

Joseph and his Coat of Many Colours

A036 Sunday Address 4th July 1937 Pembroke Hall, London Sunday Service

The text of this address is as issued in the magazine Angelus after it was given, apart from correction of errors

Text: duplicated script with the heading 'Joseph and his Coat of many Colours' plus the date. No superficial markings. Also printed in *Angelus*, September 1937.

Context: no details about the service; it reads almost like an Inner Teaching on the chosen theme and demonstrates how thematic these early addresses are.

General notes: the underlying story is from Genesis, chapter 37. The previous talk mentioning Judas as an 'opposite' of God was no. 023, given on 4th October 1936.

References: 'Father, forgive them', at the end of the talk, is one of Jesus's remarks in the Crucifixion narrative; see Luke 23 : 34. The story of the Prodigal Son, mentioned just after, is also from Luke (15 : 11-32)

White Eagle's Address:

Before we talk on our chosen theme, will you please open your consciousness to receive the streams of light now being poured upon this gathering. There is not one present who cannot respond to the love of God his Father. Life on earth can be hard, cruel to all outward appearances, but all [lives] have one thing in common, there is human suffering and sorrow and divine joy. These two bind humanity into one vast Brotherhood. You may believe in this or that religion, accept this dogma or that creed, but there is the one common note, and no matter which path you follow, which religion guides and helps you, you will eventually find this one common denominator.

With these preliminary words, we have asked you to attune your heart and your mind to the ancient doctrine, to the ancient wisdom to be found hidden beneath the stories in every religious school. You will find there is only one path leading to heaven. And heaven is not a place, not a fairyland of beauty afar off, but rather a state of illumination in man's mind, the highest condition of spiritual life which he can reach whilst yet man.

And so, brethren of mine, we have chosen one of the stories in your Christian Bible which contains the truth, the wisdom of the ages. There is nothing new, nothing fresh; we can never bring you fresh truth. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Thus stands the Cosmic Law which must be obeyed by all.

'Joseph and his Coat of Many Colours' – so the translation reads. The coat of many colours might be translated as 'the coat of many pieces' or of a number of component parts. Recall the aprons worn by Adam and Eve, made from many leaves. There are many points of similarity to be found in the parables and stories of the races – Jewish, Egyptian, Greek, Persian, Chinese. They tell of men who, passing through sufferings, indignities and sacrifice, find final regeneration or freedom. The story of Joseph is identical with that to be found in the mystery schools, the masonic brotherhoods, and tells of the candidate who walks the path towards final freedom. Joseph exemplifies the initiate who, having put aside all material advantages and mercenary claims, seeks to follow the path towards Mastership or regeneration. Remember, the spirit having chosen the path of experience, of its own free will

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the soul must descend from the place of peace and light, must travel downwards to gain experiences to strengthen and create the Temple of the Soul.

Throughout the Old Testament these stories recur. Now let us return to Joseph. He was, we are told, a dreamer; undoubtedly more advanced than his brethren. Because of this he was disliked – his brethren hated him.

Is not this the experience of every candidate on the path? His brethren hate him because they do not understand.

I would draw your attention to the twelve sons of Israel, of which Joseph was one. In this we read a deep mystical significance. These ancient tales bear a certain astrological reference, and when we read of the twelve brothers, we may identify these with the twelve signs of the zodiac, and the coat of many colours made for Joseph by his father portrays the elements of the earth, the elements which go to make a physical form. Joseph wore, then, a coat of many colours: a coat of skin, a physical form.

Did not the Master, the Son of God, also draw around Him twelve disciples, twelve brethren, making with himself thirteen. But Judas, you will remember, betrayed the Master. In a previous talk we referred to Judas as being the other aspect of God, likening each one of us to both Christ and Judas – one. Each contains the Christ Light and that which is base, a Judas which betrays in us the Son of God.

Because of his dreams and his beauty of character, his brethren were jealous of Joseph. You will remember his dream of the twelve sheaves of corn, and how the other sheaves, his brethren, bowed down to that sheaf which was Joseph. And in a second dream, even the stars bowed down to him, to his particular star: again a reference to the eleven bowing down to the twelfth, making obeisance to him who is the perfect one, the Son of Life.

The brethren conspired to rid themselves of Joseph, we learn. Always it must be – conspiracy amongst those who do not understand the light in another, conspiracy which would destroy and overthrow the one who is trying to tread the path towards the light. Have you not experienced such a condition? You long, you desire to do that which is right and true, you advance somewhat on the path, and you find that you suffer through the uncharitableness and unkindness of those who do not understand. An old story every being retold.

So his brethren tried to lose Joseph, but one amongst them recognised the love and the light which was his, and did not wish to harm him. So they took Joseph and stripped him of his coat. We are not told they killed Joseph – they did not wish to have his blood upon their hands. A deep mystical significance again: we might almost interpret this as a laying aside, not so much of the body itself, as of the coat of many colours which had been branded, besmirched with the Beast – do you understand? – the beast which dwells in all men, that baser self of earthiness.

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The brethren are reputed to have killed and smeared the blood of a kid on Joseph's coat. The kid (or goat) can be recognised as the zodiacal sign Capricorn, 'one who wanders afar'. Joseph was destined for a mighty work, not as revealed in the Christian Bible, but deeper and far more significant. He was destined to play a great part in the evolution of the whole human race. There is so much here we cannot hope to convey to you, but think for yourselves and you will discover much.

