in a pathway of light, and this light divided the darkness, thereby revealing a safe path. The way was there all the time, but the light revealed it. I was reminded of the experience of Moses and the children of Israel at the Red Sea. Before Moses' illumined thought, the waters parted, and he and those who were with him passed through the midst of the sea on dry land.

Having seen that the power of God is made manifest through man, Moses was obedient to the divine command ([Ex. 14: 16](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Lift+thou+up+thy+rod%2C+and+stretch+out+thine+hand+over+the+sea%2C+and+divide+it%3A+and+the+children+of+Israel+shall+go+on+dry+ground+through+the+midst+of+the+sea.&book=tfccs.main.hb.kj)), "Lift thou up thy rod, and stretch out thine hand over the sea, and divide it: and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea." The dry land appeared! And the Israelites went forward in perfect safety.

In the Christian Science textbook, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures," our revered Leader, Mary Baker Eddy, writes ([p. 505](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Understanding+is+the+line+of+demarcation+between+the+real+and+unreal.&book=tfccs.main.sh)), "Understanding is the line of demarcation between the real and unreal." Understanding then is that which discriminates by setting apart the good from the evil, the pure from the impure, the essential from the unsubstantial. Moses drew "the line of demarcation" across the Red Sea, and this line of spiritual understanding separated the children of Israel from danger and changed what had appeared to be an impassable barrier of water into an open thoroughfare. This understanding revealed to Moses a sure way where material vision saw only obstruction. His spiritual understanding of the power of God and his active obedience to the divine command brought to light the dry land—the specific formation of thought needed at that moment—on which the Israelites were able to proceed, and by which they were set apart from the forces of evil, darkness, and aggression.

Was not this experience of Moses and the children of Israel a practical fulfillment of the promise or statement of spiritual authority in [Genesis (1:9),](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=And+God+said%2C+Let+the+waters+under+the+heaven+be+gathered+together+unto+one+place%2C+and+let+the+dry+land+appear&book=tfccs.main.hb.kj) "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear"? And do we not have the same divine authority? Can we not say to every Red Sea experience, "Let the dry land appear"? Indeed we can!

It is "the line of demarcation" or spiritual understanding which we need to separate us from all beliefs of error, to set us apart from darkness, ignorance, misunderstanding, envy, limitation, fear, war, plagues. This spiritual discrimination enables us to see the real where the unreal appears to be, to see a way where no human way is apparent, to behold health where disease is making its claim, to see deliverance and safety where danger is evident, and to see the abundance of omnipresent good where lack argues its presence. We can, like Moses, draw this "line of demarcation," and what has seemed to be an impassable barrier will become to us a wall of protection and a course of procedure. We too can walk on dry land through what had appeared to be a seething sea of impossibilities.

Recently a student of Christian Science received word from her husband that he was being transferred from duty in a foreign country to the United States. It was determined that he should be sent to a certain port of embarkation. The thought was expressed that he might have to wait there a week, a month, or longer because of the shortage of transportation. At first the wife accepted this as one of the limitations of war. And then she remembered Moses at the Red Sea. God did not bring him that far and leave him.

She found herself thinking of her husband and saying mentally: "As a spiritual idea, man is not dependent on material transportation. You are endowed with an understanding of the omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, and omniaction of Spirit, and this understanding reveals the way in which to progress. You are being borne by uplifted thoughts, winged with joy, gratitude, strength, and love. Identify yourself with Soul, and intelligence will reveal to you the perfect operation of the law of harmony, all things moving in perfect order. This spiritual sense of activity silences the material sense of limitation and obstruction and enables you to be obedient to Soul. Go forward with this light and the right way will open."

Metaphysical work along this line was continued until material sense ceased presenting its arguments; then she rested in the truth of man's being, glorifying God rather than dwelling on the seeming problem, and singing praises to Him for His goodness and mercy and strength. She waited, eagerly expectant, for the good news. Two days later a radiogram from a neutral country arrived, indicating that the ocean had been spanned by plane. And two days after that her husband was at home!

Mrs. Eddy tells us (*ibid.,* p. 507), "In metaphor, the *dry land* illustrates the absolute formations instituted by Mind, while *water* symbolizes the elements of Mind." As Christian Scientists, it is not only our right but our duty to call forth the dry land in any and every experience, to realize the presence of the specific ideas or "absolute formations" of thought which we need each moment. And we can be confident that the specific ideas of intelligence, energy, safety, supply, health, will come forth, will come to light in human consciousness. These ideas will show us the unreality of the error which may be claiming recognition and reality, and enable us to walk unharmed and unafraid through every experience.

