

The Path of The Soul - 3

T159 The Inner Teachings 7th November 1945 St Mary Abbot's Place, London

No. 3 in the series and based upon St Matthew, chapter 4, which should be read together with this record.

Invocation:

We open our hearts to the Great Spirit, Father-Mother, all-enfolding Love, Wisdom, and Power. We would come into the light of Thy Son, O God. May we lay down our burdens and come into Thy heaven.

Amen.

Beloved, we have prayed to our Creator, the Source of our being, and asked that we may lay down our burdens and enter into heaven. While we know that life in the physical body presses very heavily, we do not understand why this is so. To lay down a burden does not mean to shed responsibility. For responsibility, if looked at in the right way, should prove not a burden but rather an opportunity and even a joy, because while we are tested by our responsibilities we also earn our responsibilities. This means that as the soul becomes more mature it is ready for more important tasks. If the soul can only realise it, the responsibilities that come along are its opportunities for service.

Some people want to rid themselves of responsibilities. Others take on unnecessary burdens and call them responsibilities. We must discriminate between these two. Are not burdens the cares which weigh us down because we are in the darkness and we do not understand the love or the power or the wisdom of God? Indeed, everything in life can become a burden instead of a joy, and when we say, 'Let us lay down our burdens,' we mean lay down those unnecessary fears and anxieties and tortures which come through the soul's conflict with others and with the conditions of life. When a man* can see where he is going on the path of life, when he has realised the power and the love and the wisdom of God, he no longer carries burdens. So we want to learn more of these attributes of God and when we understand the spiritual life so that we are filled with light (which means lightness), we shall not carry burdens.

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

To illustrate this, think for the moment of leaving aside all the material things and entering into tranquillity and peace. As soon as you touch that vibration of tranquillity and calmness you have no burdens. They have all fallen away because you have entered into the heavenly state of consciousness. Suppose that in everyday life you could meet every situation with complete tranquillity, not with indifference—that is another matter—then no burden remains. We speak of this because when the Bible says that Jesus was anointed, it means that Jesus the man, Jesus the prophet, Jesus the teacher, was anointed. The spirit of Christ entered into or took possession of him. This happened at the time of the temptation. At our last meeting we spoke about the baptism and explained that the experiences of Jesus the Master are those which every soul eventually passes through. We shall see how similar they are to your own experiences and to those of every soul endeavouring to tread the path.

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We shall have to pass these four main initiations. From the astrological aspect you will know that every individual reincarnates according to the need of its soul, facing the tests and trials of these particular aspects or elements, and in each life there is an opportunity for one of these four great initiations.

At the moment we are concerned with the water initiation, which you will remember appertained to the desires and the feelings—the psyche. The water initiation is one which all those touching the psychic realms are faced with. Also the water initiation is placed before those souls who are overcoming desires. You can desire on all planes—physical desires, soul desires and spiritual desires—but the work of the candidate is to control but not necessarily erase these emotions, these feelings, these desires.

We are told that Jesus was called to the river Jordan to be baptised. You are all called to a river Jordan to undergo its baptism. Certain religious sects believe that by actual immersion in water something happens to the soul. Well, this is true, but it really means the cleansing or purification of the soul when it is called to the river Jordan (or to the place of true repentance) where the soul feels that it must find God. Jesus, being an agelong soul, already knew consciously many things. Nevertheless, as we said before, every soul that reincarnates has to face these same tests, but having been tested in former lives it remembers and is strong. The initiations are therefore simple.

Jesus heard the voice of God saying, 'This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased'. But, surely, others also hear this voice in their own souls and are overcome with emotion and raised to a great pitch of ecstasy. You and we have felt this. We have had some wonderful spiritual experience and are raised to a state of ecstasy with the light and the joy of the spirit. Maybe it has come to you through actual communication with some loved one, or during some beautiful service in a church or when listening to beautiful music—some outstanding experience when the soul feels the presence and the glory of God. How wonderful are the ways of the spirit! How glorious is God! Emotion overwhelms the soul. It feels that it is saved. The soul literally heard the voice of God. Perhaps at some meeting at the White Eagle Lodge, you may feel the power and see the light of the spirit. You feel that you will never again look back. All is well. You have entered your spiritual home. That is right. That is good. But something follows.... As soon as ever the soul has heard and seen, then comes the testing.

Everyone goes through these tests, and particularly those souls who have had psychic experiences. They are perhaps overcome with joy because they have received a message which convinced them that the spirit of their dear one lives and is very close to the earth and can communicate. Is that enough? No. We assure you, my beloved, that after the first call of the spirit there will be set up along our path a series of tests.

