

# Prodigal

A047 Sunday Address 3rd July 1938 Pembroke Hall, London Sunday Service

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

*Text:* from the duplicated version that also appeared as pp. 238ff of the September *Angelus*. The title follows the *Angelus* version even though 'The Prodigal Son' would be a more obvious title.

*Context:* a Sunday service as usual; the reference to children being present, at the beginning of the Address, is unusual. An internal reference shows that one of the hymns that preceded the address was 'Dear Lord and Father of mankind', with words by J G Whittier (1807-92, the American Quaker poet).

*General notes:* despite the title, only the second half of the Address deals with the Prodigal Son; the rest is about understanding coming from Spirit, and about how man in the Aquarian Age will have clear contact with Spirit. The reference to Faust, once the 'Prodigal' theme opens, is possibly unique in White Eagle's teaching.

*References:* the 'woman whom the world had outcast' seems to be to the sinful woman of Luke chapter 7, who then goes on to anoint Jesus' feet; elsewhere in the Gospels, especially in John, this is Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus. For 'the Comforter, of which Jesus spoke', see John 14 : 16 and other references in that chapter. Other bible references include 'take no thought for thyself', Matthew 6 : 25, and 'I, if I be lifted up', which is John 12 : 32. For Faust, see above all the great work by Goethe.

## White Eagle's Address:

The children present tonight would like a little word from White Eagle; so we greet them specially and all our beloved brethren we greet. We enter with you into this service, in our hearts praise and thanksgiving. We feel with you a spiritual baptism from the angels ever watching over earth's humanity. We ask you to give us your whole attention for this brief talk; we will not overtire you. Raise your hearts to the Great White Spirit, to the invisible worlds, and believe when we tell you that there are countless invisible people here; near, yea, touching and enfolding you in their love are those who dwell behind the veil. They are not to be disregarded nor considered as 'ghosts' or 'spooks'. How will you like it when you find yourself in the beyond, with a finer mentality and a greater understanding of life, to be referred to as a 'spook' or some 'wisp of ether'? You will be a hundred percent alive in the spirit world but on earth, unfortunately, most people are fifty or seventy-five percent dead!

Why are they thus? - because they allow themselves to be weighed down by the heaviness of desire and emotion. True, desire and emotion have a place in the evolution of man, but you and many like you have arrived at an understanding of a life greater than the physical. And yet you will say the world rings with materialism! Not so loudly as some think. There may be much noise on the surface but there creeps into men's minds and hearts a light – not necessarily through the intellect, but through the intuition – a light announcing a new life. We know that often the message is misrepresented and misunderstood, but we tell you that Truth must always find its level. God is omnipotent and in spite of man's stupidities and his misrepresentations, through his own growth, truth will grow in the human heart.

You can do much to help this growth by individually endeavouring to think and act in a real way. What do we mean by a 'real way'? We speak of the reality of human kindness and, in

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doing so, we think of the great teachers, particularly the Master Jesus, and see in His teaching a wonderful understanding. His life was the human life. What do the children feel about Jesus? Spontaneously they love Him and love to hear of His miracles and parables. The children do not question nor try to understand intellectually. They only know Jesus as a loving man, a kind and gentle spirit, and say their prayers to Jesus because they feel in their little hearts that Jesus will understand.

Beloved, Jesus does understand. God understands! You see what we mean? Naturally and spontaneously love and simplicity comes forth from a child's heart towards that gracious and strong figure, Jesus. The Cosmic Christ manifested through Jesus, by reason, maybe, of His simplicity and humility. He did not set Himself up in high places, but walked the earth in simplicity and made a friend of the sinner – so called – being beloved of His Father. He had no time for hypocrites. It was not the human, not the simple sinner he criticised; he seemed to see in the sinner something akin to Godliness. You remember the woman whom the world had outcast? She came to Jesus, drawn to Him by that spontaneous love that she felt in her heart for Him. She knew that He would not reject her. Her intuition told her that here, in this one Man, dwelt real love, true compassion. Real love! Not a condescending love, but a love which would enfold her and give her friendship and peace, something to hold on to, something which men and women had snatched from her. So she knelt at His feet and washed His feet with her tears and anointed them with precious ointment.

