

A Survey of Life – I: The Life of a Flower

T075 The Inner Teachings 27th April 1938 Pembroke Hall, London

Invocation:

The world of matter is full of discord and turmoil; we look out over the world and see much work to be done. We have ever to bear in mind that before we can be prepared as instruments, we must find the place of contact wherein the divine will can be heard. In thus raising the vibrations of all willing servants of the Most High, we are not unmindful of the practical needs of men*. We do not theorise, but rather we endeavour to make way for the inflow of the divine will in man. We have to become attuned to the central fire, and the light of life. Let us, therefore, withdraw from the material world, and enter the Garden of Eden in the heavens, and in the stillness of this beautiful garden of the spirit wait for the coming of God. We pray to Him for wisdom, love and power, and as this trinity becomes linked to our conscious life, we grow in stature and become sons of God.

Amen.

*[*For editorial policy around gender, see the introduction.]*

The cry of man's heart is that he may understand life. To the man on the outer plane life seems but chaos [and] humanity a mass of hunted animals, driven hither and thither without purpose. There seems no sensible purpose in life, and all he can understand is the reaction of his five senses. He, in common with all, passes through birth, suffering, some degree of pleasure—perhaps even tasting its highest aspect, happiness—and then death, the finish! Those sages who have attempted, and even still attempt, to reveal the wisdom, the love and the power of God, are considered either imbeciles or idealists, and certainly not of sound judgment or great intellect, and so are tolerated as ignorant children playing with fantasy. Yet the materialist can give no reason to those tortured by life, nor yet console them for their sufferings and disappointments. Even the materialist, in his innermost heart, seeks understanding, and strives to satisfy reason from the findings of science, material science, with the result that he goes through life hungering, full of fear, and resulting sickness of either mind or body; certainly he does not find happiness.

The materialist, however, has his place in the grand scheme of evolution. He brings to humanity a power, a driving force, which eventually causes the opening of man's higher mind. For out of that compelling hunger is born another urge: the urge of love, to make contact with something he does not understand but which he feels, through a slowly awakening intuition, that he needs—something akin, attuned to that urge within himself for love. He does not always desire to love, to give love, *but he desires himself to be loved*. From this suppressed flame within us all is born the desire to understand that which is invisible but can yet be sensed and felt. For the mind tells man, when he looks forth upon an awakening spring, when he listens to gentle and grand music, when he wonders at a sunset or the brilliance of the starlit night, that behind these manifestations of beauty there must be a power—perhaps a mind, an intellect, which has caused all, and the power of which strikes a harmonious note within his breast. For not only the beauty of colour and form, the majesty of nature, but some vibration invisible and behind the physical manifestation brings harmony to his soul.

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Some have thus become aware that there exists what is described as a 'spirit world'. Through many schools of mystery teaching comes the same dominant note: there is a spirit world, a life beyond, and in the present century it has been decreed by the sages and masters of the Ancient Wisdom that such simple schools as Spiritualism should provide to a humanity now ready the reality of a life invisible, a life immortal. The demonstrations given are simple, perhaps seem as playthings, as rattles to a babe to the more advanced student, who can find much to criticise. The awakening intuition of humanity needs the simple and the obvious. God is Spirit, and before man can comprehend God, he must understand that he himself is created in the image of God and partakes of His spirit. To demonstrate to him that there is an aspect of his being which lives after death, awakens still further his awareness of God life, not only within man but within every manifestation of form, colour, music, and the spoken and written word. It awakens the understanding that every action has behind it the power of spirit, and that even the ritual and ceremonies of mystical brotherhoods and the Church are instrumental in bringing man into closer relationship, into closer contact with the invisible: the universe not merely seen but the universe unseen.

We desire with all our heart to become aware of this spirit world. How many grieve because they can neither hear the spirit music nor see the forms of loved ones—teachers and angels. Deaf and blind are they! You, in common with all men, desire to become aware of God. The first step to this becoming aware is to gain a condition of stillness, of peace, of tranquillity. Unless man can enter into this silent chamber, he cannot approach the gateway which lies concealed within and which opens upon the great garden of life, unlimited and eternal, the true Garden of Eden. Within this garden shall man eventually meet his Father God, the Great Spirit, the Father of Creation.

Meditate on these things, and you will find, as you grow in awareness, that this garden will become increasingly nearer and more beautiful to you. The flowers will all speak. A fantasy? No! It is true! Every flower which grows in that garden (and as we now visualise this heavenly garden, we can see the heavenly in the visible flowers carpeting the earth) —in every flower there is a vibration of God, and every flower has an affinity with some part of man's organism. This the sages know; therefore sages used flowers, herbs, as healing remedies. Not only the material substance of the flower but also its accompanying colour and planetary vibration has its due effect upon some centre in the human organism. It is truly said there is a herb for the cure of every disease. The little flower is the medium to receive its particular God-vibration, but man is the medium for the whole universe and contains within himself every vibration in universal life. Even the notes of music all have their correspondence in the human body. So, to the prepared soul, certain music will bring healing and balm.

