

# The Law that Reveals Health

*Excerpts from a talk given by Evan MacDonald for Arden Wood, November 5, 2022*

**Hello, friends.** Thank you for having me back. I'm excited again to share some Biblical concepts that translate into our everyday lives, especially as they relate to the wonderful changes that Arden Wood is undertaking—a physical transformation that **MUST** accompany the higher goal—the transformation of thought. During Arden Wood's Annual Meeting, I heard ideas about church in action, and demonstrable proof of utility, and gaining an understanding of God that undergirds our **CONVICTION** that Christian Science heals. Key ideas I kept hearing were vitality, vibrancy, unencumbered, fresh, rooted, and transformed. The entire world needs these. I learned that Christian Science nurses training will be the key moving forward; and while learning the steps for taking care of individuals will be important, what will be most essential is the training of thought, upward—that goes for Arden Wood's Christian Science nurses and staff, for its patients and guests, and for its executive board and supporters like you.

During the Arden Wood Annual Meeting Keynote address, Warren Huff talked about all the wonderful building projects that have occurred at CedarS camps, as well as his favorite type of building—the building of sustainable spiritual values. Warren talked about “a choice one makes, to live in accord with firmly established rules, laws, guidelines, set forth in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, of God's clear instructions to man; they are freeing, not binding,” he says. “They're full of promise, not restrictions; and they bless and heal all mankind.”<sup>1</sup> Warren has clearly described our work today: that God's law reveals a promise of health.

## The Commandments

The Law came to us through Moses. The Gesenius Lexicon says *torah*, the Hebrew word for law, is “instruction or doctrine.”<sup>2</sup> *Torah* is a noun, it's the thing. It is the teaching. In Hebrew, nouns come from verbs, and the verb root of *torah* is *yara*—which can mean “to teach or instruct,” but it also can mean “to lay foundations.”<sup>3</sup> I find this fitting for Arden Wood both on a literal and a metaphysical basis.

What teaching or foundation was laid? The Commandments were one of the first worldwide systems of manners, customs, or laws given to a people. The famed Hammurabi's Code does pre-date the Mosaic Law by 300 years or so, depending on when scholars date the Exodus, but the Mosaic Law differs: first, in that they were God-directed; and second, in that they are a covenant, not between man and man but between God and man. The Hebrew word, *bərit*, translated as covenant, is not just a written agreement, but “in several cases throughout the Bible, the Hebrew term . . . refers to an alliance.”<sup>4</sup> One might see, through understanding the added depth of this word, that rather than some business contract or legal document, “we can perhaps

conclude that God desires heartfelt relationships with his people that are based on mutual commitment.”<sup>5</sup>

Mrs. Eddy has much to say about the commandments; especially the First Commandment, which she quotes directly 21 times in her writings; such as, “‘Thou shalt have no other gods before me,’ and the Golden Rule are the all-in-all of Christian Science.”<sup>6</sup> She references it another 20 times just by name. For example, “The divine Principle of the First Commandment bases the Science of being, by which man demonstrates health, holiness, and life eternal.”<sup>7</sup>

The text of the First Commandment is vital to know and understand as students of Christian Science. Jewish texts often harken back to the Exodus as a reminder of God's promise of deliverance **OUT** of bondage. This is the covenant He's made with us. But that's only half the deal. The law does two things: it protects you from evil, and it brings you to know good. God spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, “And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey.”<sup>8</sup> Notice the language here: I will take you **OUT**, and I will bring you **IN**. This is what the Law does.

Just like the Children of Israel in the wilderness, we are guided out of bondage and into safety. An understanding of each of the Ten Commandments would lead to a greater sense of God's protection and provision. And it was these rules taught by Moses that the Pharisees always tried to get Jesus to contradict. They said: If a man can't put away his wife, why did Moses give a bill of divorcement?<sup>9</sup> And of course there is the famed, “Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?”<sup>10</sup>

