

# The Brotherhoods of Old

T231 The Inner Teachings 4th May 1954 St Mary Abbot's Place, London

## Invocation:

We open our hearts to pray to our God, our Creator, Father-Mother, and to the Son of God, the Light, the Supreme, perfect Light of Life. O Lord, may we be truly humble in our prayer to Thee. We pray for increasing light. O Lord, give Thy children understanding, so that when the vision opens before them they may not be confused by the earthly mind. O God, we thank Thee for the revelation of the spiritual life, for the bridge of ether which enables the spirit to commune with the earth. We thank Thee for all the beauty which love brings. We thank Thee for love, for love. We thank Thee that we can love our brethren. May Thy blessing be ever with us.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

You have asked us to speak about the ancient brotherhoods. It is a great subject to which we can hardly do justice in one short hour. However we will strive to convey a picture, first of all of brotherhood as we understand it. Many of you here are brethren within this Lodge. Some of you hope to become one of our number. We say to you all at the outset that brotherhood is not a matter of passing through some ceremony which admits you as a brother of any particular lodge or order. Brotherhood is contained in the heart. This ancient wisdom is the core of all brotherhood[s] throughout time. There are certain mystical truths which cannot be spoken of, can only be discovered by the individual when in a state of ecstasy or illumination, but the core of all brotherhood, whether it is of today or millions of years ago, is the inner light. Some of you have already been told that each brother\* has within his heart the Light, the Shekinah, the rose. The ancient brotherhoods held this symbol of the rose sacred. Inside the rose was the Light. The brothers would endure all manner of physical persecution for this precious jewel of light. Not only was it the mystical light in the heart that they guarded but there was an actual light which burned indefinitely. This light was created physically from a substance which some might describe as pure gold. Now gold itself is a form of light, and this ancient light was often encased in a stone as a symbol of the holy light of the spirit being encased in physical matter. This same light remained burning indefinitely. Perhaps you have heard stories of such discoveries even in your land. Some of you may be aware of the reality of these eternally burning lights. Again we say that the substance which keeps them burning is the substance of light, pure gold.

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

You people on earth have to think in terms of years, of time and space, but the brothers get beyond these factors. They comprehend the meaning of eternal consciousness, because life is consciousness. So long as the consciousness is there, life is there, and the consciousness of the spirit is eternal. You have short memories, and humanity as a whole has no memory of the past; has forgotten from whence it came and has no vision, no conception whatsoever of whither it goes. But when man's spirit reaches that divine consciousness, it is in the eternal Now, and it knows itself in very truth. It knows all it is and has been and ever will be. This may sound to you an impossibility. Well, time, as you call it, will bring to you this revelation of your eternal self.

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Britain, your magic isle, is not the only centre. Well-known and ancient brotherhoods (as you describe them) have registered their mark on the earth in many continents, in India and Egypt, America and Europe and also in the continents of the South, in Australia and New Zealand. The brothers are not white-skinned necessarily, but they are certainly white-hearted. Sometimes you find that what is known as freemasonry is a basis of brotherhood, and you will find (we are talking about earthly brotherhoods now) signs and grips, passwords and other indications amongst the Indians in South America, showing that they have profound knowledge of ancient freemasonry. You can go amongst them, particularly those of the Indian race, and there will be no sign at all that they know anything about these things. Yet even today there are centres of these ancient brotherhoods. There are caves (this you will find difficult to believe) of pure gold in the mountains in South America and elsewhere in the world, which are centres of the Brotherhood, but not until man is ready to get his values straight between spiritual and material things can he be permitted to lay hands upon these sacred places.

In those ancient days in South America, with which we are (or were) familiar, the furnishings of the sanctuaries were of pure gold; everything was gold, but it was cherished not because it was of material but of spiritual value. Gold is the most beautiful spiritual substance; it is the symbol of life, of the Son, of the Father, of God, and it was for this reason that our Indian brethren venerated gold. When a brother reaches a state of advancement, when he has learnt the secret of the, shall we say, the Rosicrucians and is able to turn or change base metal into gold, he does not do it because he has got beyond all desire to create gold for the sake of possessing earthly wealth. But most precious of all treasures in these temples or lodges of the past was the beautiful little light encased in a rose or a lotus flower. This was a symbol of pure spirit and a symbol of life, of love, and love was even put before wisdom. True wisdom is of the heart too, but there is always a danger that wisdom will increase vanity in the mind. This is something which the brothers have to guard against, but the love in the heart is the perfect life. You are far safer to follow the path of love even if you make mistakes; though you may suffer, nevertheless you will learn and thereby you will increase your power to be happy; you will increase your understanding of true values.

