

The Path - III

T097 The Inner Teachings 31st May 1939 Pembroke Hall, London

Invocation:

Let us thank our Creator for the blessings of life; for the gift of vision which brings to our souls the beauty and the love of life, for the sense of hearing, for the love and companionship of brethren and friends of the human, animal and nature kingdoms. Let us pray that we may become increasingly aware of the countless inner blessings of life, and learn to give forth praise and thanksgiving in service to this boundless love, which has given to us so freely of all that makes life beautiful.

Amen.

You notice that we emphasise the beauty of life and apparently ignore that which is inharmonious and unbeautiful. From your earthly point of view you may feel a little rebellious thinking, 'Oh, why emphasise the so little beauty and ignore the overwhelming sorrow and ignorance and darkness?' It is because we see, oh so truly, the transcendent beauty of the spiritual life, and of mortal life also. As we speak we hear the song of the birds on the trees outside this building as music to our souls. We feel the companionship of these flowers on the altar; we see the forms of the nature spirits who guard them and are responsible for their beauty and fragrance. These little nature spirits are our companions, our brothers. What a glorious world! Leaving the great city we can go into fields and fields of wild flowers, see freshly shooting corn and trees laden with the promise of fruit. We see in the skies countless millions of nature spirits, all working together for the good of life and to bring gifts of food and sustenance to humanity. We see all around you in this chapel radiant teachers and angelic beings waiting to serve, to fill your souls with love and peace. We see that through the music you have heard the angels of music are drawn close to serve you, touching your souls as hands play upon a harp, so that you also may absorb the harmony of the spheres of music.

Do you wonder then that we emphasise the gifts of God which He has poured forth upon you, His children? Do you not see, beloved brethren, that in the degree that you respond to love and beauty, so you are increasing beauty on earth and thereby naturally decreasing that which lies on the other side of the scale—the darkness and ignorance and bitterness and selfishness of humanity? We know and you know the sordidness and ugliness of man's* life, but it is our work and your work to dispel that sordidness. I grant you it cannot be accomplished in a few short years or in one incarnation, but we do not live for one incarnation alone. Remember that we move forward on the path of life, this journey leading us ever upward and onward towards the kingdom of heaven. Everything we do in everyday life can contribute beauty and joy and happiness and love, and thereby forward the great plan—God's great plan of evolution—for all men, all creatures.

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

But we are all finding that there are certain lessons to be thoroughly mastered as we tread the path towards the holy city. We spoke last of the cross to be seen within the blazing light of heaven. This cross is a symbol of life, but it means life gained through death: not death of the outer body, the coat of skin, but death of the dense lower self, of the animal nature of man. It

The Path - III

T097 The Inner Teachings 31st May 1939 Pembroke Hall, London

means the surrender of the animal self; it means putting the personal desires beneath our feet; responding always to the inspiration of love and brotherhood. This is not nearly so easy as it sounds, and if our words seem simple to you let us again remind you that to absorb an accumulation of facts and technical knowledge does not necessarily make a musician, and neither will an accumulation of spiritual facts and knowledge necessarily make a saint. You may possess all knowledge and have failed to find the key into the kingdom. Yes, the way to create or mould the key which will unlock the mysteries is out of the substance of our soul, by virtue of all the experiences gained during our journey along the path. The simple experiences of human life can give to us the very gold, the very substance necessary. So we do not waste time, my beloved brethren, when we speak of the simple problems which beset every man during his incarnation.

One of the primary lessons is that of discrimination, between the false and the true; discrimination between the real and the unreal, between right and wrong. No one can teach us; no one can give to us this divine attribute of discrimination. You have already found, no doubt, that on this path of spiritual growth there comes to you greater and greater need for discrimination. You desire to be brotherly, you desire to be all that you should, but you have to deal with hard facts—commercial facts—and it is not easy. There can be no compromise for the man who sincerely desires to step forward. We see that some of you have faced a difficult problem concerning a beloved companion or brother, and whilst desiring to be brotherly there has loomed up an ugly picture of your brother doing something which you cannot understand.

I will touch on another point: the problem has crept into the heart of some present. It would appear that some guidance received from the spirit world has brought seeming havoc and chaos; you find it very difficult to reconcile this so-called spirit guidance with the brotherhood of love and wisdom. The question recurs again and again: why do the powers that be allow these things to happen? 'It is not right—no it is not right', you say. Here comes your need for wisdom and discrimination. Usually the problem is shelved, and sometimes wisely, by the questioner saying, 'I do not understand it so I will leave it on one side'. This advice we ourselves have given. If you do not understand a problem, do not judge, we beg of you, but leave it until you have more data to work on which will enable you to understand. The lesson you are learning is discrimination—not discrimination as to the judgement of a particular case—but discrimination with yourself, between your own higher self and the worldly self, and the difficulty arises: 'God has given me reason—my reason tells me that such and such a thing is wrong. Am I not to follow that reason?'