Did Jesus contradict the Law? **NO**. It is this very law that we are told Christ Jesus fulfilled. He tells his followers in the Sermon on the Mount, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”<sup>11</sup> Jesus never taught against the Law. He taught and followed the Law to the letter! “For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”<sup>12</sup> Contrary to what many Christians believe, there is not an old law and a new law. They are one. One scholar writes, “The word ‘abolish’ means ‘to interpret incorrectly.’”<sup>13</sup> *Kataluo* in the Greek and its equivalent *batel* in Hebrew can mean cancel, abolish, or destroy, but they are “often used in contexts that deal with interpreting Scripture. One cancels Torah when it is misunderstood. The word ‘fulfill’ moreover, refers to interpreting a passage accurately.”<sup>14</sup>

In my study of the Bible, I've never found Jesus condemning the Pharisees for their knowledge of the law. They **KNEW** the law. It was their interpretation that he took issue with. And this

is what he came to fulfill, or to interpret correctly. Leander Keck states that in Matthew's Gospel, "Jesus declares that what he teaches is God's will and the criterion of eschatological [final] judgment, so there can be no conflict between Jesus and the Torah, which he fulfills."<sup>15</sup>

Jesus was the most effective healer the world has ever seen, and this is because he was the most obedient to God's law. In the Gospel of John, which focuses on Jesus' true spiritual identity, Jesus tells us, "For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting."<sup>16</sup> He tells us, "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me,"<sup>17</sup> and "I do always those things that please him."<sup>18</sup>

We will be able to heal when we can utter those same words a fraction of the time. Mrs. Eddy writes, "God is Spirit. Then modes of healing, other than the spiritual and divine, break the First Commandment of the Decalogue, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' There are no other heaven-appointed means than the spiritual with which to heal sin and disease. Our Master conformed to this law, and instructed his followers, saying, 'He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also.' This is enough."<sup>19</sup>

Christ Jesus completely fulfilled the Law of Moses by giving a truer interpretation of God's Law. This is what heals, and our Master knew that we could demonstrate this law just as effectively as he did. And so, not only did he fulfill the Law of Moses, but he simplified it for us so we could put it into practice.

The Law of Moses, fulfilled through Jesus Christ, is simple and easy to understand—not hard or condemnatory like it has been made out to be. His entire healing ministry was founded on the law. To Christ Jesus, he simplified the Law of Moses by giving us two Great Commandments that created umbrella statements for Moses' 10 to fall under: Love for God, and Love for man.<sup>20</sup> If we take his own words—that he came to fulfill the law—then Moses Law must also be centered on Love. This "new commandment" isn't "new" because it replaces the old law (making it null and void); rather, it's new because the right understanding/interpretation of the law is NEW TO US. What was once seen as a list of what not to do, or a list of restrictions, can now be perceived rightly as a center for the affections—a love of God and man.

Mrs. Eddy asserts, "The coincidence between the law and the gospel, between the old and the new commandment, confirms the fact that God and Love are *one* . . . The life of Christ Jesus, his words and his deeds, demonstrate Love. We have no evidence of being Christian Scientists except we possess this inspiration, and its power to heal and to save. The energy that saves sinners and heals the sick is divine: and Love is the Principle thereof. Scientific Christianity works out the rule of spiritual love; it makes man *active*, it prompts perpetual goodness."<sup>21</sup>

### Love Is the Law

An active, perpetual goodness is a beautiful way to describe our half of the covenant. Our debt of love, as Paul calls it, to God and

man. He writes to the Romans, a church he did not seed nor had ever visited up to that point, "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law."<sup>22</sup> Origen, writing 150 years after Jesus' ascension, states, "The debt of love remains with us permanently and never leaves us; this is a debt which we both discharge every day and forever owe."<sup>23</sup>

Does that make sense? To fulfill our covenantal agreement with God, we owe love to God and our neighbor every day. And while we may pay this each day, we will never "be freed" of this obligation—this debt—because with each new morn, we are commanded to love again. "Love is the rubric for the whole of the Christian life"<sup>24</sup> writes one commentary; and it is our responsibility to pay this debt to everyone—to each neighbor, for who isn't our neighbor? This Law of Moses and Christ Jesus is scientific. Therefore, it is a present dispensation for us today and does not belong specially to ages past. It is readily available, demonstrable, and the correct interpretation of the Law of Love must be found/revealed by each individual (for it is there in the first place). It needs to be studied and practiced and then demonstrated by all who know it as the only power to uplift the standard of living for all mankind.