To a certain period in world history, the human race moved towards development of the race spirit, nations or groups were thus controlled and governed. Their peoples could not marry outside their own family, their own blood. But the time was coming when nations would have to intermingle with other nations, there must be intermarriage to prepare the way for the coming of the Great Light, known today as Christ, which brought the ideal of universal brotherhood. This could not be while the nations were dominated and controlled by the race spirit.

We may read in the story of Joseph's wandering from the Promised Land, from Canaan, the mystical story of the descent of the pure and undeveloped soul from the Father-Mother God into the coat of skin, the physical body.

This is the story of every man, of your own life, my brother, of the descent, the clothing with the coat of skin, the coming forth into the land of Egypt, the foreign land, in order to gain experience.

To return: one could, if one wished, interpret the placing of Joseph into the pit as the death of the physical body, and see portrayed the dipping again into earth's experience, the new life in strange places. Some call this 'reincarnation'.

(May we remind you here of a significant fact, that when the brothers sold Joseph to his captors, they received twenty pieces of silver. The Son of Man also was betrayed, for thirty pieces of silver.)

The story goes on to relate that Joseph was employed by a captain in the Egyptian army. Another important test came to him then: he was confronted with one of the most important tests on the path of the neophyte. He was tempted by Potiphar, the wife of the Captain. We read in all the ancient mysteries of this temptation of the flesh and the lower nature. Because of Joseph's refusal to succumb, he was thrown into prison. Are not you yourselves thus cast into prison, into a state of misery and resentment, when striving to overcome?

Whilst Joseph was in prison, he met two other prisoners. You will remember that when Jesus the Master was crucified, there were two thieves also, on either side.

You remember the dream of the Baker, one fellow prisoner? He was walking with a basket of bread on his head, and the birds came and ate it all. You know the interpretation given by Joseph? 'You will die', he said. Why? Because the Baker was solely concerned with the material substance of life, and nothing else, that which he bore was stolen. Does this convey

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anything? Man does not live by bread alone, nor yet by mind or intellect; if he surrenders all to his intellect, there is no life left in him.

Then came the Butler's dream. The Butler was pressing the grapes and filled a cup and offered it to his king – the grapes signifying the gifts or faculties given to him by the Creator. The Butler extracted from his experience a wine of life symbolical of the spiritual nature.

The Baker died, the Butler was reinstated. But he was so elated by his success that he forgot Joseph.

Is this not like so many of us – so elated with our own spiritual advancement that we forget others still languishing in prison?

But in due course Joseph was remembered by the Butler, for Pharaoh dreamed a dream no one could interpret, and Joseph was sent for to interpret the dream. Joseph was clothed in fresh linen – notice that – clothed in fresh clothing when he met Pharaoh.

Now the dream was of seven fat cattle and of seven lean cattle. The Bible states that the first seven cattle referred to the seven good years of harvest, and the seven years of famine to follow, indicated by the lean cattle. But in the ancient schools, seven years was the period needed for the neophyte to train, seven years to work upon his physical and his etheric body before the next degree.

Here is a reference again to the ancient masonic school. We might liken this second experience, when he interpreted the dream of Pharaoh, to the passing from the first to the second degree. Then it was that he was given control over a large area, and you note he was now thirty years of age – another deeply significant number. Jesus the Master was thirty when He commenced His ministry.

The final step, the third degree, was when he had received his brethren. They had to come to him eventually to beg for the food which they could not find in their own home. They had to make the same journey as their brother, they had to follow the same path, and beg of him for spiritual food.

Here the law of karma, of exact cause and effect, finds illustration – that which the brothers had sown, they reaped.

Then the final point, the crux of the whole story we would have you notice: Joseph brought all the family from the Land of Israel to the Land of Egypt. You will not appreciate the full significance of this, but it has reference to a tremendous advancement in human evolution.

The last act: Joseph not only forgave his brethren, but proved his forgiveness. He said, 'You did not send me away from my home. God willed that I should journey in Egypt'. But his brethren – again we liken them to the signs of the zodiac – had to play their part; each exercised an influence upon the soul of Joseph during his probationary path towards

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mastership. Again we see that the science of astrology has a great bearing upon the soul-life of the individual.

When Jesus was crucified, He too spoke in words of tenderness and love: 'Forgive them, for they know not what they do' – inferring that his lesser brethren who had taken and crucified Him were fulfilling their destiny; that they also moved onwards towards regeneration; that the suffering they inflicted was part of their life's experience. So also Joseph knew that although used to inflict suffering upon himself, they were fulfilling their part of the scheme.

Beloved, can you feel as Joseph, towards those who persecute you?

No, not yet perhaps. But remember our words; whatever you are called upon to suffer at the hands of your brethren, they are as instruments to help your evolution. The time will come, it must come – not necessarily in this day of life, when you will say, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. I thank my brothers for the service they have rendered me!'

Only when a soul has overcome the lower and earthly nature can it meet God the Father who in Heaven waits to receive the Prodigal Son returning from his long journey over the road of experience.

And now, beloved ones, receive into your hearts and minds the Light and the Blessing of the Master Christ, Who is all Love, all Wisdom ...

Peace of mind be yours.

Amen.

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