

## Easter and the Life Beyond

T192 The Inner Teachings 12th April 1949 St Mary Abbots Place, London

### Invocation:

To the Almighty Spirit, Father-Mother God, we pray that the ministering angels of light, of wisdom, love and power may come into this group now, and that every soul may receive the inspiration of Thy life; that the mists of the earth life may be penetrated; that the vision glorious of Thy heaven world may be given to these waiting ones. O Lord Christ, we call to Thee in simplicity and faith that Thou wilt be with us, that Thou wilt manifest to us. We wait in confidence of Thy love and Thy promise. So mote it be!

Amen. Amen.

At our last group we were speaking upon life after death. Tonight we shall continue with this subject. Easter is near\* and we have a few words to say to you about this festival, because it has a bearing on life in the heaven world. Easter—the ancient festival of Spring—comes with mixed feelings of sadness and joy, for you associate Easter with the crucifixion of the Lord Christ.

*[\*In 1949 Easter Sunday fell on 17<sup>th</sup> April.]*

The cross has always taken a prominent place in religion through all time. The symbol of the cross in the circle is interpreted as the crucifixion of the man, or the descent of the spirit into earthly matter. In this sense it is a crucifixion when the soul incarnates, but then we find that after the experience or the crucifixion ceremony a liberation of the soul follows, an awakening and resurrection into eternal life. True, there is suffering when their spirit enters matter. So impressed are men's\* minds with the pain and labour of this earth that they reject the truth of reincarnation, because an instinct revolts against the idea of yet another span of mortal life. Other people, holding communication with the spirits in the pure, clear astral realms, do not believe that after life in higher worlds God will condemn the soul to reincarnate again on earth. You see, man's instinct is strong for the spirit to be liberated, to be freed in a world of light and beauty. It matters little whether a man rejects the teaching of reincarnation or not, for it is a truth. The soul must come into matter again, again and again many, many, many times in order to gain mastery over that plane of life. For this reason therefore you will find in every religion, all through the ages, this symbolism of the crucifixion of some particular saviour and then his resurrection into the life immortal.

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

We have told this inner group on other occasions that the crucifixion is really a symbol of the highest initiation—the earth initiation. The earth initiation means that the spirit has gained mastery over the physical and the earthly atoms. The other initiations, as you know, give the soul mastery over the emotions, the mind, and over the divine fire or power of kundalini. The earth initiation means that the soul has attained complete freedom from incarnation, that its karma has been worked out and that after this last initiation the soul is free to live in realms of light without need to come back for further education or testing.

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Yet there are souls who voluntarily return to earth. Such beings we call saviours of mankind. In your church festival of Easter you worship the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God. What do we mean by these terms? We mean the Lord and Master Jesus, one of the most ancient souls. We mean also the only begotten Son, Light, Truth, the Word—if you like—of God; which Light, which Word became incarnate in Jesus the Master. The earthly interpretation usually is that Jesus the Nazarene was the only-begotten of the Father. This, we think, is a mistake. The ‘only-begotten’ is not one particular soul, or one particular individual, but a representation of the Third Principle—the Cosmic Life, the I AM. It is the I AM which descends into matter and becoming crucified on the cross of matter is thereby liberated from all bondage after the passing of this final earth initiation.

As we are talking our vision opens wide in the heaven world. We see not earthly souls, not earthly people in bodies of flesh, but a great temple of golden light. We see many, many souls in shining raiment. These are they who come close. These are they who have been crucified, who have passed through great tribulation, whose garments are whiter than snow. They come back because they have learned the mystery of perfect love. They love humanity. They love you because they know that you are part of the same spirit as themselves. They come back to help you forward on your path towards the liberation of your soul from the crucifixion of matter.

