

The Path of the Soul - 6

T162 The Inner Teachings 17th April 1946 St Mary Abbot's Place, London

Invocation:

My brethren, let us rise into the temple to pray. O Great Spirit from Whom we all derive; Thou Who art Father-Mother God; we thank Thee and we adore Thee with all love. Thou hast given to us the gift of life and the opportunity to be happy in the kingdom of Thy creation. O Great spirit, we come to Thee with manifold problems, sorrows and difficulties. May we at this moment surrender, leave all these things outside, as we enter into Thy courts. For we know that with the incoming of Thy wisdom into our minds and love into our hearts we shall receive understanding and guidance, and shall have no need for anxiety for all problems will fade away in Thy glorious light of truth and peace. We pray this evening that a flood of golden radiance may enter our temple and that each soul in the temple may be blessed according to Thy will.

Amen.

Beloved brethren, we have opened our hearts to God knowing that God is all wisdom and love and He-She gives to us everything we need, but it is not easy for you to have complete confidence in this divine truth, particularly when you are (as you say) eager for service. Delay is perhaps one of the trials which beset most aspirants on the path, because the soul has seen the glories of the heavenly kingdom and wants to bring all people to the same vision. It feels that if its life were different, if barriers were removed, if only the right opportunities would open up, then it could give that service to mankind* that it feels so eager to give and longs to give. This period of waiting and testing is most difficult for the soul to accept with patience. At these times the soul believes it knows best, thinking that if only people would not be so dense it could render the service which they need. But they won't be helped! And God Himself seems to cry 'Halt!'

*[*See the introduction for an explanation of gender issues.]*

My brethren, now we enter the innermost temple; at this very moment we enter into the temple of God and we become aware of its radiance; we become aware of countless souls gathered in this temple of the Lord. We behold the blazing altar; we behold the Divine Presence serving all creation at that altar, and truth tells us that we too are come to receive a measure of that holy service. As we are able to absorb and receive this divine essence into our hearts we become blessed with inner peace. By this we know that we have surrendered all cares and frets and fevers of the lower mind. As we contemplate, meditate before the Divine Presence we know that all is well, and that God is all wisdom and His ways are those of a loving parent, perfect and true. An earthly parent may think he loves and yet he often indulges his child, mistaking indulgence for love, but the Heavenly Father perfectly loves and does not indulge His child. Nevertheless often His love causes Him to withhold that which the child would grasp and hold. By this we catch a glimpse of the dispassionate mind, the higher mind of the divine essence. For a flash we are able to comprehend a love which withholds as well as gives, a mind which is in no hurry because it is completely sure of the outworking of divine laws which are ordained to bring to the child of earth the blessing of realisation of divine love, divine beauty, divine truth and divine happiness.

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Let us bear in mind these preliminary words. We have received into our hearts the divine essence and we have known the meaning of surrender and peace. All is well.

Our subject is the air initiation. We will endeavour to make our theme clear without going over too much ground that has already been traversed. We commenced with the water initiation, which we found concerned the emotional and the psychic nature. According to the mystery schools of all time, the first degree, the water initiation, means control of the emotional nature, the passions, the feelings of man. The second degree is the air initiation, and this concerns the mind. At the last group we gave an outline of the two aspects of the mind, the two pillars through which we must pass into the temple of initiation, which are the higher and the earthly mind: the mind of man—the earthly mind, and the mind of Christ—the higher or the heavenly mind. To those souls who have passed the first degree (which is through the psychic or emotional nature, or through religious aspiration) there comes the next degree, which means discrimination between the mind of earth (the mind of man) and the mind of heaven (the mind of Christ). Then follows the testing and the conflict.

You all know how so-called reason (or the lower mind) can argue against all the presentations of the Christ mind. How reasonable seem those arguments that tell us why we should not be too sentimental or too idealistic; why we should be practical and think of our own bread-and-butter—think first of self-preservation and the needs of our family. How important are these things to every man and woman! Yet the mind of Christ, the higher mind shows yet another, a higher way of life. For every soul must pass through this same testing; and whilst the higher mind prevails (during such times as these when we are in the temple of the spirit) yet the higher mind knows well that when it goes back to the world and is faced with the problems of life the reason is likely eventually to overpower the Christ mind. The task in hand is for the soul to become so strengthened that the higher mind rules every detail of human life, so that life is controlled and directed not by reason but by inspiration.

