

# The Meaning of Ritual

A186 Sunday Address 1st February 1948 St Mary Abbots Place, 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: from Angelus, May 1948.*

*Context:* key to the dating of this address is its mention of the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, which occurred on 30 January 1948. There would have been a service on Sunday 1 February. Whether this is it is uncertain; the way in which Gandhi's death is discussed sounds more like mature reflection than shock response (at least in the minds of White Eagle's listeners), and that would move the date to the first Sunday in March, which was the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month. But White Eagle himself speaks of the shock people felt, and thus the balance perhaps swings to 1<sup>st</sup> February.

*General Notes:* after a very interesting discourse on ritual, White Eagle very subtly moves his topic to the death of Gandhi and goes on to make the point that the assassination of someone so key, just as in the case of Jesus, has an infinitely greater power to perpetuate their values and beliefs than their continuing to live, quietly. The same might be true of the Cathars, whom White Eagle often cites, and who, in being almost completely extirpated, have left a memory to humankind that may never vanish or cease to inspire, at least during the current cycle. There is also a substantial discussion in this address of the destiny of Judas; for more on this subject see White Eagle's book *THE LIVING WORD OF ST JOHN*.

*References:* 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do' is Luke 23 : 34. 'Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect' is Matthew 5 : 48. At the end, the phrase 'make his face to shine upon you' echoes Numbers 6 : 25.

## White Eagle's Address:

We would bring to you a message of truth, of faith, of beauty, comfort and inspiration. We would like first to talk about the world unseen. Of course, people working purely with their minds do not believe in a world invisible. This is their misfortune, in a sense; they have so closed their doors of their psychic and spiritual bodies that they are unaware of the world invisible. Yet if they read their scriptures, or the beautiful teachings of the ancients, the wise men and the philosophers, or of the poets down the ages, they will learn of the mysteries of this heavenly world. We would like to withdraw the veil before your eyes, so that you could see into the peace and the serenity. It is a natural world but infinitely more beautiful than your earth. We would like to tell you that this world of spirit which is so beautiful is created for each soul out of its own spiritual substance. To describe heaven to a materialist would convey nothing, because he would not have the qualities within himself to create even a picture of that heaven.

Many people dislike what is called 'ritual'. They have no use for it. To them ritual is just play-acting, conveying nothing, meaning nothing to their understanding, their sight and to their hearing. Could they have the veil lifted from before their eyes, they would see the purpose of ritual revealed.

When you come into a service like this the first thing for every soul to do is to close its doors to the outer world. This is what is called in Freemasonry 'tyling' the lodge, or barring out the material world. As the ritual of your service proceeds you are raised in consciousness from a material and a physical to an illumined and spiritual state of being. This may not be felt in the

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worlds that we speak to you only, except that our words may raise your consciousness. It comes about also from the preparation which has been going on from the moment this service commenced. In this preparation even the flowers on the altar play their part in raising the consciousness. The ritual of the music also helps to build a spiritual temple around you. Were you clairvoyant you would see angelic forms here. You would see three great Beings clothed in white – and yet in all the soft colours of the spectrum – and you would see that these Beings were acting as channels, directing Golden and silver rays of light upon this service; so that in spirit you are being raised far above the worldly level of thought and feeling. Ritual serves to create a channel for angelic powers so that they can send through spiritual light to the earth people. You come to a service with a mind full of material thoughts, or suffering from an irritating cough or cold, or sundry aches and pains – in fact you are imprisoned by your body. Your real self wants above all things to commune with God, to worship God, to be able to reach up to higher planes of consciousness. As we have already said, the ritual of the service helps you to detach yourself from worldly things and enter into the temple of the spirit. You can yourself prove this is true by your reactions to a service of this nature. With or without your conscious aid you are raised. Even if you cannot see, you feel the presence of angels, of the company of saints.

Ritual does not only take place in a church or in some gathering of people, but also within the individual's own being. You find help if you are in a company like this, but there are souls so far advanced along the spiritual path of evolution that they do not require such aid in their approach to the invisible worlds. They are able by a process of right thinking, right speech and right action to open their own being without ritual to the divine light and life of God. Souls able by this process of life and thought to open the channel of the heart and being to the inflow the glorious light of God are known as saints. They are very gentle people, living often in seclusion. There are others who are not permitted by their karma to live alone, much as they would like to do, but are drawn into the world of action, and called upon to serve mankind in public offices.

You have often heard us say that the time will come when the government of the whole world will consist of initiates or saints. This statement may make some of you smile, but this is what happened once and will always happen in a golden age. Yes, those men and women called to the service of the government of the people will be initiates; they will be souls who by their former lives have prepared themselves to be channels for the pure light of God. For this purpose they have to be prepared in utter selflessness and purity of motive and devotion to their brother man.

The whole world has been shaken recently by the assassination of a man who will be known in the future days as one of the great saints, because he has long been a channel of the light of God, as were the saints and initiates of past ages. You will notice that this happening has come as the world is on the cusp of the Aquarian age, the age of spiritual brotherhood. There will be queries – we hear them on all sides. Why was he not protected? Why was such an influence for good removed in such a manner?

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Mahatma Gandhi was killed by an assassin when he himself had preached non-aggression, when he had given his life to lead his people in the paths of peace and brotherhood. Of course you would say it must have been his karma. Nay, more than his karma. We assure you that the karma of very many individuals had been involved in this tremendous act. It calls to our minds the fate of the other great Master who also taught, preached and lived the gospel of love and brotherhood and non-violence, the Master Jesus – through whom the Christ shone. He too was assassinated or murdered, crucified by the worldly mob.