When we talked last we referred to some of the difficulties and complexities that await the soul immediately after death. We want to describe to you the true state of life after the soul has passed through what some people call the purgatorial spheres. By the purgatorial spheres we mean that state of mind in which the soul finds itself when it has long been bound by selfish desires and low conditions of life. After death [such a] soul will have gradually to work through or let the fires of these desires burn out. Then it is able to rise into a condition of happiness and beauty. While man’s spirit is essentially pure and the spirit life pure and beautiful, when the spirit incarnates it becomes entangled with the desires of the flesh. In the beginning of its life in man, the spirit can be likened to a little child, a babe. Its light and power is so dim in both the body and in the soul that you can hardly recognise its existence in the people you contact in the ordinary, everyday world.

Now, the purpose of incarnation after incarnation is to force growth of that spirit into the full consciousness of its divine sonship. This full consciousness is only attained by long and varied experience in the flesh. You may still ask, ‘Why need the beautiful spirit descend yet again into such darkness and bondage?’ We answer that only through continued contact with matter can the spirit gain its strength and growth. A child may have the potentialities of a great man or a great woman but has yet to grow towards that end. So also with the spirit. So, when you find life particularly hard and limiting, remember that the purpose of that limitation is to teach you to rely upon the power of the divine Son within. Most people prefer to rely upon material things, upon money, mental equipment and their own ability to do things well. They go off that path which the spirit would take. The whole purpose of the difficulties of life is to bring forth the power of the spirit. Instead, many people give way. Being weak they appear to be lazy—mostly, not always. But when there comes a call upon that inner strength, upon the inner Son of God, then progress is made and real growth takes place.

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When the soul at last comes to the end of an incarnation, it passes onwards and goes through the fires which burn out the dross which it has collected during its period of weakness and foolishness. When all dross has been consumed the soul goes forward into the astral plane, or into a world of light somewhat similar to the earthly plane. The same forms of scenery are there, such as mountains and rivers, woods and gardens, flowers and trees, and there are nature spirits, fairies, elves, gnomes and sprites that abound in the astral world. Its people live in a state of intense happiness. Everything about them is as perfect as can be. They could not have reached that state, that spirit plane we are describing, could they not appreciate the perfection of that life.

We will explain what we mean. When the soul leaves its body it has to pass through this intermediary stage. If its consciousness of that spiritual life has been awakened on the earth, it will traverse that intermediary or purgatorial place in a sleeping state and awake in the heaven world. If, on the other hand, there has been little development spiritually, the soul may find itself like a horse wearing blinkers, quite unable to see the glorious country in which it is living. This is where the importance of meditation comes in. Once you are awakened you will commence to use your imagination and your powers of meditation. By exercise of these powers you will find yourself in beautiful places. You will see grand scenery, lovely snow-capped or sunlit mountains, beautiful valleys and rivers. You will see rainbow colours in everything, and you may see the most perfect architecture and wonderful temples. All these things you people say exist only in your imagination. Not wholly; they are actually places that you see when your spirit is released, for then you penetrate that world of light; even if only in vision, you see into the higher world.

People often ask, 'What do the people in the spirit life eat? Can they really eat? What do they do there?' Well, there are perfect and delicious fruits in the astral world. If the spirit desires food it can pluck from the tree the fruits of the spirit, or indeed any other kind of food that appeals. In higher spheres desire for food fades. Nevertheless, we want you to understand that the spirit world is solid and real, and those who live there can banquet—if they want to. They can eat very delicious food and drink a liquid which is equivalent to your wine, but is actually a spiritual substance. But then all food and fruits are spiritual in essence over there, because they are on a spiritual plane of life. They are, however, just as real to us as your coarse foods are to you. Regarding clothing, the inmates of higher spheres can clothe themselves as they wish in most beautiful soft materials, such as do not exist on earth. What we are trying to tell you is that in the spirit world life is as real as on your earth, only infinitely more beautiful.

