

Cause and Effect, or Karma

A122 Sunday Address 5th September 1943 St Mary Abbots Place, London Reopening Service after the August break

The text of this address is as issued in the magazine Angelus after it was given, apart from correction of errors

Text: from Angelus, October 1943

Context: although the August break intervened, the second paragraph makes it absolutely clear that this address follows the June and July ones as a series, and there is full confirmation in the October service, the date of which is certain, that it followed this one – it refers back to having quoted, in this address, the masonic phrase about labour and refreshment (see References). There is no indication of hymns or readings.

General Notes: like the other addresses in this little series, this one is fairly lengthy, carefully constructed and very clearly arranged around the one theme. However, one thing stands out: the direct addressing of members and friends towards the end, putting them under the responsibility of supporting the Lodge. One may wonder at how it was received at the time, but it may well be what led to a pattern that continued all the rest of the Lodge's time at St Mary Abbots Place: people coming in for regular, full, weekdays and using those to participate in absent healing, learn contact healing and meditation, and so on. Thus the Lodge in London became a community, rather than a place of pilgrimage (although we cannot know how much this represented change, how much continuity). It is intriguing how White Eagle ties this giving of commitment with the principle of karma. The whole section might seem rather prescriptive, but White Eagle beautifully pulls out of it the spiritual rewards, and this is where the address leads.

References: as White Eagle says 'from labour to refreshment, and from refreshment to labour' is a Masonic saying. 'God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth...' is Galatians 6 : 7; White Eagle follows with another oft-quoted saying from the Bible: Matthew 22 : 37 ('Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart...'). 'Love thy neighbour as thyself' comes immediately after (22 : 40).

White Eagle's Address:

We welcome all to this service, and we hope that you will feel that you are encompassed about by a cloud of unseen witnesses.

We spoke on the last two occasions of Life after Death and then on Reincarnation. Both subjects are controversial in this world of intellectualism, but there comes a day and not far distant, when a great wave of light and spiritual understanding will break over the earth.

For this, preparation is taking place during these years of conflict. Those of us who dwell in the spirit and millions of people on earth are either consciously or unconsciously working for the betterment of mankind. It is usually thought that reforms originate solely from man's mind and common sense – and not yet recognised that much reform and betterment has its origin in spiritual realms. Those selected to become pioneers are sent themselves by reason of a divine and exact law, so that they may serve either one of the causes of reforms on their earth, or in the religious, social or other lines of service.

People sometimes say to us, 'What use is it to talk of service? We cannot do any work, we are too obscure or too old'. But none are too old or too obscure to be channels of the light of God and many and diverse are the opportunities of service which are offered.

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The Old Order Changeth

We have just stated that there are many people working to uplift mankind and create better conditions. We see the old order, even the old presentation of religion, changing. We do not foresee violent upheavals, but this gradual permeation of mankind by the Spirit. Only by the power of the Spirit will these reforms take place. The fruit of the Spirit is love; and when the spirit of man is being expressed there must be give and take, understanding and sympathy and brotherhood: work not for the sake of self, but for the whole community. This means that the seeds of the Spirit are being sown. Those fond of gardening or farming will understand and appreciate the great joy that comes from watching the earth bring forth. When the seed of the spirit is sown in life there must come a harvest. For this reason, and this reason alone, my friends, you will see in the future a world of brotherhood, a world of beauty and harmony.

Life Continues

Some of you will say immediately, 'Oh, but this will not come about in our time!' Do not be too sure. You have an erroneous way of looking at life if you think thus. Life is eternal: life does not break away after a man attains seventy or eighty years of age. Life continues through the ages. You will again answer me, saying how terrible it will be to live for ages and that you would like to go to sleep and forget it all. Well, you fall asleep each night and forget everything but nevertheless are quite pleased to wake up, particularly when the sun is shining and the birds singing on a summer morning. Having been recharged whilst in the higher spheres of life, you wake feeling it good to be alive. Believe me, you will feel like this in thousands of years time, for life is a continual spiral, a continual progression, in which periods of refreshment are taken in the spirit land ere you return to earth to labour. In the craft of masonry this is well known and taught, 'The Brothers go from Labour to Refreshment, and from Refreshment to Labour', it is said. Therefore conditions change and the spirit and mind of man change also.