Brotherhood, as we have already said, was the same yesterday, is today, and will be for ever. You are getting right to the very heart of life when you enter into the consciousness of brotherhood or at-one-ment with your brother, your sister. Both sexes are the same in brotherhood; all souls are brothers.

We know that you are by nature inquisitive; that you want to rush into the temple and you want to hold and examine things; you want to know more and more and more about these ancient mysteries. Well you can know more, my brethren, you can know more if you will only provide the necessary conditions for the unfoldment of your understanding. You will never gain the knowledge that you crave for simply by reading books; you will only gain the knowledge for which you long, you will only reach the end of your search, through living, through daily experience, through contact with your fellow man.

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The ancient ones, who are, of course, masters of matter and of all earthly things, always concealed their true greatness. They lived on earth usually as very ordinary people. This is a thing it is well for you to know. No ancient brother will ever give away his secret. The greater the brother the more ordinary he will seem, the more simple a man, mingling amongst his fellows, entering into their interests, their joys and their sorrows, doing what little he can to comfort them, to point out a little light on the road on which they are travelling.

During the Middle Ages a number of such brothers lived in Britain. There have always been groups of these, all working for the one object. Few have been closely associated with an orthodox religion. They practised something much deeper than the surface religion. They interpreted their religion in the light of the deep wisdom which had unfolded in their hearts. They were not cramped, narrow-minded or bigoted. They were very broad and noble—oh, they were noble gentlemen of the Order of the Rose Cross!

The Rosicrucian Brotherhood is thought by many to have begun between the years 1400 and early 1500, with the coming into incarnation of the soul known as Christian Rosenkreuz, who brought back (to those who could understand him) this profound knowledge, this wisdom of the nature of the higher and angelic worlds, and who also taught his pupils the principles of alchemy, of the transmutation of base metal into gold, about which these men certainly had the power and the knowledge. The inner secret, of course, was the transmutation taking place in the heart of the brother. That is the real thing. Not only was there Christian Rosenkreuz but others also that many of you know about, such as the Master R., who also collected round him his own little group. These men, although resident here, were always travelling from one centre to another in Europe and other parts of the world. More than this, there were means of communication through telepathy, through the mind, or by astral travel or, if necessary, through the actual physical transportation. Some people who do not know quite enough, doubt this phenomena, but we vouch for it. The communication between all the groups of true brothers is just as natural as the sun rising in the morning and setting in the evening.

It is, however, erroneous to think that the Rosicrucian Brotherhood commenced with the coming of Christian Rosenkreuz. The Rosicrucian Brotherhood has never commenced; it has always been; it is part of the Cosmos. And away down the ages, even at the time of the Hyperborean Brotherhood, the Rosicrucian principle was the basis. It must be. It must be because man goes forth from God, a spark of God-consciousness, a spark breathed forth, but only a tiny spark, unconscious of its own inner qualities and life, [and] descends through the spheres of the spirit down to the earth. It is clothed in the flesh and its God-consciousness is buried in the flesh, much as that light we spoke of in the beginning of our talk is encased in stone and buried in the earth. In due time it is raised, and arduous is the task of raising it from the depths of matter, of breaking the stone, so that the pure light eventually radiates through and transmutes the flesh until in the end even the flesh ascends. The story is told through all the ages in every brotherhood. Your beloved Master Jesus and the Master R. both passed along the same way. Jesus, or the story of his birth, life, temptations—which are initiations—the crucifixion and the ascension, is the picture, the demonstration for you all of what is before every man. Man rises after the crucifixion or the overcoming of the lower self, and ascends into heaven as a perfected soul full of its own God-consciousness. The soul must

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pass through different stages, first of all unconscious, then becoming conscious, self-conscious and eventually God-conscious. Then Christ Supreme crowns that soul with the Christ Light.

This story is simply told in simple language, without long words and without a lot of ramification; it tells you of the basic truth of all brotherhood throughout time. Only one more thing we would add to this: it is not only on earth that this glory is known; it is the heavenly life which comes, which succeeds this mastery over the earth life.