We speak of this incident tonight purely on the outer plane, as told in the Gospels, but there is an inner meaning – there is an inner meaning in the whole story of Jesus of Nazareth. The orthodox church has had its work to do in preparing the minds of men so that they could receive, when fully prepared, the inner meaning of the teaching of Jesus the Christ. In all the ancient religions there were the outer courts and the Holy of Holies. The Hebrews, who learned much from the ancient Egyptians, built their Temples on this plan. The Egyptians had a set teaching which was given to the masses, but also there was an inner, occult teaching which was handed down by word of mouth and contact with spirit. You will not find the esoteric teaching, the inner teaching of the Elder Brethren in any writings, unless they be so veiled as only to be read by the initiated. The inner truth, the inner mysteries, are not communicated by the written or spoken work, but only on the inner planes.

To what are we leading up? We want first to impress clearly upon your minds that in the ancient religions there was the inner and the outer. The outer being a code of morals and ethical teaching for the masses – perhaps not quite so advanced, so evolved, as is accepted today, but according to the needs of the race, so that religion was given them which satisfied the outer self.

Jesus continued this same method and gave His hearers magnificent teaching for both the outer forms of life and for the inner. By the 'inner' we mean the occult or esoteric schools. Even if you know nothing about occultism, your intuition can help you to understand much of inner things. It is not necessary to be a student of any particular school, so long as you are a student of human nature and human reactions, particularly your own. We do not advocate the

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study, too particularly, of your own self but rather a going forth and living and expressing of the Christ within actual life, by control of passion, emotion and desire.

The hymn you have just sung; 'Breathe through the heat of our desires', the breath of God, beautifully expresses the needs of the present, to prepare the way for the greater illumination which follows. As soon as man begins to develop and encourage that still small Voice within, he begins to develop himself, without knowledge of occultism. It is a natural process through the drawing to himself of those vibrations of light and power which release his soul and enable it to bring back to his physical brain memories of journeys into the unseen. These reveal the true life and bring an expansion of consciousness and intelligence enabling him to read the heavens and the earth and to read men's hearts even as the beloved Jesus the Christ read and understood the hearts of his Brethren.

So all the teachings of Jesus lead up to a crucial point in the spiritual evolution of humanity. For two thousand years preparation has been going on. The Gospel according to St. John and the Revelations of John are understood today only by the very few, yet these contain the mysteries of the soul, of man's being, of creation and regeneration; the mysteries of the grand cycle of life from the beginning to the end.

And what of the New Age, the Aquarian Age, talked of so much? This is when the spirit of life, the spirit behind all manifested forms will be revealed. In every department will be seen the spirit expressing its life through the physical body. Up to now it has not so manifested; it has been dormant. The mind has been developing and evolving. The intellectual aspect is important, but only in so far as it enables man to understand and grow. When that intellect is allowed to take possession, then it crushes the greater self, the intuition, the spirit of truth ... [even] the Comforter of which Jesus spoke.

Concerning the parable of the Prodigal Son, which so many find difficult to understand, we would like to take this opportunity of elucidating the difficulty of the elder brother. Most of you can understand the younger brother's part, but the story of the elder brother perplexes you. Let us study these two aspects; the younger brother did not know much about life but he had certain gifts given to him by his father. He made up his mind to enjoy these gifts and he did. He lived to the full. He wasted his substance, so we are told, in riotous living. How many of us do that; waste our substance!

We do not advocate that you all spend your substance in riotous living, but we would have you see another aspect of this parable. The younger son was he who went out into a far land and lived on the outer plane to the fullest extent. He was not sleepy and lethargic; whatever he did, he thoroughly enjoyed. You have heard us say, 'Enjoy life; bless your food and take it and enjoy it; but always praise your Father God for that is given. Thank God and enjoy His gifts.' These human experiences bring, in time, so much wisdom and true light. The prodigal son, after dissipating all his substance, was brought to the lowest depths. Have you ever thought what jewel may be hidden in the man who is down to the dregs? What jewel may be laying within that ugly casket? We don't think, we draw aside our skirts and pass by.