Another question arises sometimes: 'Do you grow old in the spirit world? Why is it sometimes that we see a spirit man or a woman who appears to be old?' Well, there is no age in the astral world, only, shall I say, a period of maturity. A person may appear mature but never decrepit, always full of life, health and wellbeing. A spirit can clothe itself at will, and often will visit the earth wearing the appearance of the body it wore at the end of its last incarnation. It will appear like that in order to be recognised, but on return to the astral plane it is again at the perfection of manhood or womanhood. You like to have a change of dress? We too have a wardrobe containing different dresses that we can adopt at will. For instance,

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we may clothe ourselves as an Easterner, with the typical white robe and the turban. We may clothe ourselves as an Atlantean, with a crown of feathers like the plumed serpent. We may be seen sometimes as an American Indian with a crown of eagle's feathers. Some of my Indian brethren are very proud of their feathers, because every feather has been won. The wearer has gone through some grave ordeal to win each feather in his crown or his headdress. We may at will adopt the dress of our incarnation as an Egyptian priest. You also will do the same. Whatever you have been, whatever incarnation you have had, you always have the right to adopt that dress. It is yours. You have grown into it and the clothing belongs to you. Of course incarnations with which the soul is not very pleased can fade right away and disintegrate if desired.

Did we tell you that there are beautiful palaces and buildings in the world of spirit such as great laboratories for the use of the scientists, and very wonderful observatories for the astronomers, beautiful art galleries and music rooms, halls for the music lovers and gardens of exquisite beauty for the gardeners? Every conceivable desire is supplied in the world beyond this. Beyond and beyond and beyond—there is no limitation to the life of the spirit. We could go on talking for a long time about this life beyond the earth. You see, the earth has an astral world all around it that is far more beautiful and radiant than itself. There are many planets in the heavens that are purely astral and not composed of earth matter as you understand it. These luminous bodies exist in the heaven spheres when the soul, having undergone crucifixion, finds eternal life, such as was demonstrated by the Master Jesus. Afterwards that soul has power to create or to materialise a body at will, which can travel through space or to any sphere of life it desires.

Have we given you an idea of this finer world? The Master Jesus demonstrated it. After his crucifixion there came the ascension, the resurrection from the grave, in which he rose in a physical body transmuted from earthiness into astral matter. That body was sufficiently opaque for the disciples to see it. In due time after the resurrection he also demonstrated the ascension of the body into the astral, this heaven world. For as he stood and blessed his disciples he was raised into heaven. The miracles of Jesus do not need to be explained away. They are true. The Master Jesus had knowledge and command over the physical atoms. He was able to perform what to the ordinary man are miracles because he could manipulate and control matter. You do not need to explain away the miracles intellectually. You do not need to explain away the raising of the dead as Jesus demonstrated it, because these things are facts. They are true. Only the ignorant do not understand. The mind is always the destroyer, the slayer. The mind will always disregard truth, always, but the inner spirit, the Son of God, knows truth. It is this power which, growing in man through his physical life, raises him into the God-consciousness. Then he knows that all the so-called miracles are true and right, brought about by a natural process of spiritual evolution, understood by reason of the growth of the God life in himself.

So we catch the vision of the beloved Jesus Christ, rising from earth in full glory, and disappearing from the sight of the earthly man as he joined his Father and all the saints and the angels in the heaven world.

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God bless you, dear children. May your eyes be opened to the full glory of this astral life. You have come from it into the crucifixion of matter. You will return to it; and having gained certain knowledge you will be like soldiers ready to go forward again to conquer the enemy of the lower self and battle with earth conditions.

Q. Does it take a soul long to recollect its past incarnations when it passes into the astral world?

A. It does not immediately remember. Some souls do not wake up; they go through the cleansing sphere and then into a state of quiescence—some, not all. Others remember their past incarnations, but only the more awakened souls. The important thing is that consciousness of the spiritual life has got to come to the soul while it is on the earth.

### Benediction:

So may we receive the blessing of Thy love now and the peace of heaven be with every soul in this assembly.

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:*

*Acceptance, afterlife, surrender*