Some become disillusioned. They think it is all wrong, but others are not so easily shaken, and though they may be perplexed and puzzled they know that they have seen the truth, heard the truth. They keep on keeping on and on. Some are disillusioned with the people they contact. People are very ready to say, 'Well, fancy so-and-so while professing religion

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behaving like that!' —forgetting that their companion is walking the selfsame path as they, and needs the hand of brotherhood, understanding and sympathy when he fails. 'Judge not that ye be not judged.'* We cannot, we dare not judge anyone. We are all moving along the selfsame path and while our brother may fall below the standard sometimes, so do we. What do we expect when we fail and we fall? Think what it would mean to us if our brother would say, 'Never mind; we will forget it. Rise, brother, and let us continue our walk.' This is the way, the truth and the life.**

[*Matthew 7 : 1] [**That is, the path of brotherhood is the way.]

Jesus, having received the call, went away into the wilderness—*into the world*. All aspirants after hearing the call have to take up their life and wander as in some wilderness. They want to be good, they want truth and they want knowledge. But the world is so difficult. People are so difficult. We look at the world particularly at the present time and think, 'Oh, dear, this is hopeless'. The mists and the illusions of the material world befog the soul. But that is no use; the soul has to learn something. What is it? The soul has to learn to hold fast to the Christ within itself. Only when this Christ power within the soul becomes sufficiently strong to establish itself in possession can the candidate be called anointed.

When we talk of these things do not think in terms of days, weeks or years or any periods like that. Learn to think in terms of many incarnations, because the way of the spirit is very sure and slow and mysterious. 'God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.' These tests are long continued and mean that the soul is intended to become very strong, very firmly established. It has to turn inwards to the strength of its own inner spirit, of the Christ within. With every turn of the road, every difficulty and problem which comes along, the soul must turn to and be strong enough to hold to that inner light.

Jesus wandered in the wilderness for forty days. The Israelites were in the wilderness for forty years. There are many references in the Bible to 'forty'. We think you will find that this number comes from the period the babe is carried in its mother's womb, roughly forty weeks. 'Forty' symbolises a time in confinement and limitation. The soul, after hearing the voice of God saying, 'This is my beloved Son,' then goes through tests and trials of limitation. You know the feeling. You have seen the glories of heaven and heard the voice of the spirit. Many people have said to old White Eagle, 'Why have I got to stay in this old body? I wish I could go to the other side.' They do not realise that they would not be out of the wood even then. It is not all glory over there unless the soul itself has the light within. All depends on what is in the soul. The soul faces conditions which are very hard to bear, is tempted by Satan—by Saturn, the planet which brings limitation. For your encouragement, we say that those who are strongly under the influence of Saturn can be thankful. In spite of the limitations and hardships which life seems to bring it is good, because only through these limitations does the soul grow in strength and richness.

Now we will hear the three temptations, one by one, as they are recorded in the Bible and then associate them with our own personal experience.

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(Reading of St Matthew, chapter 4, verses 1-4)

'He was afterward an hungered.' That is usually taken as a physical state. The body having fasted for forty days is hungry and it longs for bread. There is of course one interpretation which we have given ourselves for the outer plane. This is the temptation of the soul who has power to perform miracles to turn something to its own account, for its own satisfaction—a thing which the Christ man or the true spirit will never do. However great his power he will not think of or use it for himself. That is one interpretation, we say. Also when the soul has once seen the light it longs for a manifestation in the physical. People who are seeking the spirit world say, 'If only I could hear the voice through the trumpet with my own ears, or see my loved one, touch my loved one, I should be satisfied'. That is not the way. It is another method of wanting to turn stones into bread. But the Christ within says, 'No, man does not live for this physical manifestation. Man lives by the word of God, the spirit of God, the inner knowledge of God.' The aspirant learns to deny promptings to use the Christ power, the power of God, for his own desires.

The soul on the path knows nothing. It is unperturbed by any of these longings and hammerings of the lower self. It does not want anything like that. It only wants to realise the light of God and hold fast to that inner knowledge, that inner light—no outward manifestation at all. Yet it is a big temptation, my dear ones. Fasting, purification, yes. Does this not mean purification of the mind so that the mind is clean and sweet? It is not what a person eats so much as what he thinks, what he is in his inner self. He abstains from those things which are unclean, by which we mean that which is unholy, unhealthy, unworthy. That is what is meant by fasting—living in a state of cleanliness and purity. Of course when mind and soul are pure because they have abstained, the body will not desire to eat anything which savours of cruelty, which is surely unholy, unhealthy.

