

How Lovely are Thy Dwellings

A123 Sunday Address 3rd October 1943 St Mary Abbots Place, London Special Thanksgiving Service for new rooms, harvest

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

Text: from Angelus, November 1943.

Context: the editorial part of *Angelus* for October 1943, under the heading 'New Work' describes how new healing chapels had been dedicated (the words of the dedication are printed in the same issue) at the Lodge. This was made possible by an extension of the leasing of the property to include 9a St Mary Abbots Place. In 'A Letter' from Minesta immediately following the words of the dedication, it is announced that 3rd October is designated a 'Day of Thanksgiving'. The letter indicates that the service was also a Harvest Thanksgiving. It is possible that the movement from the Brahms Requiem suggested by the title was given as an anthem by the White Eagle choir, though there is no formal indication of this. There is a reference back to the September talk with the phrase 'from labour to refreshment', making it certain that the whole series of addresses, May, June, July, September and October were all correctly dated.

General Notes: an underlying theme of this talk is that the aspiration to beauty is part of the discovery of God, and that God's beauty is not separate from, but constantly expressed in, human beings. There is a note which may be missed if not noted, of the fine ambition behind the Lodge: 'our whole purpose [is] that from the highest heavens may descend a pure white spirit, a tiny baby, the Christ Child, and there upon the earth grow into manhood'.

References: 'How lovely are Thy dwellings fair, O Lord of Hosts' is the opening line of Psalm 84; it is also the title of a well-known movement from the German Requiem of Johannes Brahms. The Grecian philosopher referred to is almost certainly Plato, with his concept of the Ideal. It is not clear where the story of the woman who found she could play a musical instrument comes from, but it seems to be taken from a Spiritualist source. 'The fields are white unto harvest, but the labourers are few' is a conflation of Matthew 9 : 37 or Luke 10 : 2 with John 4 : 35.

White Eagle's Address:

'How lovely are Thy dwellings, Lord God of Hosts.' This is our theme. We meet on this occasion to give thanks for the blessings which have graced our lives and for the blessings of the earth. At this season you walk in the countryside, you look abroad over the fields and a sense of peace and fulfilment enfolds you. It is a time of gathering in the harvest, but even more the human heart thrills at the flaming colours of the trees, at the sweet scents of the earth; even those scents which come forth from decay. All must learn the lesson of praising God for change, for the passing from the old state of life, for the preparation for the new. No doubt it has occurred to you how blessed is the gift of sleep. Those who endure sleepless nights through overtired brain and body will feel gratitude for all-enfolding sleep. A transition into the world of sleep is a great blessing and our brethren of the ancient schools of knowledge taught the young souls to be thankful for the refreshment of sleep before returning to fresh labours.

At our last talk we emphasised this point: 'from labour to refreshment; and from refreshment to labour', At this season these words become pregnant with meaning, for mother Earth ceases her labours and sleeps awhile. Then all is peaceful, waiting for the resurrection and the coming forth of new life. Thus, brethren, we can find a continual promise in our material

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world of what will happen to the human soul. Naturally, therefore, the gathering in of harvest is followed by thanksgiving and rejoicing of the peoples of all nations.

The earth is beautiful. There are many who feel they can worship God with greater strength, with deeper sincerity, when in the open country or on the mountaintop or by the seashore. Then they feel a sense of isolation, or rather a communion, an expansion of their consciousness from the individual to the universal; then they can glorify the name of the Lord with praise and thanksgiving. This is well, this is good. Our brethren in the great days of Egypt, on the Festival of Isis praised and thanked the Mother-aspect of God for all the fruits of the earth. We would emphasise the importance of this Mother aspect of the Deity, even at the risk of wearying some of you. It is important at this juncture of the world's history for all to recognise the saving power of the divine Mother aspect of God, because here in our midst as an expression of this divine Mother love, we receive the fruits of the earth – the bounty of Isis the mother of the earth. Now that we have stepped across the border between the two cycles, Pisces and Aquarius, you will see more and more how the power of this Mother aspect sways the progress of the world. My brethren, for this the world is crying – for Love, the divine Mother Love. Mankind needs mothering. We have said this again and again. Think what this means – the restoration to mankind of sanity, clear vision and commonsense by the wisdom of the divine Mother. We suppose that commonsense is one of the attributes of womanhood, and the possession of commonsense is of the utmost importance to happiness. How many a little problem and difficult has been overcome by the simple, sound commonsense of the divine Mother expressing itself through some homely woman! But we digress from our subject.

'How lovely are Thy dwellings fair, O Lord!' Thy dwelling places are at this season the fields of the earth, the fruits of the earth, the beauty of the earth. Thou dost also dwell within the temple of man, living God. We worship Thee, we thank Thee for the beauty and glory of the earth. It has been said by a Grecian philosopher and writer that the beauty seen by the physical eye and heard by the physical ear is merely a reflection of the beauty to be found in those worlds beyond this material physical earth life. We suggest that now, at this moment, you aspire to those spiritual planes and conceive through imagination something of this beauty; great is the beauty of your earth, but this must be intensified a thousandfold. Remember that this depends upon yourself. Do you realise that every soul created by God contributes to His beauty both here and hereafter? Therefore the beauty of the spheres lies within your own self, within your heart. It is something to be cultivated. The seeds are sown in you, the soil also is in you. The ploughing and the sowing and the reaping is yours. Humanity has to reap its harvest both here and hereafter. Grace, proportion and beauty in a building is the result of mind and labour of man. Beauty in the heavens is the result of the work of the soul, an eternal outgoing of all the qualities of the soul gathered in successive incarnations throughout the ages. That soul which has evolved through successive incarnations enters into great and exquisite beauty in the heavens. But unless the quality and the workmanship and the form are there in the soul, it will miss much.

