

# Transfiguration

A216 Sunday Address 7th May 1950 St Mary Abbots Place, London Sunday service

*The date of this address is conjectural (see below), while the text is as issued in the magazine Angelus after it was given, apart from correction of errors*

*Text:* from *Angelus*, February 1951

*Context:* the dating of this address is unresolved conjecture. Printed in February 1951 one might expect it to be the New Year address, but there is not a hint of the New Year in it. It is neither Christmas nor Remembrance, and so we look back at least as far as October 1950, the date chosen. But the October address was, by 1950, becoming traditional for a Harvest Festival, and there is no reference herein to harvest. We are inclined, therefore, to put it back to May 1950. This does not link it to any festival, but Whitsun did not fall until 28 May in 1950, so would be an unlikely topic three weeks earlier. One tiny clue might be the phrase near the end: 'the initiate becomes clothed with the sun' – if 7 May is correct, the talk that White Eagle gave in Edinburgh on the 16th actually gained the title 'Clothed with the Sun'.

There is another, rather remote clue. At the Easter service in 1950 (9 April), one of the readings was from the apocryphal *Acts of John*, and White Eagle made reference to the Easter story in that work in his address. The account of the Transfiguration is one of the most striking stories in the miniature gospel contained in the Acts, and it could easily be that a member of the congregation, or of the Cooke family, was sufficiently intrigued by the story in *Acts* to ask White Eagle to speak on the Transfiguration (for a suggestion this address was influenced by the account in *Acts*, see 'References', below. That said, the reading seems instead to have been the conventional account of the Transfiguration from Luke, chapter 9, probably beginning at verse 28. The actual feast of the Transfiguration, which is particularly celebrated in the Eastern church, is not until the end of the Summer. White Eagle made another brief mention of the Transfiguration in what we have regarded as the September service.

The White Eagle Choir (later, at least) had in its repertoire a setting of the words from Philippians quoted (see 'References': 'Whatsoever things are true'), under the title, 'Think on these things' by Carl F. Mueller (1892-1982); it is highly likely that this was the anthem sung.

*General Notes:* from the beginning it is clear that this is as much as anything an address about St John's Gospel, yet there is an irony that the episode of the Transfiguration is not covered by John (some scholars have however seen a reference to it in John's phrase, 'and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth' (John 1 : 14)). It is also very much an address about the dawning Aquarian age. White Eagle also draws attention to the Transfiguration as a story about initiation. He refers to the very obvious initiation moment for Jesus on this occasion; we might wonder if it was an initiation moment for the other disciples too, particularly for John (who figures pre-eminently among the disciples, particularly in the *Acts of John* account).

The address is possibly unique in White Eagle's teaching for identifying the disciples Peter, James and John as representing (respectively) faith, hope and love.

White Eagle in this address describes the baptism of Jesus as his Water initiation and the Transfiguration as his Fire initiation.

*References:* the injunction, 'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are of good report ... think on these things', is to be found at Philippians 4 : 8.

When White Eagle speaks of the illumination of spiritual love shining in the human face, there is an adumbration of the Transfiguration story. 'After eight days Jesus took to the mountain' is Luke 9 : 28, and since White Eagle mentions the eight (Matthew has six days) we know Luke's account, the reading on the day in question, was the one most in focus. Luke says of Jesus that 'As he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening' (9 : 29). Matthew says, 'His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light' (17 : 2). *Acts of John*, by contrast, says that as he was transfigured 'his feet were whiter than any snow, so that the earth

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there was lighted up by his feet, and that his head touched the heaven' (chapter 90). White Eagle seems to imply more than is there in the synoptic gospel accounts and might have been influenced by *Acts of John*. This might well have been regarded as out of the reach at least of White Eagle's medium and Brother Faithful, yet we know the reverse to be true from the Easter address of 9 April 1950 (see above, 'Context').