Loving God and our neighbor is not just about being a good person. We're not embracing humanism. The Law of Love is divine! It's a MORAL spiritual force. The activity of the Law of Love is how divinity embraces humanity because the Moral degree is the human one. "Moral" comes from the latin word, *moralis*, which means societal "manners, customs, laws."<sup>25</sup> Cicero, around the time of Julius Caesar, is believed to have first used this word when translating the Ancient Greek term *ethikos*<sup>26</sup> or ethics.

An account of healing is told in *Christian Healer*, "Remarkable as was the man's physical healing, even more remarkable was the transformation in his thought and life. His wife told Mrs. [Glover] a few days later that she had never before seen him [hug] his children as other fathers did, but on the night of his recovery he called them to him, and taking them in his arms he told them that he loved them; and with tears rolling down his cheeks he said to his wife, 'I am going to be a better man.' It is not strange that the happy wife said to Mrs. [Glover], 'Oh, how I thank you for restoring my husband to health, but more than all, I am grateful for what you have done for him morally and spiritually.' Robert Warneck continues, saying, 'This type of moral regeneration set Mrs. Glover's 'science' apart from any other healing method. She saw it as the most important part, which very likely caused her originally to call her discovery, 'Moral Science.'"<sup>27</sup>

The Moral Law is often perceived solely as a sexual standard that is antiquated and restrictive. But to the Christian Scientist, it means so much more than that, and it should to all mankind as well. In the textbook, Mrs. Eddy reveals to us the Second Degree of mortal mind: "MORAL. Humanity, honesty, affection, compassion, hope, faith, meekness, temperance."<sup>28</sup> These transitional qualities are essential for a flourishing society and a vibrant practice of Christian Science; they are so much more than a list of sexual improprieties.

Grasping the importance of morality and understanding the Moral Law seemed to be the bedrock for Mrs. Eddy. In her *Miscellaneous Writings*, she speaks plainly: “It is impossible to be a Christian Scientist without apprehending the moral law so clearly that, for conscience’ sake, one will either abandon his claim to even a knowledge of this Science, or else make the claim valid. All Science is divine. Then, to be Science, it must produce physical and moral harmony.”<sup>29</sup>

Isn’t physical and moral harmony what we want for ourselves, for Arden Wood, for all CS nursing facilities, and for the world? Then it would behoove us to “apprehend the moral law clearly.” She says you can’t be a Christian Scientist without it! What a clarion call for us. Are we willing to make the honest effort to study these laws? To put them into practice? To protect, preserve, and maintain harmony? Then we can proclaim with the Psalmist, “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”<sup>30</sup>

Where is the law held? In the law book? If the book was destroyed, like Moses actually did with the first set of Commandments, would there still be a law? Yes, of course. Much like a marriage license is a contract between a bride and groom, the essence of their relationship—their love—is not in the binding agreement itself, but in their hearts. So, too, are the Commandments more than just words carved in stone and housed in the Ark of the Covenant. They are written on our hearts! The Psalmist sings, “I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”<sup>31</sup> So, where is the law?

In both the Old and New Testaments, there is a strong connection between the heart and mind. We might see this best expressed by the author of Hebrews as he echoes what God told the prophet Jeremiah, saying, “I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts.”<sup>32</sup> And then two chapters later, he flips the parallel, “I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.”<sup>33</sup>

Yes, it is in our heart where the Moral Law resides, and there is a Biblical symbol for this throughout Scripture—the Soil of the Earth. The Master’s parable of the four types of soil presents degrees of mortal thought. This is a vital parable to our Master, for he said, “If you can’t understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables?”<sup>34</sup>

The soil of the “good ground,” as Luke calls it, “are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience.”<sup>35</sup> Mrs. Eddy expounds on this verse, telling us, “The spiritual sense of truth must be gained before Truth can be understood. This sense is assimilated only as we are honest, unselfish, loving, and meek. In the soil of an ‘honest and good heart’ the seed must be sown; else it beareth not much fruit, for the swinish element in human nature uproots it.”<sup>36</sup> Do you see her use of the Moral transitional qualities?