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No doubt you have heard of the woman who had always longed to play a musical instrument, but had been frustrated. At length she found herself in the spirit world, in a home in which there was a lovely music room and a perfect instrument. Her guide took her to this instrument and said, 'Play!' 'I cannot', she pleaded. 'Sit down and try', said the guide. She obeyed. To her great delight she found that she had only to lay her hands with great love upon the keys and the music swelled forth.

This is what we mean of the soul having to put forth of itself. It is not merely the perfection of technique but a question of soul-quality, a question of evolution of the soul through experiencing all the underlying richness to be culled from both joy and sorrow. Harmony and beauty lie deep within and a voice which has been silent on earth can right forth in the heavens. This harvest the soul gathers when it passes from its labours on earth to its period of refreshment and rest in the spheres beyond. There is beauty to be found in earthly temples, in the churches and in the earth architecture – architecture which is the expression of the creative God-power in man. Sometimes this quality is overlooked, it is not recognised as an expression of the God through man, but thought to be due to man's mind alone. Indeed, through the mind can come a true beauty, but there must first be a blending with the heart. This is why we emphasise the divine Father, the blessed and holy Mother, and the Son, as the Holy Trinity which should be realised in every individual, the Three in One and the One in Three, the perfect family.

This, my beloved, is the teaching of the White Brotherhood. We come and talk to you thus in this Lodge with a great purpose – no, not to entertain you, not to amuse, not to enable you to spend a pleasant half hour which may be nothing more than an anaesthetic lulling you to sleep, or giving you a Sunday sense of well-being and niceness. We come instead to bring a message which is of vital importance in the world today. You are moving forward to a crisis – no, not a crisis of horror. We predict a crisis of decision which has to be faced, has to be recognised. The whole world moves forward onto a path of Brotherhood. The world is hungering for justice, for truth. It looks this way and that, to orthodoxy, to politics, to dictatorship, to Communism. All the differing souls are looking for some harvest which they hope, which they believe is about to be garnered. My brethren, if the harvest only consists of present outworn creeds and dogmas, or if it is gathered from the political fields, there will be few ears of corn. The only worthy harvest is that of God. This means the harvest of the human heart. The reaping has to be charged with humanity, with human love, human brotherhood. When we speak of the crisis ahead we mean the true harvest of the brotherhood of spirit in which all people recognise the values in life and recognise the Godhead as the one true source of supply for all their needs. Unless they draw their refreshment from that Source they cannot be sustained. When they realise this they will share their substance with their brother, and thus share the cosmic body of Christ. Man will thus eat the bread of the cosmic life and drink the wine or the blood of Christ. Each man will live not for himself but for his brethren throughout the world. No man will sleep quietly if he has wronged or hurt his fellow man. No man will rest comfortably while his brother is in torment or is suffering injustice under a wrong and cruel social system. These things can only come about when the true harvest of the Spirit is ready. This is why we talk to you, my brethren. This is why we labour

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to establish White Eagle Lodges in all parts of the country, in all parts of the world: to establish a centre of Brotherhood of the Spirit, so that the influence of brotherhood and kindness and mutual respect and dignity can be spread throughout the world. The needs of every man will then be recognised by his fellow.

The time is fast approaching when the fields will be white unto harvest. At present the labourers are few. This brings us right back to the home which has been provided here for the White Eagle Lodge by the bountiful love of God. His Son is God's agent. God looks to you, sons, daughters, to you, brethren; that through you He may work for the establishment of the White Brotherhood, so that that which dwells in the heavens may be manifest on earth. This is our whole purpose, so that from the highest heavens may descend a pure white spirit, a tiny baby, the Christ Child, and there upon the earth grow into manhood. Our evidence for this belief is to be seen in the lives of all the saints, the seers and the teachers of the ages. This is how we can know this will some day be. We have seen the glory of the Son of God shining through face, body and raiment of these holy and blessed ones. In them dwells the blessed and the Most High, and their form is His temple – how lovely are Thy dwelling places, O Lord! Thou dwellest in the glory of earth and in art and architecture, in music and religion, and above Thou dwellest in the most glorious of Thy temples, Thy child; and in Christ, Thy Son, made perfect in us.

For this privilege, for this knowledge, we praise and thank God. Take this message to your hearts; may you feel the privilege which is yours to work and to labour here in this Lodge, in this corner of God's vineyard; for there, by your cooperation, the heavenly hosts draw near the earth and minister to the needs of the heart, the soul and the body of man. Those of us who labour behind the veil thank you for your service, your help; and we ask you to give as you are able; only God and the inner self know your capacity for service and for giving.

God bless you, God bless you abundantly. May you bring forth the harvest. 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:

thanksgiving, gratitude, feminine, women, nature, rejuvenation, musical inspiration, community, creativity