My friends, do not be so cast down and depressed, or think these earthly joys will not come about until you have departed from the earth. This is entirely wrong. Get into the way of realising that life is just a beautiful continuation through differing phases, differing planes of consciousness. Always the spirit returns after refreshment of labour in the vineyard and each time it brings back some spiritual seeds to sow, seeds which have resulted from fruits grown in a previous life. Isn't this as it should be – seed time and harvest, the ever-changing beauty of the earth, the ever-changing glory of the heavens? This, my friends, is Life.

When Things go Wrong

Where does life go wrong? When we see such suffering and horror in the world it is because man, having been given free choice in spiritual matters, deliberately turns a deaf ear to the Spirit. Nevertheless we do not advocate a life lived up in the clouds. In your western world and in your present civilisation your object should be *service through action*. The task of

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present-day man and woman is to learn to express spirit not only by prayer and devotion as in the monastic days, but in action and service. Sow the seeds of the spirit thus and the harvest is sure.

Karma

It is commonly thought that whatever a man does he has to pay for. For this reason many people talk of accepting their karma and sit down under it like a poor old man with an over-heavy bundle on his back, saying, 'It is my karma! Well, I must bear it!'

That is not the way, my dear ones. Although karma has to be faced, there is more than one way and more than one attitude of mind. The whole point is to remember that what you sow is the life you will reap – which means that you sow not only by your actions, but also because of your attitude of mind to life and to its problems. What you sow from your innermost being are your seeds of the spirit from which you will surely reap a harvest. Should this harvest leave much to be desired, you can still find happiness by cheerfully accepting and recognising what is happening and continuing from that moment to sow more seeds which will bring forth joy and happiness. Such seeds are not those of self or self-interest, but of selflessness. There lies the vital difference. They must be thoughtful seeds, not only for the little community in which you live but for the whole universe. This means that every thought, every action, must try to be lovely, kind, gentle – that is, if you wish to reap flowers instead of thistles.

Shoulder your Burden

Man must not sit down by the wayside and resignedly say, 'It is my karma; I have to bear it!' Get up! shoulder your burden like Christian in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and walk with a smile, recognising that nobody but yourself made the bundle, out of your little shortcomings. Therefore you must carry it and accept, not grumble, accept what life brings with a cheerful heart. Do this and you will be surprised how quickly that burden will become lighter. Do not make the mistake of thinking that karma cannot be transmuted. I know that this point of view is rejected by some thoughtful people. By the transmutation of karma we mean exactly what we said in our reference to Christian carrying his bundle. When the spirit of man strives to realise the divine light, the pure spirit of Christ; when his whole heart goes out in simple adoration and worship and sincere desire to love and to serve, the transmutation of karma takes place. Thus karma can be worked off through joy and service. We mean by this that all depends on the attitude of the soul to its conditions. Where one soul endures its karma very sadly, very hardly, another soul under exactly the same conditions, facing exactly the same kind of karma, will live with joy, with adoration and belief in the Christ power to save; the first soul will suffer and be miserable, and the second get through joyously. This is transmutation of karma.

Whatsoever a Man Soweth

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In the Bible is a reading which is becoming hackneyed. It runs: 'Be not deceived: God is not mocked; whatsoever a man soweth he must surely reap'. In this connection it seems to us that great trouble has resulted in the past because brother man has set himself up as a judge of his fellow. What is sin? Religion attempts to define it. But then, in certain countries national customs allow behaviour which in a Christian land would be regarded as sin. Again, some sect decides that this, that or the other thing is sinful, while another sect will permit these things. In the old-fashioned days, as you would call them, this stern text had perhaps a different meaning. The seeds which you will sow are not those of any particular sect or religion, but the products of your own innermost spirit. Therefore what is required is for man to be truly sincere and honest. If he is doing what he does because he feels inspired by his higher self; or if by the spirit within his heart he is following the path of truth, then all is well; but if a man deliberately closes his ear to the inner voice, if a man deliberately goes against what he feels within his heart to be truly brotherly and right, then he might be called a sinner. What is sin? Surely, to break the law of love, to break the law of brotherhood.

'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.' This is the law. Your Lord and Master, Christ, through the Master Jesus gave you this as the law. 'Love thy neighbour as thyself.' That is all. Love one another. God is love, the Spirit is love. The fruit of the spirit is love. When we come face to face with this truth, when we once recognise it, we bear a great responsibility.