Throughout the Bible references to these two minds will be found, in language which is largely symbolic. But to the soul awakened to truth the meaning is clear. We have in mind the case of Moses, who led the children of Israel in the wilderness for forty years—a space symbolising a period of waiting for their birth into spiritual life, spiritual light and understanding. Although the Israelites knew that they were being led towards the Promised Land still they murmured and grumbled. In this we see the lower mind at work. You will remember that Moses himself never actually entered the Promised Land and few indeed of any of those who had wandered in the wilderness ever got there either. But their children entered in. Perhaps this means that in their next incarnation those souls actually entered the Promised Land? The children of the fathers had wandered so long that they were eventually led not by Moses but by Joshua.

We interpret this to mean that Joshua was representative of the higher mind. But you will remember that Moses was allowed to see the glories of that land but did not taste the life therein. Isn't that the way with us all? Long do we wander in a wilderness, undergoing our testings, our preparation, and in due course—maybe in the next incarnation but not necessarily, because all these initiations can be passed in one life—the soul reaches the

The Path of the Soul - 6

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Promised Land, which symbolises the state of illumination when the higher mind comes into its own, and then enjoys the glories, the fruits, the beauties of the heavenly state. Some of you here are training in the art of meditation. You may not yet have reached the Promised Land but it is waiting. You will find it in due time. Then you will not only see but you will actually enter and enjoy the life, the fruits, the realisation, the illumination of the higher mind. This is the meaning of the air initiation, because the mental body is associated with the air, the mind. The winds of heaven—but it is the higher mind which catches the winds of heaven, not the lower, the higher.

At our last talk we spoke about the disciples plucking the ears of corn and rubbing them in their hands, so that the husks blew away and the grain was left. Even then the corn was hard and needed to be ground into flour before it could be baked into bread. There is symbolism in this. The husks were useless—material, earthly things fall away—but the disciple is left with the hard grains of corn which have to be pounded up by human experience, the experience of every life. Did not the Pharisees accuse Jesus of plucking the corn on the Sabbath Day and condemn Him? Why? It suggests that the Sabbath Day was regarded as a day of contemplation, of meditation, when man enters into the courts above and takes stock in his higher mind of his heavenly experience, with a view to applying what he learns during these hours to everyday life. Therefore the Pharisees disapproved because to them religion was one thing but everyday life and business was another. In other words they condemned Jesus for teaching the people to apply their spiritual understanding, their spiritual findings to their business, their material life.

To repeat—the grinding of the corn means the working out in everyday life of the spiritual truths that the higher mind learns. You remember the reference in the Old Testament to the twelve little loaves of shewbread kept in the temple. This brings to mind the twelve zodiacal experiences by which every soul learns whilst in incarnation. It reincarnates again and yet again until it has absorbed the twelve labours of Hercules. The twelve little loaves or experiences represent the sum total of human incarnations. Before they are taken into the temple they are sprinkled with incense—which means that man has to become meek enough to learn his lessons sweetly, and not in a severe, harsh or stern way. He must present his bread, the sum total of his incarnations, lovingly sprinkled with sweet incense so that it may be acceptable to God.

Let us now consider the Sermon on the Mount*—surely a controversial subject, which people functioning only in the mind of earth say is impractical in modern times. The Sermon on the Mount is true today, yesterday, and forever, because in it Jesus gave to his disciples, initiates, those who had passed the first degree and were learning the second, inner teaching or rules which have to be learned and applied before the soul can be initiated. He divided this discourse into two parts—first stating the four aspects or four tests which every initiate would have to face, and secondly outlining the four attitudes of mind in which the candidate must accept these tests.