Gandhi was killed by those who did not agree with his gospel. It is strange, you will say, that those who preach the gospel of love and brotherhood are destined to pass out of the body by the very method that wars against their own teaching. But there we see the law at work, because beings highly evolved on the spiritual path by their teaching, their lives and example arouse the antagonism of materialism on earth and of the darkness in the invisible worlds; but it is not finished! We mean by this that when such an act is committed the spiritual forces, both positive and negative, are brought into conflict, but not as you know conflict on the earth plane. It means that the light and the power of the spirit thereby increases. By this act which has so shocked mankind, a tremendous spiritual quickening will take place. The spiritual powers in the invisible will come forward and demonstrate their truth: instead of an overcoming of the powers of light by the powers of darkness there will be an increase of the light, because with the liberation of that great soul there will be a breaking of the shell and the golden light of heaven will flood the earth.

In a sense that one soul has released a power which will bring brotherhood closer to the hearts of the people, much as the crucifixion and the martyrdom of other great ones down the ages never failed to bring more light, more truth. Like an explosion the light breaks forth. The Master Jesus was destined to bring a great illumination to the earth. Had he not been crucified there would not have been the radiation of this message. You will find the same truth all down the ages. When light beings, saints, masters, advanced souls have given their knowledge, their love and their service to mankind they have always had to suffer. Even if their bodies were not, their souls were always crucified and according to the extent of their suffering so is the measure of good which they accomplished. The Gospels say that Jesus named Judas as his betrayer. The esoteric explanation is that the Judas in every man betrays the Christ in him. Nevertheless, these stories are enacted on the earth as well as in the individual life and soul. The Master Jesus could see the karma of Judas: he knew that Judas according to his karma had to be branded as a betrayer. Jesus had love in his heart towards Judas. He would not force him to work out his karma, so forgave immediately, sent Judas love so there remained no karmic debt between Judas and Jesus. This is what the saints do - they do not contract karmic debts, they give love, love and forgiveness. 'Father forgive them for they know not what they do.' This demonstrates the law of forgiveness and love. Although people cannot see in their particular lifetime the outworking of such an act, nevertheless history will show the results of lives of forgiveness and saintliness.

This seems to stray far from our original theme of ritual, but what we link up in your minds is this: the preparation of a gathering like this as the channel for the inflow of the light of heaven; and also the preparation of the individual life for the reception and the direction of

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the Great White Light into the world. A man's life, a woman's life, can be a perfect ritual. It is no use saying you do not believe in ritual when your whole lives are a ritual. Everything you do daily is a form of ritual, even to the simple things like clothing your body, washing and dressing, and the ritual of meals, of catching trains, going to work and so on. All is a ritual. You can make ritual in your life so perfect, so harmonious that you are creating yourself as a channel for the light of the Christ spirit, so that you are drawing into your aura angelic beings who will serve through you your brother man. They will also serve you. This is why it is good and wise to live calmly and tranquilly. If you get hasty, or in a passion, you can break up these fine vibrations. In other words you are crashing the soul temple which you are endeavouring to build.

So, my dear ones, never get fussed, always keep calm. You will say that you cannot make such progress if you serve the law of tranquillity and surrender. This is not so; the whole point is to adjust your mind, your thoughts, your actions to the Great White Spirit of peace and brotherhood. When living according to the law of brotherhood and of love you must be making an effort, you must be striving, you must be keeping very calm and very tranquil. You are putting into action a divine, a spiritual power which is creative; this power is rebuilding your soul, and it is this building, this soul-structure that you will constantly live in whether you are in or out of the physical body.

The whole of life, then, is ritual; and by the correct use of ritual – that is doing it precisely, carefully, calmly and with love in your heart always – by opening your consciousness to the divine spirit, to the all-enfolding power of God, you are making yourself a channel. You cannot move amongst your fellow men, you cannot live if you have created such a channel within your being, without your becoming a great server of mankind. Your name may not be shouted from the hilltops; you may pass from your body unknown and unsung. That does not matter; but what does matter is what you are giving to mankind, what you are creating in God's universe.

If all men and women understood this truth; if all the world understood it as this moment and put into practice these things, what a beautiful world you would have! Now, this is the only way that you will ever attain this end. Legislation is all very well, but without spiritual life there cannot be perfection and there cannot be true happiness. Will perfection ever come, you say? Our answer is, most certainly; for it is in the divine plan that man should learn to be a channel for the Great White Light, should learn to create that which is harmonious, beautiful and perfect. 'Be ye perfect even as your Father in heaven is perfect' – the Great Spirit living in harmony, beauty, truth and light. You are part of that universal spirit, and it is your work to manifest His light on earth.

So we look to these saints of all the ages, and give them deep thankfulness for the service which they have rendered to mankind. For they cause a great light to flood the earth. Were it not for such lives the earth would not only be in a state of darkness, but would be destroyed.

So we say to you keep your faith in divine things; seek the open vision, seek the glory of your God; and he will bless you, and make His face to shine upon you and give you peace.

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*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:*

*world of light, spirit world, heaven world, spiritual contact, tuning in, light within, masters, holy men, ceremony, traditions, sacrament, sacrifice*

