

The Esoteric Significance of the Five Senses

T023 The Inner Teachings 7th October 1936 Pembroke Hall, London

Invocation:

We raise our thoughts and aspirations to the spirit of love. We pray that love alone shall dwell within us, and with the incoming of God's love, all fret will fall away and we shall be caught up in the power, the wisdom and eternal love and there at Thy feet, O Father God, we pray to understand the deeper mysteries of our being, of life.

And we call upon the angels of wisdom, love and power, to draw nigh and to bless this meeting with their love.

Amen.

We ask you, beloved friends, to enter this communion with love in your heart. This request may seem unnecessary, but we would explain to you all that we do not work on the purely mental or mind plane when we come, but on the intuitional or Buddhic plane of consciousness, and the vibration is most delicate to sustain. At an ordinary séance the sitters are particularly asked to be sympathetic; even so, one who does not understand the extreme delicacy required for this finer communication between the spiritual and the physical world does not realise the need for certain conditions to be exacted.

Remember, beloved, that this human instrument is like your wireless receiver and can register instantly any disturbing element. And so I ask for quietude, tolerance and love. We are all pupils in the same school, and the great man* is he who can recognise that he has something to learn.

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

I think the subject chosen is 'The Esoteric Significance of the Five Senses'. You have been continually reminded that the spiritual world and the physical world are interrelated, that your physical life bears close relationship to the spiritual life. Indeed, one of the first lessons necessary to be learnt is this—the interpenetration, the interconnection of all life. There is no separation between God and man, between the spiritual realms of life and the physical. Man is the microcosm, and he contains within his physical, etheric, mental and spiritual bodies exactly the same life principles contained in the macrocosm. Hence that old saying written over the temple of the ancient mystery schools— 'Man, know thyself, and thou shalt know God and the universe'. Within man are eight principles which are contained in the whole, in the cosmic body. As with man, with man's body, so with God's body. We do not ask you to conceive, however, some anthropomorphic God as of old, but would try to outline the relationship between man and the cosmic body of the Lord of Creation. Man's five senses enable him to contact life on the physical plane; they do not function only through the physical body however, but also through the higher vehicles or spiritual bodies of man. We will itemise and relate each sense to the corresponding higher elements of life, and see the importance of so harmonising the physical life that it balances and controls the five senses. Then we are able to penetrate through them into the heart of the cosmos and to unravel the mysteries of the universe.

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To make the subject clearer and to simplify, we will first consider the eight principles of life. Earth, Air, Fire, Water, Ether, Mind or Intelligence, which is the controlling power, the Soul or individualisation, intuition or Spirit. Earth, Air, Fire, Water, Ether, Intelligence, Soul and Spirit. Now of the elements five have correspondence or relationship to a physical sense. Again through these physical senses, man opens the way to the inner mysteries of his being.

We will take first the sense of smell, which some possess in a very acute form. When that sense can penetrate with knowledge not merely the smells of the earth, but the finer essences of life, it is contacting (smelling, if you like) the perfume, the emanation of the cosmic body. Now we relate the sense of smell to the element of Earth. You can, if you will, smell the essence of life, the perfume and fragrance, the inner vibration, the very essence of the earth, and as you penetrate even beyond and utilise the sense of smell which can manifest in those higher vehicles or bodies, you absorb or inhale the essence of the cosmic body. Do you see what we mean? You may penetrate through your physical sense of smell into the life of God.

Thus these five senses, though primarily of the physical body, are fundamentally of the cosmic body.

Air: Now we relate the element Air to the sense of hearing. Can you recall the reaction upon your feelings or soul-body while listening to music which deeply moves you, or when you listen to the wind in the trees or do you not get any reaction? Do you reach out and touch something not purely physical, not only some vibration of the air? How did music originate? By an effort to reproduce the sounds in the air created by the winds. As you attune your hearing to these vibrations of sound and reach behind the physical to the inner hearing, you will hear the mysterious word, the great Word of Power, the Creative Word pervading the air. Listen, when you are in the country, and if you can silence the lower or objective senses and open the inner hearing—and—oh! Supreme experience! Hear the Great Word ‘O-o-o-o-o-o-m-m-m-m-m’ pervade all things—God’s voice, the voice of the cosmic body.

