

Ritual and its Effects

T011 The Inner Teachings 27th May 1936 Pembroke Hall, London

Invocation:

Let us with pure thoughts and joyous minds thank God our Father for the gift of life; for our preservation; and above all for the inestimable joy of spiritual enlightenment and communion. And let us pray that we may be ever conscious of our responsibility in giving unto our brethren truth and love.

We call upon the Angels of Wisdom, Love and Power to be with us in our work.

Amen.

Tonight's subject is very interesting; there are many who dislike any form of ritual, feeling that all ritual is merely a mockery, and there are others who feel afraid of it. As regards the first, we would say that those who fail to register any impression from ritual are likely to be souls who are deeply engrossed in physical life. In the second category we place those souls who (perhaps in some previous incarnation) have experienced the power of ritual, have had their fingers burnt, and therefore shrink from it in self-preservation or self-protection.

Ritual can produce very great power. On the other hand, forms or ceremonies used merely as such, without a mental impetus or will behind, may be as empty vessels. Many feel that the ritual of orthodox churches is empty and means nothing, but even such ritual, conducted without understanding, may stir emotions to some extent, but lacks the power to be of much effect. On the other hand the Roman Catholic ritual has a very powerful effect upon those who come under its ray.

We would explain that what takes place is a calling up of forces on the psychic plane which affect the emotional body. Ritual of the purest kind will raise the consciousness of the individual to a high plane of spiritual intuition—that is to say it first raises the consciousness, then opens the intuition—a centre to the inflow of spiritual forces. When we speak of 'spiritual' we usually think of the beautiful aspect of spiritual life, but let us bear in mind the forces of the inner planes, of a [psychic] nature, yet whose ray operates through the satanic or dark forces of creation. One may be called black magic; the other, working through pure love, the white magic.

We must not go too deeply into this; for one thing, we shall get very involved and for another this subject requires careful treatment.

We find therefore that ritual provides the means of drawing upon the psychic or spiritual forces to create a certain condition of mind. Many have read of the ritualistic practices of various nationalities and have heard or seen moving pictures of extraordinary dances (according to your Western thought) and incantations. These will appear as ridiculous, yet actually these people are working up a certain vibration and create, through that vibration, a certain state of mind which enables them really to see things and to contact forces and elementals which are quite real—which are creations produced through ritualistic practice and for the time being thus animated with a life which may be [helpful or] harmful.

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In some religions it is and has been the practice to create a certain state of mind in the candidate through ritualistic practices whereby the candidate is put through terrible mental torture. Although apparently degrading, those who practise such ritual do so believing that if they have the strength to overcome or withstand the tests they have acquitted themselves and have passed a degree into the next stage of soul-development.

Let us consider a more worthy aspect of the subject. Ritual rightly understood and practised with selfless and pure love, practised with the object of helping the candidate to attain a higher plane of consciousness, can be beautiful and helpful. But we admit that there is so much danger and so many pitfalls that it is unwise for anyone to participate in ritual without certain knowledge.

Take the ritual to which you are all accustomed, that practised in the churches. To many it seems so much like mockery—yet if you could see clairvoyantly what takes place with the action of the priest directing the power you would be amazed. Merely the holding up of the hand—if the channel is a strong channel and one developed to receive the flow of power—will provide a focal point through which the power will flow and be distributed into the congregation. Again, the act of placing the hands together to form a triangle makes a focal point for the power. The act of standing erect, with the spine straight, and legs and heels together and the hands together creates a channel for the reception of power. Practise it yourself; stand first in such an attitude before an imaginary congregation, and then stand at ease—and note the difference!

One of the most important ceremonies or rituals is the Sacrament, or Holy Communion, yet to many it means nothing. Could you but see a beautifully conducted ceremony and witness the gathering of angelic ones you would see them at the altar, drawing elements of beauty and power from the universal and infusing the bread and wine. If the communion is received with a pure and loving heart, the communicant is actually contacting the divine rays of the Christ Life—as some of you may have experienced.

Beautiful music, a harmony which raises the soul, draws to the musician and those participating certain angelic ones whose glory it is impossible to describe. The listener may be caught up, be bathed in the aura of these glorious ones, and oh how difficult is it to come down to earth again! To mix again with the harsh vibrations of ordinary life is painful after the soul has been raised to heights through the ritual of the musician.

Ritual brings power, creates power, but power unattended by love can be destructive—therefore anyone participating in ritual must do so with the purest motives; otherwise they open themselves to forces which may be undesirable. I hope I am not frightening you—there is no need to have fear.