Let us now turn our attention to one of the ancient centres in Britain, the most popular, Stonehenge. Many people visit Stonehenge; they gaze at those great stones and wonder who put them there. They wander around them, shrug their shoulders and walk away. They see nothing but a collection of monoliths. Well that in itself is the wonder of your age, but when a soul is attuned to the etheric influence of the stones, when it is attuned to the agelessness of life, the scales fall from its eyes and it is able to see enacted there a great and glorious heavenly scene. Is it on earth or is it in heaven? You are part of it, and the first thing that you, the soul, sees is a vast company of angels. Now this is not a fairy tale; we are telling you true things about this vast company of angelic beings gathered there, protecting this holy light. Remember, we speak of the light buried in the stone, buried in earth.

For those little lights have been discovered in your own country and all over the world, and are buried within the stones. Now we are coming to something much finer, to this holy light which can be seen on the altar. Why do you think that altar is called the Rose Stone at Stonehenge? It indicates the connection with the ancient Rosicrucian Brotherhood, and the ancient Brotherhood is still there and still enacting a grand cosmic ceremony year by year. That ceremony is as old as creation, as old as life itself on this earth. The brethren participating in it are invisible; there are human brethren and there are the angelic brethren, angels and archangels and planetary angels. You are only children in your nursery! We hint to you that there are such glorious beings from other planets who come to your earth, not for amusement but because they love humanity. They come to help humanity. They come to bring light, to stimulate light in the stones on your earth. You are the stones; these great ones come to help you; they bring indescribable spiritual power and love. If you are fortunate enough to be able to open your vision to that scene, where there is enacted the actual birth of the Christ Child and the great ceremony of the angels encircling and marching, you will see the most beautiful movement, hear the tone and sound of the music of the heavens and the great paean of praise which goes forth, hear the very creative power and Word which is being used. And yet many people present will hear and see nothing—no, see nothing except the rising sun. They will see the first rays of the sun strike that Rose Stone. The brothers of the Rose, brothers of the ancient Light, are there as well. They make no claims. The greater the brother, the more silent is he. Flowing from his heart there is ever love, love, love, kindness, goodwill; the brother sees always God, always good. You never need to look for what is called evil; you never need to criticise anything. You will say, 'Oh, but it is the critical faculty which helps things along.' No, no, no! It is love which helps the world go round; it is love which creates; it is love which brings all progress, your love and the love of all men which will help humanity.

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We have told you something about the ancient brotherhoods; what applies to one brotherhood or one lodge applies throughout the world. There are centres in South America, in the Andes, in Egypt, in India, in China—all over the world; the masses\* know nothing. These brothers work behind the scenes ever to bring light and progress. Now there comes again another great breath of life to help forward man's progress. Side by side is ignorance and cruelty, we know, but that will all evolve into goodness and into love, and soon, yes soon, you will welcome visitors from other brotherhoods in other planets. Brotherhood is not exclusive to the earth; there are brotherhoods on Venus, on Jupiter and other planets. Do not tell us that no life can exist there and that you are the chosen few and that God has created only humanity on this dull old earth. I assure you that the earth is one of the most retarded planets and the others are shining stars in comparison. So we hope and pray that all of you who are brothers of the ancient and eternal Shekinah, will do all you can as you go about, not to preach but to live the gospel, to sow light in darkness, to sow goodness where there is a lack of goodness. Do all you can to stimulate the good and the light in your brethren and you will indeed open your own inner awareness and your vision. Oh, my children, the brothers are here now! Cannot you feel them with you? Cannot you open your eyes and see the beauty of their faces and the love which is pouring forth? They will help you whatever your task. They will help you whatever gifts you have and feel unable to use. Ask the ancient brothers, who know you and who are near you. They will show you how to call upon the Almighty Presence, the Divine Light which is in you, and all things shall be obedient to the Divine Will and Love.

*[\*A word of the time meaning the majority of people.]*

We have yet another point that our Brothers behind are suggesting that we make. That is the profound silence essential to all brotherhood work. You people of today find it very difficult to remain silent for long, particularly if you are with your companions. In the ancient brotherhoods they would meet for hours; they would enter the lodge in the silence, during the movement and ritual they would be silent and afterwards. We impress this necessity for silence upon you all. Only in silence, the absolute silence, will you find the jewel you are seeking. Silence is one of the rules of the Brotherhood. You will learn so much in the silence.

## Benediction:

O Lord, Beloved, we pray to draw ever closer to the Heart, to Thy Heart, to be in Thy Love and in the glory of Thy heavens. May all fear and ignorance pass away. May love and joy and perfect brotherhood crown humanity. May there be no more war, no more sorrow, but a great burst of light everywhere on earth. May Thy Will be done on earth as it is being done in Heaven.

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:*



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*Psychometry, sacred centres, psychic abilities, spiritual influence, history, ritual, sacred, secret*