In John Tutt’s article, “Wiser than Serpents,” he writes, “Jesus said, ‘I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.’ May not this be taken to mean, I am not come to destroy reality, but to restore

it to consciousness?”<sup>37</sup> God cultivates our soil, elevating a seeming mortal mind out of itself, restoring its real and original state of thought that has the Mind of Christ. Mrs. Eddy tells us that Christ is the ideal man—ever-present in human consciousness. Perhaps this is why the sower is not very discerning as to the various types of ground in which he sows his seed. The Word of God is needed in all consciousness, and God will help till the soil to prepare it to seed and take root. We read in the textbook, “The life of Christ Jesus was not miraculous, but it was indigenous to his spirituality,—the good soil wherein the seed of Truth springs up and bears much fruit.”<sup>38</sup>

So, in my prayers and study, I have begun to see the Christ consciousness as the soil of an honest heart—the Moral Law, which he came to fulfill! And we, too, can have this Christ consciousness. We read in the textbook: “Every day makes its demands upon us for higher proofs rather than professions of Christian power. These proofs consist solely in the destruction of sin, sickness, and death by the power of Spirit, as Jesus destroyed them. This is an element of progress, and progress is the law of God, whose law demands of us only what we can certainly fulfil.”<sup>39</sup>

Mrs. Eddy’s expectation for her followers was to be consecrated healers. And that can only happen by planting ourselves in the Christ consciousness—in the soil of an honest and good heart. The soil of an honest heart is where the trees can take root and grow. Our Leader is clear on this concept: “All must sooner or later plant themselves in Christ, the true idea of God.”<sup>40</sup>

What do leaves symbolize in Scripture? Health. Salvation. We read of the tree of life, “which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”<sup>41</sup> The prophet Ezekiel had a similar vision of waters issuing out of the house of God and nourishing trees. He writes: “Fruit trees of all kinds will grow along both sides of the river. The leaves of these trees will never turn brown and fall, and there will always be fruit on their branches. There will be a new crop every month, for they are watered by the river flowing from the Temple. The fruit will be for food and the leaves for healing.”<sup>42</sup>

The scriptural prophecy is assured that as we plant ourselves in the Christ consciousness, our fruits, fruitage—our HEALTH—is assured and will never fade, wilt, or be consumed. Jack Hubbell writes, “Man does not experience life as a deciduous tree, first with new buds, then in full leaf, then with dying leaves, and ending with bare branches. Man is evergreen, always expressing beauty untouched by passing seasons.”<sup>43</sup>

The order of the two ideas that are presented on the third day of creation is important. We must first be on the dry land, the New Earth of the Moral Law, and then the seed grows and bears fruit—fruitage/healing. The Bible tells us plainly, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”<sup>44</sup>

### **Moral Law Reveals Health**

You can see now why Mrs. Eddy writes, “The entire education of children should be such as to form habits of obedience to the

moral and spiritual law, with which the child can meet and master the belief in so-called physical laws, a belief which breeds disease.”<sup>45</sup>

This concept has blessed generations with articles in the periodicals, such as, “The Tree of Life” by Annie Knott in 1916, all the way to a recent favorite of mine, “The healing power of the moral law” by Cynthia Clague in 2015. This summer in doing some research, I came across a great lecture titled, “Healing Under the Law and the Gospel”<sup>46</sup> given in 1982 by Horacio Omar Rivas, a Christian Science lecturer from Buenos Aires. He remarked that, “Obedience to the First Commandment promotes morality and healing.” And I find the idea even in books like *Christian Science in Germany*, where Frances Thurber Seal writes that the sick “recover promptly when God’s Law was invoked.”<sup>47</sup>

So, with this understanding we can begin to see how the symbols of the third day of creation set forth God’s plan for universal salvation or health. The tree of life with its healing leaves is rooted in the soil of the Moral Law. Mrs. Eddy’s writings are replete with this concept. Here is just a sprinkling: “Moral conditions will be found always harmonious and

health-giving.”<sup>48</sup> She says that not intellect but “sound morals are most desirable”<sup>49</sup> for healing. That “the more that is thought and said about moral and spiritual law, the higher will be the standard of living and the farther mortals will be removed from imbecility or disease.”<sup>50</sup> That “man’s moral mercury, rising or falling, registers his healing ability and fitness to teach.”<sup>51</sup> And that “to cure a bodily ailment, every broken moral law should be taken into account and the error be rebuked.”<sup>52</sup>

Thus, the purpose of the earth on the third day of creation is to bring forth man’s salvation or health. The following verse brings this to light, “For God is my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth.”<sup>53</sup>

So where does all this leave us today? The Book of Kings relates how a book of the “law of Moses” was discovered in the Temple during the reign of King Josiah bringing about reformation.<sup>54</sup> This relates to us today. Let’s re-discover the power of the Moral Law—the Law of Love—and its direct impact on revealing health as a permanent dispensation from God. 