(Reading of verses 5-7)

Notice that 'the devil taketh him up into the holy city,' the city of Jerusalem. The inner meaning is that he was taken to the place of peace. Jerusalem means the centre of peace. When the soul enters 'Jerusalem' then it has found the place of peace. Then, if too sure of itself, it begins to wonder. Temptation comes. 'Why should I need to depend on God for everything? I can do anything I like now. I have passed my test, my initiation. Now I can remain here and nothing will touch me. No harm can befall my body or my soul. I am at last safe. Why should I still continue to discipline myself?' You know the kind of thing which goes on in the soul, particularly after it has travelled a little way. Then the Christ within says, 'Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Thou must continue in the perfect way. Thou must continue to be true to me, the Christ within, to obey the laws of the spirit, to be wise and not break the spiritual laws of God. Thou must not tempt the Lord thy God.' This temptation comes from a form of pride in which there is usually a degree of ignorance.

There is another interpretation, just as with the first temptation. Many people are inclined to use their spiritual knowledge for their own ends. They think that by sending out a powerful thought they can bring anything they like to themselves—which is true. Send out the thought

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and you can draw material things to you. But that is not the way of the initiate. The initiate overcomes this temptation. The initiate learns and passes the test. He depends purely and simply upon the spirit of God. 'Thy will, O God, not mine.' It really means surrender of the soul to the divine spirit so that the soul does not use or try to use spiritual power to gain anything for himself. He lives sweetly and purely in the Christ light.

Now we come to the last temptation.

(Reading of verses 8-11)

Many people who are successful—good religious people as well as materially minded people—are tempted to think that all their success is due to themselves. They think how clever they are. They forget that without the help and the blessing of God nothing could have been accomplished. Not through man himself but by the will of God certain conditions come along in life destined to give an opportunity to the soul to serve God. But there are many who become intoxicated with material success, and that is the case on the spiritual path too. People become full of spiritual pride and inwardly they think how nice and how good they are. They are carried up into a high mountain—to a place of high consciousness, that is what it means. The soul is raised in consciousness and the tempter, the lower self, whispers to the soul, 'How wonderful I am. I have attained this spiritual height. I have made great progress. I am; I am; I am.' But the soul who has passed these three temptations knows whatever it does spiritually of itself it is nothing and can do nothing, but all the good that is in it is of God.

These temptations, my brethren, are to show that what is being tested is the strength of the Christ within the soul. The Christ speaking in the soul is humble, is pure, is loving and gentle, meek and kind, wishes no evil and knows no wrong. The Christ within just keeps on and on and on in humility and love and because of this it grows very strong; this is the purpose of Saturn, of Satan, limiting and tempting Christ in the wilderness. It is worthwhile making every effort to turn within to the gentle Christ: whatever your problem, whatever your hardship or difficulty, turn within. You will get the answer to your question. You will get light on your path. Have courage to face the truth and you will then pass the water initiation and will be firmly established as an initiate, a master of the water element—the psychic, the emotional element.

Q. After seeing the light, I heard a voice say 'Carry on. Mount the ladder.' What does this mean?

A. The voice was telling you to keep on keeping on, on that particular path. Be true to the spirit within you. Keep steadfastly on treading the path whereon your feet have been set. Outward conditions are not important except that the soul is being presented with certain lessons and opportunities to gain the strength, wisdom and love it needs. That is why it is better to keep to one condition until something comes along to alter it. Make no effort about it—just let it come gently. We are speaking materially and spiritually.

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Q. With regard to the second temptation, it is difficult to know whether the thing that one wishes to draw to oneself is good or not. It is surely not breaking the law to wish for harmony?

A. All depends on the motive; that is, is it a selfish desire to bring to oneself things for one's comfort? One should not think of oneself in any way but dwell in God and leave all to Him. By dwelling in God you enter into harmony and so become a channel for harmony. Therefore harmony flows through you and it cannot help but recreate harmonious conditions. But if you send out a thought merely for the sake of obtaining for yourself this harmony, this is not good. Become attuned to the gentle spirit of God and love and light. Become so filled with light that your body becomes perfectly healthy. Then your life will become harmonious. 'Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven ... and all these things shall be added unto you.'* But not because you want certain things to happen but simply because you love God. God is certain to manifest. The manifestation of God through the physical body will manifest as healthiness and beauty and it must manifest in everything around you. You create heaven on earth. Seek ye first—God—only God—only the light. Think of nothing else.

[*Matthew 6 : 33]

You do not always know it but you are our family. We are in touch with you. We understand so much about your lives, your aspirations and your needs.

Benediction:

Our thoughts, our aspirations, our prayers form a golden cup before the Blessed Master. We humbly pray to drink the cosmic wine and to eat the cosmic bread and in humility give those to Thee, O Great One. Great White Spirit, we thank Thee.

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:

Responsible, stability, perseverance, resolution, ask, resilience