

The Tree of Life

A151 Sunday Address 2nd September 1945 St Mary Abbot's Place, London Sunday
Service after the summer break

The date of this address is conjectural (see below), while the text is as issued in the magazine Angelus after it was given, apart from correction of errors

Text: from Angelus, October 1945

Context: the date is conjectural, but this is assumed to be the September address duly printed in the October magazine. White Eagle's warm opening just might be interpreted as celebrating a new session after the summer break but there is little internal evidence to confirm the conjecture, and the bracketed words under the title, 'An Address by White Eagle' do nothing to confirm that this is a recent address. However, the address does mention the joy that the war had at last ceased. See 'Historical References' for why this may confirm the date of the address.

The text mentions the hymn, 'Breathe on me, breath of God', with words by Edwin Hatch, very commonly sung in White Eagle services; typically, as a quiet hymn, it would have immediately preceded the address. The reading seems to have been from Genesis, about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (probably, the first part of chapter 2: see below, 'References').

General Notes: a comparison between two trees, that of life and that of good and evil; and between two human beings, one typified by 'the old Adam' and the other by 'the new Adam', Jesus Christ. The final long paragraph, beginning with the words, 'We can hear many of you say', has become very familiar through being reprinted first in White Eagle's book *Prayer in the New Age* and then *Prayer, Mindfulness and Inner Change*.

References: White Eagle makes a strong distinction between two trees in the Garden of Eden, both first mentioned in Genesis 2 : 9: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In verse 16 and 17, he encourages man to eat of the first of those trees but proscribes the second. White Eagle compares this story with the story of the Resurrection (John chapter 20). 'Thy will be done, not mine' refers back to Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane before the Crucifixion, praying that God might remove from him the destiny he foresaw, a story told in all four Gospels (Matthew 26 : 39, Mark 14 : 36, Luke 22 : 42, and John 6 : 38). The concept of Angels walking and talking with men (see penultimate paragraph) has roots in the Bible but no specific verbal reference: it may also be familiar through the words of the song by Elvis Presley, 'You look like an angel'.

White Eagle makes a reference to his trust in 'all English-speaking peoples': this statement is not, we think, intended to exclude others but to assist the rebuilding of national confidence after all the traumas of a six-year war.

Historical Notes: as noted above, the address mentions rejoicing that the second world war was finally over. VE Day was well past (8 May) but the surrender of Japan had been the subject of negotiation in August and was signed on this very morning. 'Men have been *compelled* to lay down their arms' might just be a reference to the atomic bombs dropped on Japan in August – the paragraph continues to refer to man's acquisition of 'knowledge' akin to that of the tree in the Garden of Eden, knowledge that burdens him, perhaps, with heavy responsibilities.

White Eagle's Address:

We come with joy and love to speak with you. The words that you have just sung still ring in this church: 'Breathe on me, breath of God; so shall I never die'. Nevertheless, most people regard death sometimes with thoughts of fear and horror. In those words, 'Breathe on me, breath of God; so shall I never die', lies the secret of life.

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In our reading today, we have heard about the tree of good and evil that grew in the Garden of Eden, but only a brief reference was made to the tree of life which also grew therein. God warned man that if he ate of the tree of good and evil he would suffer, but He did not withhold from man his freewill. He warned man that if he ate of this tree, which was also the tree of knowledge, he would surely die. But there is no warning forbidding man to eat the fruits of the tree of life.

In this story lies a profound yet very simple truth; and it is a truth, my brethren, which all the world must know if it is to survive. It is a truth which means *life* to man – life on this earth planet, life in eternity. You will wonder why we speak to you in this manner. My friends and brethren, it is because the world is on the eve of the Age of Aquarius, the New Age, during which there will be revealed to man great knowledge and great power. Without the balancing of the spiritual light which God has planted in the garden of Eden (which means the garden of life) into which man has been born, destruction may come through man's own choice.

Now there are some people who fix their hearts, their minds, upon a world more beautiful than this. They look forward to this world of spirit. They think that by discarding the body and getting away from the material world they will find a greater happiness than they have yet known. So they set to work to discountenance the importance of the physical and the material aspect of life. They become dreamers and shirk the part that they should take in the world of men. Nevertheless, man has been placed here with great opportunities to unfold his spiritual qualities and knowledge ... not in some far-off place in the heaven worlds but here on earth. The mistake that many others make is to concentrate all their attention and their efforts upon the material, taking no account of the spiritual side of their nature. Instead of this there must be a balancing of both material and spiritual so that the light of the Spirit manifests through physical life.

My friends, at this time in the world's history yet another opportunity is being presented to mankind to unfold its spiritual faculties, an opportunity for man to eat of the fruit of the tree of life. When man has once partaken of that fruit from the tree of life, he will no longer know death. Neither will he know separation from his loved ones. For if a time should come when the physical body can no longer sustain the spirit, it will be laid down and the spirit will continue to manifest, as was the case with the Master Jesus, who was a vehicle, a channel for the Supreme, and whose body seemed to disappear after death (so-called), but was actually recreated and revived. The story tells who He met the woman at the gate of the tomb. It is significant that it was a woman to whom He appeared – in a body now radiant with the life of the spirit and raised in vibration far above the heaviness of the average physical body. Then it was that the Christ light manifested through the Master Jesus and flooded the world with light and blessing.