We do not want to make you heavy or depressed. Our message should be an inspiration in your daily life, in your attitude to everything, material as well as spiritual; nevertheless, a responsibility is immediately laid upon the soul who recognises spiritual truth. We suggest this as one reason why there is such a conflict in the world between mind and spirit. The materialists deny spirit. They do not wish to recognise spirit. Since the fruit of the spirit is love, it means that the materialist must change his whole outlook, his whole attitude of life and his relationship with his fellow man. He must build on an entirely new foundation. For spirit does not say 'every man for himself!' It says, 'I must not be content to see him suffer and lack the necessities of life. He is dear to me. He is part of my spirit'. A spiritual man immediately recognises his responsibility to his brother man, to life. To all strata of society must come this spirit of brotherhood and the one of the low degree must recognise the difficulties and the burdens of the man on a higher social scale – and vice versa. All must recognise the spirit in mankind. All must work for the spirit.

To Friends and Members

We speak to our members and our faithful friends of the White Eagle Lodge. Although we speak from the spirit world, we speak also from the Councils above who are behind this work at the White Eagle Lodge. We would welcome you, our brethren, not to a Sunday service occasionally, but to the whole service of the White Eagle Lodge. When you become members of this Lodge we would like you to realise that you are taking upon yourself or yourselves, certain responsibilities. We are not speaking of material things, but purely of spiritual matters, because when you become associated, when you become a member of this Lodge –

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But first, why do you become a member? Because when you come to the Lodge you feel happy there, you like it. You think, 'Yes, I feel at home; I am glad to become a member'. Perhaps you fulfil the necessary material obligations of membership. But it does not end there. My friends, my brethren and sisters, you are receiving something from the Lodge, something which is intangible and cannot be counted in any scale of material or social values and cannot be estimated. Nevertheless, you are receiving and will continue to receive ... this Something. There are others here who serve who through their destiny have been brought to this Lodge. In the same way your own karma has brought you here. Since every soul is in [the] charge of an angel and a guide, perhaps you were guided to come. Understand this fact of life. There is a responsibility to members which is yours also. This Lodge cannot exist without continual spiritual support. Souls in the unseen continually labour here and serve everyone – members, friends, visitors – both in their daily life and when they come into the Lodge. We like you to remember this labour of the unseen helpers. Your responsibility is to support the work here. Come frequently. Yes, come if it even seems a trifle wearisome sometimes, even if you feel a trifle bored and do not want to come: come as part of your service. Remember you have a responsibility. You have a store of spiritual needs brought back from lives lived before. These seeds have to be sown because they are the seeds of your spirit. You are offered an opportunity to sow them in this garden. If you refuse you may be flinging away your seeds to die. This is your spiritual responsibility both to the workers of the spirit world and to your fellow workers in the Lodge. They need your faithful support and loving service week by week, so that others may also receive that intangible something which can bring well being and happiness into your own heart and life.

This, my dear ones, is karma. Karma does not necessarily work out in two or three thousand years. It sometimes takes a long period, for the simple reason that time and again the handful of seeds is not sown properly. Then it may take thousands of years to work out. But it can be transmuted here and now – instantly, in this present life – sometimes much quicker than some of you bargain for. Your true inner self tells you that if you eat unsuitable food it will give you pain. Your lower self says, 'I don't care! It's worth it!' This is an example of the quick working of karma. You do something that is definitely wrong. You go for an evening's enjoyment. A little voice says, 'What about those at home?' The lower self replies, 'No, I am going to stay'. When you get home, the atmosphere may be a little cold. You feel it unpleasant. This is a quick working-out of karma. Prove it for yourself. You do that which you know perfectly well is not playing the game and you quickly suffer. The law is exact and precise. What we are trying to put in a very clear, simple way is that the inner self, the true self will tell you the right thing to do, and often the lower self deliberately won't do it. So you see you have a great responsibility.

This need not make you miserable, but rather fill you with joy, because the true seed of the spirit is love, and love is a great transmuter of karma. Here is the whole meaning of the teaching of Jesus the Christ – LOVE... Not only in a wide brotherly sense, but in every detail of life. Love your neighbour as yourselves and so fulfil the law of all the ages. Life is or should be joyous.

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As soon as the seeds of man's true spirit commence to grow on earth you will see this Golden Age which we are all preparing. It does not matter if you wear this 'coat' (physical body) or another coat in three hundred years' time. You have to wear clothes of some kind and the fashions may have changed. But you will participate in the joy and service which will be the fruition of the seeds of the spirit which perhaps you yourself sowed long ago.

God bless you, dear ones, God bless you all.

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, cause and effect, path of the soul, community, light within, intuition, inner voice, fairness, enlightenment