Is there any means of protecting oneself against forces invoked through ritual? Yes, there is always the protection of pure love. Do not cast aside ritual as being worthless or of no value. Like other things, if used wisely it brings blessing; if foolishly it can be a great curse. Fire gives warmth, but put your hands in the flame and you will be burned. There are schools of

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thought who dislike ritual and declare it better to contact God in your own way, through the pure meditation of your heart. To some people ritual merely is a means to an end, crutches! They think it better to approach the Godhead without the aid of ritual.

True it is that the soul can reach its God unaided, but we are forced to abide by the laws of creation, of vibration. We know that certain vibrations create certain results, and ritual will create that vibration which is necessary for creation.

In the spirit world there are forms and ceremonies of great beauty which enhance the spiritual and life aspect of those participating. These wonderful ceremonies are used as a means of distributing power and blessing and love on to the earth plane. If one individual is very strong mentally and uses invisible power and thought to help another, how much stronger must that power be if many people work upon a certain rhythm—in other words, perform a certain ritual to bring into operation powerful vibrations and life force and then distribute it?

A word about initiation. Every soul at some time will pass through the portals of the Hall of Initiation and will take part, or be the candidate, in a ceremony. I may add that the power or help may be communicated to the candidate through a higher being, through one who has passed on the Way before and who is the channel for this great cosmic power. The soul is touched by fire; that is all I may say.

Another word about the priest who forms the channel for the power: if the channel be not pure that which comes through it will be sullied and can do much harm. Be careful before you participate in any ritual.

Perhaps it may seem that I have made contradictory statements, but it is well to know what can take place through the generation and projection of these invisible forces.

Some present may have been passed as candidates through certain mystery schools, or entered a Masonic lodge. Something inexplicable takes place—after the ceremony there follows an indefinable change, the raising of consciousness—it seems easier to receive impressions than before. As the candidate advances, so little by little the consciousness is unfolded and he understands more of the inner mysteries.

Q.How many initiations are there?

A.According to White Eagle's knowledge there are three major initiations in a man's life (not the 'one' day of life alone). But there are many minor ones, varying with each soul. One soul will perhaps in one initiation gain as much as another soul in several. But White Eagle has learnt of three great initiations through which every soul must someday pass.

Q.Can one have any idea of what one has passed?

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A.Does it matter? Yes, it is possible for you to get the knowledge; when you can function on that plane of consciousness whilst still in the physical body you may know exactly where you are, but it will only come to you intuitively through the Buddhic plane.

Q.Does initiation take place often during the sleep state?

A.Initiation can take place whilst the soul is away from the body, but it makes its impression on the soul, so that it is able to remember the experience. You may pass through initiation consciously in your soul, but your physical brain may not register it immediately.

Q.Had not the Sacrament been in effect before Jesus practised it?

A.Yes, the ritual came originally from Atlantis and was known as the Feast of Remembrance. It was practised of course in Egypt, when the juice of an orange was used, but actually before even the days of Atlantis the Feast of Remembrance was known.

Q.In that case, is it not an absolute necessity to us?

A.Yes, if you feel like that. But you see every soul is not alike. We ourselves would prefer to see the Sacrament in every church of the spirit.

Q.Do you consider that the schisms which have rent portions of the Christian Church are due to the practice of their ritual?

A.Yes, I would say so.

Q.Is the Feast of Remembrance identical with the Last Supper?

A.Yes, the same; then Jesus was enacting the part of the priest. Jesus himself practised ritual, although people often say 'Jesus did not like forms and ceremonies'. But then he did not perform his ritual in public. He received baptism by John the Baptist, and you will remember what happened; we could tell you of a very great transformation and union of the soul with the cosmos which then took place, and the ritual assisted in the incoming of the power.

Q.What does the Feast of Remembrance commemorate?

A.Remembrance for and of the creation of life; that is as well as I can express it. Doubtless White Eagle has far to go yet, but he still finds a great deal of beauty in the highest ritual. The Transfiguration was the result of ritual practised by the Master, and this manifestation could not be without ritual.

Q.You say that music is ritual—does that apply to all arts?

A.To all arts? Well, to a degree; but music creates vibration—rhythm, repetition, the same as in the case of incantation. In higher forms of music a certain vibration is created which, as

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with ritual, invokes the invisible devic forces. If this can be applied to other arts, then certainly they are also a form of ritual.

Q. Did not all creation come from sound?

A. Yes, sound that is soundless, the voice of the silence. Within the silence there is sound; meditate on this. Take it as a centre from which to start.

Benediction:

Angels of light, draw near unto us; bring unto these children the fruits of the Vine of Life; raise their souls into the light and peace of Christ the Son, the Lord of the world. So may they enter into the eternal peace.

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:

Senses, deva, mantra, chakra, nervous system