Many times we are tempted to say that next month or next year we shall have more understanding, implying that the understanding which we need is afar off, that we are separated from it, that it is slow in appearing to us, that it is unfolding to someone else but not to us. It is comforting to recall that Isaiah identified "quick understanding" with the nature of the Christ. And Mrs. Eddy reminds us that "Jesus required neither cycles of time nor thought in order to mature fitness for perfection and its possibilities" ([Unity of Good, p. 11](https://concordexpress.christianscience.com/?query=Jesus+required+neither+cycles+of+time+nor+thought+in+order+to+mature+fitness+for+perfection+and+its+possibilities&book=tfccs.main.pw.un)). Spiritual understanding, therefore, is not gained by material education, but by the spiritualization of our thought. As we identify our selfhood with the Christ, we are at the same time identifying ourselves with "quick understanding," instead of with dullness, delay, failure, procrastination, obstruction, fear. In ever-presence there is no next month or next year, but only now, and in the now of ever-presence there is perfect, spontaneous unfoldment of spiritual understanding for each and every one of us.

Understanding is not something abstract, something existing indefinitely in space. Through understanding, divine Mind reveals its own pure nature in man. It enables us to acquire and retain the truth about everything, to discern that which is just and true, to judge righteous judgment. In the ever-presence of Mind there is no absent-mindedness. The understanding of Mind expresses itself without interruption in accuracy, thoughtfulness, kindness, discernment, vision, alertness, joy, activity, love, and so on.

Occultism cannot deceive or obstruct understanding; neither can organized human will influence it or dictatorship intimidate it. It cannot be magnetized or drawn away from its divine Principle. Evil cannot and God does not withhold understanding from man. Understanding is the light of Mind and is forever expressed by man. Mortal mind, and its representative, matter, cannot withhold understanding from man any more than darkness can obstruct or withhold light.

Claim and utilize spiritual understanding. You will then find yourself turning naturally from the limitations of human concepts to the infinitude of Soul and its spiritual senses. You will find that you are giving up commonly accepted human opinions, gathered from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that you are partaking of the fruit of the tree of Life and assimilating the glorious facts of spiritual creation.

In attempting to illustrate the unfoldment of spiritual ideas in a human language, it is necessary to draw a "line of demarcation" between the human concept of man, whose path is "from sense to Soul," and man, the likeness of Spirit, whose path is "from glory unto glory." Man, the image of infinite Spirit, does not pass through any material experience, for he is wholly spiritual, and is untouched by matter and its limitations. Man, the idea of divine Principle, is supported, sustained, and maintained by divine law; he does not need to lean on so-called mattersubstance. Man, the reflection of Mind, expresses the intelligence of this Mind, and is never unenlightened. Through humility we become receptive to this intelligent nature, and the depth of our humility is the measure of our understanding.

Man, the expression of Soul, is never overwhelmed by the evidence of the corporeal senses, for he is aware only of Soul's spiritual senses, which testify to the divine nature of God and of man. Man, the representative of Truth, is never confronted with the fluctuating, discordant, binding elements of mortality, for he is as consistent, honest, changeless, and free as is Truth itself. Man, who reflects the activity of Life, is never made to be inactive by the inertia of mortal mind, nor made to be overactive or discordant by the nervous energy of so-called animate error, for Life is continally repeating in man the evidences of immortality, newness, freshness, and divine energy. Man, the beloved of Love, is never attacked by hate, war, envy, lack, fear, for Love's beloved is always loved, lovable, and loving.

As human consciousness understands something of the Christ, the true idea of God and man, it turns away from the suggestions of the carnal mind and its material misconception of man. The resistance of the red dragon to this spiritual progress does at times seem to be war, a Red Sea, a lions' den, a fiery furnace, a whale's belly, a prison, a Goliath, a Jezebel, a Judas, a cross. These false beliefs have no more power to obstruct our progress than darkness has over light. As we follow the Christ-way, the obstructions vanish, the storms subside, the waters part, the dry land appears, and we go forward firm in the understanding of what is real. Identification with the Christ leads to the understanding of God's allness and the discernment of the spiritual nature of man and the universe. Claim this understanding, rejoice in it, and it will be to you a "wellspring of life."