He spoke first to a woman. This implies that women will come into her rightful place in this new Age of Aquarius, because the woman stands as a symbol of that sixth sense in man: intuition, the inner voice, the spiritual awareness in man which will come forward to greet the Lord Christ. When the sixth sense, intuition, is quickened then the human being will rise in

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consciousness and go forth to meet the supreme Light of all the world – the Light which has manifested through all saints and saviours of the world, but in the highest degree through the Master Jesus.

All the world at this moment rejoices that the war has ceased, that mankind is once again willing to live peaceably. Men have been *compelled* to lay down their arms. Why? Because they are afraid of what the future might bring if they continue on the path of evil, selfishness and greed. Man of his own freewill chose to follow the path of suffering. He chose to have knowledge. He sought to gain great power, a power which could raise him almost to the knowledge of the gods. Long ago he was warned that if he traversed that path he would surely suffer and die. He has now reached a stage where knowledge of the natural forces has been gained, not through religion but through science, for development of the mind has outstripped the wisdom of the heart. Remember we are in the mental age of Aquarius and may expect to see amazing developments in science; but remember also that coupled with this comes a wonderful awakening and development of spiritual knowledge, because the Aquarian Age is also the age of the spirit. Now it will be that mankind will recognise the truth in the old story of the Garden of Eden. Mankind will recognise that in this Garden of Eden (which symbolises the world), there is something besides a science which bestows knowledge of good and evil. There is the tree of life, the tree of the spirit, the tree of light. The sages, the wise ones of all ages, have already discovered this tree of life and have plucked its fruits. Of these fruits they have eaten and so seen God revealed in all His glory, power and might: a tree of life, which each man has to discover and earth the fruit thereof. The nature of this tree is the nature of God. Once having eaten, man becomes god-like.

Remember these things of which we tell you. Remember that you may expect within a few years to see astounding scientific developments which will revolutionise human life. In order to help forward these vast developments, every man, woman and child must strive to awaken first of all within himself and in all mankind this knowledge of the mighty presence of the spirit of God which is within every soul and which will yet be the saviour of mankind. My friends, you have heard your priests of your church tell their people that Jesus Christ is Saviour of the world. Such teaching as this has lost its power today – and why? Because mankind does not understand that Christ does not mean some Being who lived, taught and healed men nearly two thousand years ago. Christ is the life-force of the Father–Mother God; Christ is also the life of mankind, the life and light which is within everyone. This light is yet to assert itself and take possession of men so that their actions are dictated by the voice of wisdom, of love, of justice and of truth.

How many ever glimpse these truths? Of the few who know some find excuses [to save them] from applying them to daily life. There is somehow always a good reason why they abstain. They say that such truths are not applicable to the world as it is today. We who speak to you from the heart, from the spirit, tell you that unless man learns to *live* these truths in his daily life and in his national and international life also, then there will be a sweeping clean of the present civilisation. But we have confidence in the simple humanity of mankind that this will not come about. The White Brotherhood beyond the veil have confidence in your nation and

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in all English-speaking peoples – confidence that all nations will rise to the heights the present age will demand of them. Yet learn not to look to your neighbour first. Do not wait to see if he does what you think he ought to do. *Look to yourself.* Look into your own heart and your own life. Allow the will of God to become manifest in you and in your life. ‘*Thy will be done, not mine; Thy good will, O God, which is for the good of mankind.*’ But remember to so allow your own will to operate in your life and in your affairs that you apply spiritual light and truth and love to your every action. Let not your brotherhood be merely lip-service but brotherhood, active and heartfelt in the smallest detail. You have no need to worry then about the events which lie ahead. You can meet them with confidence and hope. You can be certain that you, a unit, are helping all mankind, for the unit can raise all people to receive succour of the supreme Being, the Father-Mother God.

We can hear many of you say, ‘But tell us, White Eagle, how can we apply this truth? We do not know. How can *we* help mankind?’ By daily, hourly, every moment of your life endeavouring to realise your true self, which lies buried deep within your innermost being. You will find it will rise like to a stream of light; also you will be able to rise upon this light to a higher level of consciousness and will find yourself enveloped in the power and love of God. Practise this daily realisation of the Great White Light within your own being and project it forth into world of men. Then, my friends, the mists around the earth will be dispelled. Do not look to others to do the work for you. *Every man is his own saviour; and every man is the saviour of all mankind.* As this light rises within each heart and reaches over the earth the shrouding materialism which now hangs over it will be torn asunder. Then there will be no death. You will see into the world of spirit and you will know that your loved one is not separated but is walking with you. My friends, we tell you that mankind will yet see angels. In a century or two it will be common knowledge that angels are walking and talking with men. This will bring about unity of nations and unity of life, physically, morally and spiritually. Then will the Golden Age dawn. But man has forced himself to traverse a path which he chose in the beginning because he lusted for knowledge and power; and he has learned that power over the tree of knowledge and ignorance of the tree of life will bring him death - surely, surely will bring death and destruction.

These secret truths lie hidden deep but they are waiting for you. Our counsel to you is to go on searching and searching for spiritual truth. You will surely find it, and will be raised into the light and the peace and the happiness of God's heaven.

Peace and joy bless you, bless you, bless you, dear brethren.

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:

rebirth, life after death, eternal life, world peace, scientific progress, scientific discoveries, Adam and Eve, spiritual unfoldment, spiritual development, sending out the light, service