Through the mysteries will be found certain symbols indecipherable to the man on the intellectual or material plane. Symbols of flowers were used to denote certain inner truths and secret truths. In the various religions certain flowers were used—the lotus, sacred to the Egyptians and Hindus, the lilies sanctified to the Grecian and the Christian mysteries, and the rose, also sister to the lily. The number of the flowers' petals bore reference to certain aspects of man's development, so linking up the flowers with the vibrations of number, a science

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exact, perfect and true to the wise ones, aware of the perfect harmony of life. The trees also have their place. A special evening will be devoted to a talk on the symbology of trees, beginning with the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and ending with the Tree of Life.* Many references to trees are made in the New Testament and other sacred writings, but we will not digress tonight.

*[*See teaching no. T 076.]*

Flowers, fruits and trees all bear reference to the sacred mystery of life. Thus the ancients knew, and thus all the sages know. Therefore tonight we give this message. The northern hemisphere is now awakening, and everywhere you may witness the ever-growing blossoms of spring and wonder at their luxuriance and beauty. Remember, a process of spiritual growth and harmony is working behind those outward emblems or manifestations. You, as a brother of the universal life, have your work to do, not on the mundane plane alone, but to swell the great orchestra of nature. You must love nature and strive to become aware of the life behind the form, more kind in your treatment of all growing things. Flowers and trees are the most sensitive form of life. A sensitive plant can even shrink from contact with a harsh thought! As an example, a tiny flower, not much appreciated, perhaps, in this part of the world (called mimosa in this part of the world, in other parts, wattle) is one of the most sensitive. Look at the minute hairs—shall I call them petals?—on the tiny blossom, each so sensitive! Experiment, if you wish, but perhaps your heart would not permit you. But if you give a sensitive flower like that harsh treatment, it would shrivel, and strive to return to that God life which is passing through its stem. Perhaps you had not thought! But you have your part to do: to love all living manifestations of the God life.

Do not rudely, harshly, pluck flowers. I do not say that flowers should not be plucked. They are to be used in service, as you yourself, but take them lovingly. We would rather see all flowers used to beautify this church grown and plucked with love, and thus brought into the service of the Most High. Never pick flowers wantonly. But if you pluck them, treat them with special care; see that they have food, water and sunlight, and treasure them as babes.

And now, beloved, give thanks to our Creator, and pray that we may become kinder and more loving. May we become all-embracing in our love and service to life, and to every living creature in all the kingdoms on earth and in heaven.

Amen.

Q. Is it kinder to leave flowers on their roots rather than pick them?

A. Yes. We would rather this, but there are occasions when flowers cannot be left unpicked. As already said, they are intended for service. What matters is the method; they should be taken lovingly, appreciatively. Then, again, sometimes it is good for the root to have the flower taken from it. All these points must be borne in mind. But what is more beautiful than to have the growing things in your home as well as in your garden; why not keep the flower attached to the root? But when flowers are required in a sick room, or laid upon the casket containing the physical body to be laid away, they perform a service. Flowers are an aid to

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the newly-born, or projected etheric, or soul which has just left the body, and they strengthen and help that part to get right away from the physical. We like to see flowers used for such purposes, for they are performing a function.

Q.What about growths which become parasites, the ivy growing round the tree, or trees that shut out light and air?

A.The law of life is love and service. When growths become unhealthy they have to be removed. Man has been given dominion over all the lower kingdoms of life; he has the free will to control the lower kingdoms, but has not yet learnt to use his power with wisdom and love. Those things which appear out of place such as an ivy strangling a tree, or a tree obstructing light and air, have finished their usefulness. Therefore they should be gently removed. It is the pruning knife of the gardener. That which is outgrown and unwanted in the human garden has also to be pruned away by the hands of karma, and in the form of suffering, the working out of karmic debts—the pruning knife at work so that greater beauty, greater expansion may come. The same law applies all through life.

Q.When the life of flowers is finished, is it better to burn them, or to let them fade away gently?

A.Well, this is going to bring up the subject of cremation: you cremate a flower, you cremate a human body: precisely the same action takes place. If the human body be laid aside, it takes longer to disintegrate. In conditions where the population is small, and when the climate permits burial, it is peaceful, harmonious. The same thing applies to a body or a flower. But fire is the creative power. Fire, in a sense, gives life and destroys life. Fire means a very rapid disintegration, and the release of the spirit—the nature spirit attached to the little flower, the human spirit attached to man. There is suffering if body of man or flower is brought into contact with fire too soon. Therefore lay aside your flower until it is beginning to decay, and then it will be quickly released: but if you put it in the fire before decay occurs, there will certainly be suffering.

Benediction:

The blessing of God enfolds us all. May we go forth to give in the world that which we have received in the inner sanctuary: the love and the peace and the joy of the spirit.

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:

Natural world, inner world, conservation