Fire: The next element, we relate to sight. Light reveals the physical world to us. Fire gives us light; therefore we relate the element fire to the sense of sight. Now if you strike the higher octave in sight, you receive illumination of spirit—the light penetrates the inner being and thus, through the light of the Sun or life spirit of the earth, or by the light of God, the light of Christ dwelling in a heart, can the inner eyes be opened so as to reveal the Light of God or Christ in your brother man. Therefore you must have illumination in your own sight before you can see the God, the Light, the Christ, the love in creation. The light of the body is the eye. When the sense of seeing is developed on a higher octave, you are able to see not only the objective body of God or Christ, but the subjective in all creation. Your eyes being illumined, touched with the Divine Fire and Light, you see the beauty of all things.

Water: We relate the element Water to the sense of taste. That may sound perplexing to you, but let the inner self speak. For instance—drink the water from a running brook, drink the sparkle and the sunlight which gives it life. Do you taste water only? No, more than water, an indefinable, indestructible element—you drink the *very life of the earth*, intake a very part of

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the cosmic body, the life force. Through the sense of taste which we relate to the water element, you can create or bring about in your physical body the turbulence of a storm, or surpassing harmony and peace. Think well on this. Through the mouth can enter harmony, peace—or tempest creating havoc in the physical body, like to that in the ocean. The sense of taste within will bring harmony, will create peace and a well-ordered microcosm, or it will do the reverse.

Earth, Air, Fire, Water—Ether. The element Ether we relate to the etheric body and to the sense of feeling and touch. Hence if the etheric body is driven out or away from the physical body, there is no feeling, a fact demonstrated when a patient is given an anaesthetic, a drug the effect of which is to drive out the etheric body. Then there is no feeling. It is the etheric therefore, which holds together, which interpenetrates the physical, which causes or transmits feeling or sense of touch. Therefore when physical sight is destroyed, the light which normally penetrates through physical sight, quickens or penetrates via the etheric. So you get a keener sense of feeling and touch. Relate this sense of touch to the cosmic body and find that through such an extension of touch, men can reach the cosmic body, feel the form of the Lord. This is crudely expressed. There is a great deal more behind which might be revealed, but we have endeavoured to give enough, so that you may begin to think for yourself and experiment with your five senses, remembering that behind physical sense, the delicate and sensitive etheric and cosmic senses exist.

The Master Jesus referred to the finer senses when he said that man has ears and yet does not hear, has eyes, yet does not see. Blessed are they who can see and hear the inner mysteries.

Q. When you speak of the sense of hearing and the sense of touch, would you relate that to the arts—to handcrafts and the like? And is handcraft an attempt to bring through from the other side the beauty that is there?

A. You have answered your own question. The sense of touch and the work of the hands is an important channel for spiritual development. Through touch man learns to mould, to create, the cosmic substance. Keep pure and sensitive your five senses, using them on the physical plane with the highest endeavour, thus opening the five gateways to the spiritual and invisible forces. Therefore the need for balance in your life, temperance. Never go to extremes—cultivate harmony and thus increase your awareness of God. You can taste God: through smell you can inhale the essence of God, increase awareness of the God life. Through sight you can see God, through hearing increase your awareness of beauty.

This is the whole purpose of your life on earth, that through these gateways you may increase your awareness of God. Inhale the perfume of an exquisite rose, not only with your physical but with your spiritual sense, and what happens? It will create a picture, an image, possibly, the figure of the Master. The perfume raises your vibrations, and if far enough, there will grow in your mind the perfect form, the Beloved. The perfect form you will conceive is the Master, even the Christ.

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Q.Can you explain genius as applied to the development of the five senses? Music for instance. Would it be over-development of one particular sense?

A.Rather a growth of spirit of the intuitive faculty, expressing itself through the physical vehicle of one particular sense to a greater degree through that sense than through any other.

Q.Suppose a man or woman sets about cleansing his body by becoming a vegetarian, a non-smoker and abstainer, does his sense of smell become so sensitive as to detect from the auras of others whether they are smokers etc.?

A.Certainly; to a sensitive the aura is full of odour. The man who has his five senses quickened does not need to depend upon speech or outward form, but can penetrate and reach and smell and taste and touch all that is unseen. There can be no deception on the higher octave, for your five senses tell you exactly the truth.

Benediction:

O, Eternal Father, Thy children would come into Thine arms, would rest upon Thy heart. Thou knowest the need of each one of Thy children, and we pray that nothing within us shall prove a barrier to our coming and entering into Thy kingdom of peace and love.

We thank Thee for our creation, our preservation and all the joys and blessings of life.

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:

Inner senses, psychic senses, sensitivity