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And the son arose, for the light came into him, and he realised that he was working as a hireling for another master, not his Father. How many work for another master, one who is harsh, maybe, and holds the soul in subjection? Did not Faust fall into the grip of a master other than his Father in heaven? You may be the slave of such another and not be working for your Father in heaven.

There came a time when the prodigal son realised this and he rose up and went back to his Father; 'Father, I have sinned!' – the first step, the acknowledgement of his mistake. 'I am no more worthy to be called Thy son, but let me be a hireling in your fields.' Notice the humility, the utter love and expectancy; he knew he would not be turned away. His soul told him that.

Now, what of the elder brother – the problem of so many – who had remained with his Father throughout? There was no fatted calf killed for him, no rejoicing. 'My son, I have you always with me', said his father. The elder son had remained in the love of his Father and had worked for Him. But why? Was it because he spontaneously wanted nothing more than the privilege of service? Or was he working, subconsciously hoping he would retain and gain favour with his Father?

These two cases so clearly describe the karma of mankind. Much has yet to be learned of the lessons of karma. Many occultists live and work with a thought – maybe subconscious – that they are thereby making good karma. This is a grave danger, to live to make good karma for oneself. The prodigal son did not think about himself or his karma. He went out and he lived and he expressed his humanity. When he found that life reduced him to nothing, he turned to his Father in heaven. And he brought back with him a rich harvest of experience, of karma, good karma, we will say, through that human contact. He was kindly, he gave freely, he did not think about his own soul. He may have squandered his substance, but he gave with a willing and generous heart.

The other brother was self-righteous; so self-righteous that he was annoyed with his Father for having received his own brother! One of the teachings of the inner schools is a law in the Brotherhood that the elder brother must always help the younger and rejoice in his progress – rejoice when the younger is brought into the home of the Father. That was the elder brother's great test; and one which comes to us all. Do we work to build up good karma for ourselves or are we living and giving life to all humanity, so that humanity shall reap the benefit? 'Take no thought for yourself' said the Master, but serve the whole of humanity. Live not to yourself, so that you can squeeze into the front gates of heaven. Forget yourself. What do you matter? Nothing very much – perhaps nothing at all. But what does life matter; what does the whole of the human race matter? They are God's children.

We do not think about ourselves. We are not elder brethren. We want only to help; to help with our encouragement, our love and affection, all humanity – the waifs and strays, the fatherless and the poor, the poor in spirit, though they be rich in worldly wealth – all! Thus we live, not that we may scrape into heaven, but that through our expression of the Light we show forth Christ. We cannot aspire without helping our brother; we cannot act kindly,

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lovingly, generously, not only with money but with thoughts and attitude towards our brother man, without helping all. 'If I be raised up – the Christ within – I will raise all men up unto My Father in heaven.'

So the Prodigal Son came home and was received with great rejoicing. Even so with every prodigal! And the elder brothers, who cannot receive the younger with rejoicing and thanksgiving will go out from their Father's house alone and strayed from the path!

This is where the student, the candidate for heaven or for the higher mysteries, may fall so far, fall into the depths of darkness! And this is why Jesus loved the sinner; why He called sinners to repentance. He was not concerned with the hypocrite, with the scribe and the Pharisee whose heart He could read, but with the simple, generous-hearted humanity. Whatever we have learnt, or think we have learnt, let us all live as the children of earth, the simple babes, the younger sons, our brethren!

And so we leave you. May the light of heaven fall upon you, guiding your vision to your Father Who waits for you to return.

*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:*

*sinner, outcasts, spirit world, inner knowing, arrogance, intuition, simplicity, humility, life of Jesus, ancient religions, inner voice, light within, repentance, forgiveness, cause and effect, empathy*