Reason may declare this or that to be wrong or unjust, but another voice, very feeble at first, will whisper 'It may be wrong according to earthly standards, but do I know all the past history of the particular individuals involved in this problem? Had I this knowledge I might see that the brother whom I think to be the offender is merely an instrument, a tool in the hands of the great lords of karma'. We talk glibly about freewill, but the more we learn of spiritual law the less we are positive about the reality of human freewill in certain circumstances in life. We mean that man is placed in certain conditions in physical life with opportunities, circumstances arising all through his life which will give him opportunity to

The Path - III

T097 The Inner Teachings 31st May 1939 Pembroke Hall, London

serve the great law. If he is continually placed in such positions where is his freewill then? His freewill lies in his response to the godly qualities, to brotherhood; in his loving acceptance of the conditions he has been given and in his doing his best. That soul may—and invariably does—fail in some ways; no schoolboy can get through all his lessons perfectly, some are bound to be indifferently executed. So it is with human life. The powers of love watch with love and compassion the struggles of people on earth. They do not say ‘That man is wrong!’ and lash out with a harsh whip of judgment, but rather say ‘Good brother, you have done your best; we are sorry that you have to suffer’. Compassion and love are poured upon the brother, and understanding of all the conditions and circumstances which have caused him to act in the way he has.

This is why we say to you, as we have done so many times before, ‘Judge not’. We dare not judge—we *dare* not judge. We are trying to show you the picture of the erring brother and the one who would judge him. You remember the parable of the prodigal son? Think it over again, meditate upon it and in that parable you will read a profound cosmic secret, and you will not jump so readily to judgment of another because you will realise that the one whom you may judge is merely an instrument of the divine law. It is difficult for you to understand this, for on earth you see much seeming injustice, but the discrimination which we all must learn is between the laws of man and the laws of God, between the inner and the outer life. This is what we mean when we point to the cross of light, for the soul who would receive that cross, who would bear that cross within his heart, must have learnt the lesson of discrimination and surrender, surrender of the lower self to the Divine.

[*Luke 15 : 11-32]

You are asking me now if this means that man must lay aside and not be guided by reason. When you have learned to hear the voice of intuition your reason will not take primary place. Reason will have served its purpose in your life and its domination will pass away, like all other things, when their purpose has been fulfilled. Out of reason will come intuition, or the divine intelligence of the God self, but unless you give intuition an opportunity to grow and develop in your soul you will respond for a long time to the harsh note of reason and be bound in its chains. So you see what the surrender means, what the sacrifice of the cross means? It is not easy. It sounds easy perhaps, looks easy on paper, but when it comes to putting it into action in everyday life it is one of the hardest lessons that man has to learn. Let us take this one step and then we will continue at our next meeting. After the birth of the cross of light comes the quickening of the heart of love. From out of the burnt ashes of the lower nature arises the golden heart of pure love—not a love which seeks its own, but a love that gives universally to life. This is the next step on the path, and we shall speak on the heart of love at our next meeting.

In closing we would make this clear: the quality of soul consciousness, developing as the result of human experience, is not gained in one brief incarnation, nor do we spend a series of incarnations on one lesson alone. Usually many lessons, many desired attributes are being acquired during an incarnation. So we do not say that the soul passes an initiation after so many incarnations and the next initiation after so many more. It may be there is an all-round

The Path - III

T097 The Inner Teachings 31st May 1939 Pembroke Hall, London

development, that many lessons are being learnt in many incarnations, which culminate in a series of initiations in one life. Or it may be that an initiation is taken in one distant life period and then a whole sequence of lives pass while the soul acquires or absorbs many necessary qualities before the next initiation can take place.

Will you think of spiritual evolution as being a most perfect procedure? Like the solving of some vast puzzle, all the pieces and broken fragments of lives are used and brought together in an indescribably lovely way to perfect the pattern of man's life on earth.

Q. Why do some seemingly intelligent people seem so blind to anything of spiritual value?

A. Because they have only one side of their intelligence functioning. Whilst intelligent on one plane, their windows are closed and barred on the higher plane. The shutters are open only in the lowest windows of the house; the upper windows have the shutters up and the occupant cannot see the beautiful view. To do this he must walk upstairs and throw the windows open.

Q. Is it possible for a soul to become spiritually developed in one incarnation, but come back to earth with that part of him shut away, or with the blinds down, as you put it?

A. It may be necessary for a soul to come back in a certain incarnation with other qualities of character more prominent, because he may have service to give on a more material plane. If his service to humanity lies perhaps through a commercial avenue, it will be necessary for commercial instincts and gifts to have full play. The light from heaven would rather dazzle and divert him from his course, so the light is mercifully veiled for the time being. This will reveal how impossible it is for anyone to judge another soul.

Q. Will the spiritual consciousness return to him?

A. When he has accomplished that work and learnt the lesson it is quite likely that the spiritual light will flood his higher consciousness to such a degree that his ordinary consciousness becomes aware of it.

Q. Is that how you would explain cases of sudden conversion or illumination?

A. Exactly.

Benediction:

Beloved brethren, one and all, we come to you in these earth conditions with one hope, and this: to bring love so that love may help you to understand some of your many problems. Tonight especially, all that we have said comes with deep love and understanding of your human difficulties. We know also, beloved, that the solution of all human difficulties comes when love and brotherhood, compassion and sympathy, take the place of the outer judgement of our brother man. Let us all continue to strive for this greater brotherhood and greater love, and increasing wisdom. And to our Father–Mother God we render all homage and worship;

The Path - III

T097 The Inner Teachings 31st May 1939 Pembroke Hall, London

we pray that we may be good children, peaceful and loving, putting the good of our brother before our own.

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:

Natural world, discernment, non-judgement, tolerance

