

# QUESTIONS:

Following the example set by the question-and-answer columns in the early *Journals*, when Mary Baker Eddy was Editor, this column will respond to general queries from *Journal* readers with responses from *Journal* readers. You'll find information at the end of the column about how to submit questions.

**I have never understood prophecy. In my younger years, I thought of it as spiritualism and have held that view ever since. Recently, one member of the Board of Directors wrote that as the Board visited churches and members around the world, the question was often asked, "What is going to happen with the Christian Science church?" The reply included the phrase "It is in prophecy."—A READER IN MAINE**

**A1** To understand prophecy, I've found it helpful to think of real existence as an eternal symphony with infinite movements. When we attend a concert, for example, we know the symphony is complete, that it has already been composed. But we also know we aren't going to hear the whole symphony at once!

Genesis relates that "God saw every thing that he had made," that it was good, and that creation was "finished" (see 1:31–2:1). God's infinite work, His "symphony," is *finished*. Nothing is unknown, nothing has yet to be created. Reality is Life's perpetual revelation of its own self-completeness. Since the divine Mind is the only real intelligence, on earth as in heaven, an individual who has yielded to this scientific fact, which in practice includes humbly renouncing the belief in a personal mind separate from God, is bringing his or her thinking into accord with Mind and with what Mind knows—with the entire symphony, so to speak. So when Isaiah prophesied that a virgin would bear a son (see Isa., chap. 7), for example, he was seeing an aspect of the complete "symphony" that would be revealed at an appointed time. To divine Spirit, there is only the eternally unfolding *here and now*, no past or future. Thus, in a sense, a prophet is one for whom the future is the present.

As for The Church of Christ, Scientist, and prophecy, it's essential to see that, 1) Divine Science is the Comforter prophesied by Jesus; and that, 2) this final revelation of Truth to mankind, discovered by Mary Baker Eddy, includes the church organization in our *Church Manual*. Mrs. Eddy states that, "... eternity awaits our Church Manual ..." (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 230), a prophecy indicating that the Church governed by the *Manual* will continue to fulfill its divinely appointed purpose.

BARBARA COOK SPENCER  
BROOKLINE, MASSACHUSETTS, US

**A2** One way to get a handle on prophecy is to understand its essence. Frequently it is believed to be a process of foretelling human events, but at its heart, prophecy is about spiritual discernment—being able to see something from a spiritual perspective. For instance, Biblical prophecy illustrates insight based on communion with God, the divine Mind, which in turn leads to conclusions about the future. Mary Baker Eddy points out, "Acquaintance with the Science of being enables us to commune more largely with the divine Mind, to foresee and foretell events which concern the universal welfare, to be divinely inspired,—yea, to reach the range of fetterless Mind" (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. 84).

As we more clearly understand the nature of this Mind, we can logically foresee the inevitable outcomes of its expression. Isaiah understood the nature of God, Mind, and could thus prophesy the inevitable appearance of the Messiah as a consequence of the ever-present, caring nature of this Mind. He wasn't focused on human events, but on the implications of God's nature.

The same could be said of the prophecy in Revelation regarding the woman bringing forth the man child who was destined to rule all nations, enabling the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of the Lord and His Christ—and for which there would be no end. A prophecy Mrs. Eddy indicated had a "special suggestiveness" to the discovery of Christian Science (see *Science and Health*, pp. 559–560). The Revelator realized the inevitable consequences of God governing His creation.

RON BALLARD  
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, US