John's Gospel does not actually contain the phrase 'the light of life is love', but it is implicit in John 1 : 2-4. 'This is my beloved son: hear ye him' are words heard at the Transfiguration in both Luke (9: 35) and Matthew (17 : 5), while 'This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased' is from Matthew's account of the Baptism (3 : 17). 'Clothed with the sun', at the end, is a quotation of Revelation 12 : 1.

## White Eagle's Address:

We bring love and blessing. May your eyes be opened, brethren, to the glory of the spirit world, the heaven world. May you look up – as you look up into your earthly sun – and see the golden radiance of the heavens.

We are going to speak for a short time on the mystical interpretation of the Transfiguration.

We shall commence by explaining to all that we are, as many know, on the cusp or the verge of a new age, known to certain people as the age of St John; and in this new age it will be the Gospel of St John which will form the basis of the new religion.

Those of you who are familiar with the Gospel know that this is a gospel of love. All the teachings of the Master Jesus on the subject of love are given in the Gospel of St John. Therefore the religion of the new age will not only be a religion of belief and faith but also a religion of love in action. It is not enough for people to worship with lips and with intellects the Source of their being, the Great Spirit. It is not enough to be good, although the true basis of progress and unfoldment is goodness of heart. Man must also have knowledge of the powers within his own being and must understand how to develop those powers to the highest degree. Every person is aware of power latent within himself, but does not distinguish between the destructive power of self-desire on the one hand, and on the other the power of the spiritual man, which is the power of divine love.

So, in this new age of St John, people will be seeking greater power and knowledge – seeking to understand the implication of love in their lives. They will learn to discriminate between selfish and divine love. We would impress this upon you all, because in human life, it is so easy to fall into the first category, into the fault of selfish love through dominance of self. When the soul does this it means destruction of the life essence, with resulting sickness, chaos, death. In this new age man has to understand that he is working towards a fuller life, not death. For this reason, the new age is of great importance to mankind, being the great age of initiation into the higher self – that new religion which is the religion of happiness, of brotherhood – and of divine love and light.

On this basis men may safely build for the new age, not only in the world, but in themselves. 'Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are good, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are beautiful – think on these things.' Man is

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tempted to think on the negative things instead of the positive and the beautiful. So we base our talk tonight upon these verses, because if man is going to mount the steps of initiation, as the masters of all time have done, and are still doing, man must order his life upon a foundation of love, goodwill and brotherhood.

You hear much about love, but as you look out on life you feel that this is only talk. When it comes to practising love in the life it is sadly absent; and we, who come back to help you – we sometimes weep. We are sorrowful when we see the mistiness and the lack of love which is robbing man of the joy and beauty of life. It is not laying a foundation upon which to mount to the heights, if man disregards in his human relationships the loving-kindness taught and demonstrated to the world by Jesus the Christ. What is love? Understand, beloved brethren, that love is life; it is light, it is holiness, healthfulness. For when a man loves – that is, with the divine love – his whole being becomes illumined, and his companions may not know why when they look upon him they see beauty. A man may be facially or in form considered ugly, but not when the radiance of love shines through. Then he becomes beautiful, with a real beauty. It is the love which is the light radiating through him.

Since this love is light, this is the power of all healing. Light is the healing ray. Light has many colours, and certain colours are selected for certain patients. But all colours are light and originate from light, and all healing is from light. Light is also love, or Jesus the Christ, the Son of light, who comes on healing wings to mankind. As John said, 'The light of life is love'. As man loves so he becomes illumined. So, we find that the foundation and then the building of the temple is love, and without love there can be no foundation and no building of the temple of light.

We have told you on former occasions that the Bible is a book of mystical teaching, not yet understood by the average man or woman. Nevertheless, it contains profound mystical truth, and particularly does this apply to the four gospels of the New Testament. The reading tonight was taken from St Luke, and its opening words were: 'After eight days they were taken by the Master to the mount'. After eight days! We want you to take note of this because eight is the number of initiation. Eight is the number of the planet Saturn. Saturn is the great initiator, So, in this gospel St Luke understood that 'after eight days' meant that the time of initiation had come. Then they all went up into the mountain. They were raised in consciousness, above the level of the plane of earth. They went up that they might see the Master Jesus initiated into the fire, or divine love, consciousness.