To watch a full replay: [ardenwood.org/events/event-archives](https://ardenwood.org/events/event-archives)

<sup>1</sup> Arden Wood 2022 Annual Meeting  
<sup>2</sup> "H8451 - tôrà - Strong's Hebrew Lexicon (kjv)"  
<sup>3</sup> "H3384 - yârâ - Strong's Hebrew Lexicon (kjv)."  
<sup>4</sup> Asher Reich and Marty Foodim, *Found in Translation*, pg 66  
<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, pg 67  
<sup>6</sup> Mary Baker Eddy, *The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, pg 64:13–14 Thou  
<sup>7</sup> Mary Baker Eddy, *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, pg 340:20–22  
<sup>8</sup> Exodus 3:8  
<sup>9</sup> Matthew 19:3  
<sup>10</sup> John 8:5  
<sup>11</sup> Matthew 5:17  
<sup>12</sup> Matthew 5:18  
<sup>13</sup> Brad. H. Young, *Jesus the Jewish Theologian*, pg 265  
<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*  
<sup>15</sup> Leander Keck, *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary: Matthew*, pg 115  
<sup>16</sup> John 12:9, 50  
<sup>17</sup> John 5:30 4th I  
<sup>18</sup> John 8:29 the  
<sup>19</sup> *My*, pg 221:16  
<sup>20</sup> Matthew 22:37-40  
<sup>21</sup> Mary Baker Eddy, *Message to The Mother Church for 1902*, pg 8:12-24  
<sup>22</sup> Romans 13:8  
<sup>23</sup> Origen, quoted in *Barclay, William Letter to the Romans*, pg 207  
<sup>24</sup> *Expositor's Commentary*, Romans-Galatians, pg 189  
<sup>25</sup> "moralis"—*WordSense Online Dictionary* (15th October, 2022)  
URL: <https://www.wordsense.eu/moralis/>  
<sup>26</sup> <https://www.etymonline.com/word/moral>

<sup>27</sup> Robert Warnack, *Christian Healer: Amplified*, pg 81-82.  
<sup>28</sup> *S&H*, pg 115:25–27  
<sup>29</sup> Mary Baker Eddy, *Miscellaneous Writings 1883–1896*, p. 261:26  
<sup>30</sup> Psalms 119:97  
<sup>31</sup> Psalms 40:8  
<sup>32</sup> Hebrews 8:10 & Jeremiah 31:33  
<sup>33</sup> Hebrews 10:16  
<sup>34</sup> Mark 4:13 NLT  
<sup>35</sup> Luke 8:15  
<sup>36</sup> *S&H*, p. 272:3–8  
<sup>37</sup> John M. Tutt, “Wiser than Serpents,” *The Christian Science Journal*, March, 1925  
<sup>38</sup> *S&H*, pg 270:31–1  
<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, pg 232:32  
<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, pg 54:8–10 All  
<sup>41</sup> Revelation 22:2  
<sup>42</sup> Ezekiel 47:12 NLT  
<sup>43</sup> Jack Hubbell, "Evergreen of Soul," lecture  
<sup>44</sup> Revelation 22:14  
<sup>45</sup> *S&H*, pg 62:4  
<sup>46</sup> Printed in the *Christian Science Monitor*, December 6, 1982  
<sup>47</sup> Frances Thurber Seal, *Christian Science in Germany*, pg 74-75  
<sup>48</sup> *S&H*, pg 125:5–6  
<sup>49</sup> *Ibid*, pg x:22–23, 30  
<sup>50</sup> *Ibid*, pg 197:12 the  
<sup>51</sup> *Ibid*, pg 449:11–13  
<sup>52</sup> *Ibid*, pg 392:4–5  
<sup>53</sup> Psalms 74:12  
<sup>54</sup> II Kings 22:8



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