*[*Matthew ch. 5-7]*

The Path of the Soul - 6

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Here are two statements in the Bible that appear to be contradictory. Both concern the Sermon on the Mount. One reads: 'He went up into a mountain ... and his disciples came unto Him' (Matthew 5 v.1); the other reads: 'He came down with them and stood in the plain' (Luke 6 v. 17). Yet the two can be reconciled, because the going up into the mountain means rising in consciousness when the soul enters the higher mind or functions in the higher mind. But Jesus, although he had attuned himself to an exalted state to receive what he should give to his disciples, had to come down on to the plain, to descend to the level of the disciples. He could not speak to them from great heights of illumination. He had to come down to their level of understanding. So he sat down and spoke of those things that they would have to encounter, explaining that if they accepted their testing rightly they would be blessed. Now the four tests of which he spoke were: hunger; sorrow; persecution; poverty. During the course of its human experience the soul must undergo, must suffer all these four—poverty, hunger, sorrow, persecution—which come to the soul to test it.

But the tests themselves are not so important. It is the reaction of the soul to them, the attitude of mind that matters, because the higher mind must be brought into operation and not the lower mind, since if the higher mind deals with these problems, then, the soul learns the qualities of Christ—meekness, mercy, purity, and peace. It learns to be meek in all adversity. It learns to be merciful to all its brothers. It learns purity of life and thought, and it knows an absolute peace or surrender to God. These are the four qualities that are essential before the soul can pass the air initiation.

One final point. We talk often about sacrifice. Perhaps we use the word too much. It would be better if we trained ourselves to say 'surrender' instead. For then the soul no longer thinks in terms of sacrifice because the soul has become gentle, merciful, pure, and peaceful. With the attainment of these qualities the thought of sacrifice fades, because the soul has learned the lesson of divine love. Therefore in its human relationships the soul has reached such understanding and love for its brother soul that its happiness is to serve. It does not serve because it is compelled or because it feels that it ought to serve. It serves because it holds no desire to do other than to give service. So we might say that the air initiation brings to the soul the lesson of brotherly service. The higher mind being triumphant enables the soul to give out of pure love for its brother. Having learned brotherhood it has entered into the courts of heaven, consorted with its companions of the spirit and received the illumination of Christ its Lord.

Q. How is it possible to control the lower mind?

A. The way is by continual meditation. When you are in the world, go about the world always in contact with the higher mind, not necessarily to the forefront of your mind (because your earth mind has to deal with earth things) but as you thus meditate continually the higher mind becomes an active part of you. So we say the higher mind is operating from the back of the brain so that it is always there behind everything. The secret is to keep very still, tranquil, calm and so control the emotions. This is why the first degree is control of the emotional body—control of the emotions of passion, fear, depression and anger. Then the higher mind functioning behind the scenes becomes strong and directs every thought and action so that the

The Path of the Soul - 6

T162 The Inner Teachings 17th April 1946 St Mary Abbot's Place, London

mind of earth automatically, instantly obeys. It cannot be otherwise. This means continual discipline. If man won't discipline himself then God has to discipline him through four things—poverty, hunger, sorrow, persecution. If he takes himself in hand or allows the will of God within to discipline him, then attainment can be achieved quickly. But in the speeding up of evolution a soul will encounter karma thick and fast. You will say it is better to keep on jogging along and let karma take care of itself—to enjoy life and not to hurry evolution. That is one way of looking at it. On the other hand perhaps you know the Promised Land is very near and by making an effort you can get there quickly. Well, is that better than to have to endure the petty sufferings of a rebellious soul over a long period?

We leave you with the realisation that God is all love. His ways are gentle and kind; and if the soul is willing to open to the love of God it will be filled with all blessings. If the soul is rebellious and blind, then the soul bangs its head against the cosmic wall—for there is such a thing. The soul must learn meekness, acceptance, humility, peace—all these qualities of the Christ mind—but not necessarily through the hard way. We have said that the soul can, if it will, learn much through happiness and joy, beauty and plenty. But if the lessons are not learnt, then these things are taken away and the soul learns through the lack of them.

In our next talk we will speak of the fire initiation. This will be helpful to those learning the art of meditation.

Benediction:

O Gracious Spirit, in Thy presence we surrender our hearts to God, All-Good, All-Love, All-Truth. Do with our hearts as Thou wilt that we may be ready to serve Thee and our brother man when Thou hast need of us. And to our brethren in the spheres of light, to our beloved ones in spirit, to all the nature kingdom, to all the animal kingdom, we give thanks, praise and love, and in this vast brotherhood of life may we know the peace of Thy spirit brooding over all 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:

Patience, earthliness, worldly, astrology