Many of your mystics, ancient and modern, have written about an experience which has been theirs. These mystics when seeking they knew not what meditated upon the Sun, the source of all life. For without the physical sun, life would depart from this planet. They were also contemplating the spiritual sun and the glory of God. As they did so they felt a great change come over them – some have described it as a flash like lightning rising right through their body into the head and bursting into great flames. In a very minor degree, you can be aware of a similar happening, but you don't think that you are being inspired by the Sun or the light of God. You say instead: 'Oh, I had a brainwave. I had a flash of inspiration, a flash of intuition'. But, my dear ones, understand that that brainwave, that flash of intuition was in a very minor degree similar to that supreme illumination which comes to the soul when it has prepared itself.

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This is what happened to Jesus the Christ when he went up to the Mount with his disciples. A great light came upon him. His raiment shone with the light of the sun. His countenance was so bright that his disciples could not look upon it. This is what happens to the initiate, to the one able to function in that body of light, which is what the Hindus call the 'diamond' body. It is also symbolised by a flashing star, the blazing star on the head or above the head of the initiate. When you hear a description given of one who comes to you as a guide and teacher, and are told that above his head or upon his brow is the blazing six-pointed star you may understand that that signifies an initiate, or one who has passed through this fire-initiation. The fire initiation is [the] one preceding the last initiation, which is that of crucifixion, when all that is gross and of the earth, earthy, is done away with and the soul rises supreme, triumphant, and in full mastery over the self of the earth.

Whom did Jesus choose as his companions when he rose into the Mount? He chose Peter, James and John, the three disciples who represented faith, hope and love. Faith is will! Hope is wisdom, and Love is activity, service! These were the symbols of his different companions. This meant that he had reached that degree of development through matter, through human life, by which he had chosen as his companions faith, hope and love. These are the three which every would-be initiate must choose. An interesting symbolism comes again: for from the world of spirit, from that heaven world came to Jesus other great ones, who in the past had been initiated into the fire – the divine love – degree. They were Elijah and Moses, the law giver; Moses who stood for faith and Elijah who stood for hope and wisdom. Then the cloud descended upon the disciples and they were confused. They heard the voice of God saying: 'This is my beloved Son, hear ye him.'

You will remember at the water initiation, or at the time of baptism of Jesus, the voice of God speaking from the invisible worlds, from the heavens said: 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'. 'In whom I am well pleased', suggesting that Jesus had done well, and his Father was satisfied with him up to that degree. Later, when he came to take the degree of fire initiation the voice from heaven said: 'Hear him'; which gave to Jesus divine authority because he was now the instrument, the channel through whom the divine fire and power would flow in the highest degree.

This, my beloved brethren, awaits you, awaits every soul who wills to tread the path of spiritual unfoldment and spiritual attainment. With the passing into this state of illumination, divine illumination, every centre of the soul body becomes radiant. Many mystics of your day and the past have said that flash of lightning which rises through the body from the base or centre of kundalini stimulates every chakra – the heart, throat and head, the higher triangle. There we have our golden triangle of divine illumination. The light rises and flashes fire, and the initiate becomes clothed with the sun. His raiment shines with the glory of the heavens, but this transfiguration does not separate him from his companions of earth. It gives him power to comfort those who sorrow, to heal those who are sick, and to give wisdom and knowledge to those who are ignorant. It causes him to touch the eyes of the blind enabling them to see the vision of truth.

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So, we leave you, beloved ones; with your faces turned to the glory of God, to the glory of the Shining Countenance. And the blessing of the eternal peace and love is with you now. Amen, Amen, Amen.

*The search matches with either words and phrases, which appear in the text, or the following 'key' words and phrases, which are similar in meaning to those in the document:*

*initiate, chakras, esoteric, mystical, water initiation, fire initiation, illumination, light, Gospel of St John*

