

Thankfulness

A267 Sunday Address 3rd October 1954 St Mary Abbots Place, London Harvest Festival Service

Text: carbon typescript, headed just 'Harvest Festival Address', and the date: the title, 'Thanksgiving' has been added for the present project. The font of the typewriter is smaller than the one that has been visible in the last two addresses, and the present typist also seems better at dividing the text into paragraphs. Probably the carbon folded over, for the words 'adhering to', which fell in the top right-hand corner of p. 4 of the typescript, have had to be inserted with the help of another copy.

Context: a Harvest Festival was by 1954 well established in the London Lodge calendar, and when White Eagle refers to the produce 'grown on the earth' he almost certainly was surveying tables of produce in front of the altar, by way of offering – much of it perhaps brought up from New Lands.

General Notes: there is a reminder near the beginning that 'your book is Nature; the book for you to read is the Universe'. This underlies the address; otherwise, the thought in it is much as White Eagle's harvest message so often is, but especially clearly expressed here, and the communion in particular is of exceptional beauty. The theme of thankfulness is present elsewhere, but seems particularly strong here. There is also a nice passage about giving: 'Man cannot give too much'.

References: 'he can plough the fields and scatter the seed' echoes the familiar hymn, 'We plough the fields, and scatter| The good seed on the land', which is a translation of the German hymn of Matthias Claudius, dating from 1782. 'Pressed down and running over' is here used in a good sense, of how gifts come back to us, but in Luke 6 : 38 it comes straight after the injunction, 'Judge not that ye be not judged'. 'I am the true vine' is the first verse of John 1, though White Eagle turns it into a communion message.

White Eagle's Address:

It is good to see the manifestation of God's love and power in the gifts of fruits and flowers and vegetables grown on the earth. It is good to look up to the Sun, the golden Sun, and feel the life-force pulsating in us all. Whether we are discarnate or incarnate, we all depend upon the Great Spirit, the Almighty Presence, for we are part of that Life, that Power. The children who are immersed in the material things, who are living only conscious of the physical body, are cut off from a great light and peace and happiness. It is our work, your work if you are blessed with the awareness of the Almighty Spirit, with the vision of the invisible world and the unseen life which is pulsating through all matter: then it is your privilege and your work (as it is our privilege and our work) to help our companions – the great brotherhood of life on the physical plane, on the astral plane, even on the mental plane – to be awakened to the supreme spirit, all good, all love, all wisdom.

There are so many living in the physical form who shut themselves away from that life of the spirit which is behind every form and every manifestation in life. And yet there are still so many people who read the Scriptures but they do not perceive the spirit. We say to you, you dear brethren of the earth plane, that your book is Nature. The book for you to read is the Universe, is Life, is your own individual life as well as the life of all the peoples all over this planet. There you will read of the mighty works of your Creator.

We look at the produce of the great Mother Earth. Is it any wonder that in the ancient days the simple people worshipped God as the Great Mother? It is not so prevalent these days for man to even think of his Creator as the Mother as well as the Father, if he thinks at all. A large

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number of people do not think of their Creator. They do not think from whence they have come, nor whither they are journeying. They only live in the physical body encouraging the growth of the desires of that body, and so they live until the experience on the earth touches them deeply and they are distraught with pain of body, mind or soul – and in their extremity they cry out to their Creator, still not believing nor realising that there is an Almighty Spirit. Their cry goes forth, ‘O God, help me!’ And then, at that moment, when they are helpless, it seems that some power comes to help them, an intelligence that can help them in their need.

It is perhaps instinct that makes them cry out, but it is deeper than instinct. It is a sixth sense that man has been given by his Creator. It is his intuition that reaches out to his Creator and Protector, the Father–Mother God, the Being that has created all things ... the solar systems as well as the tiniest insect. Then the mind of man asserts itself, the reasoning mind – and, in its undeveloped state, it commences to accept as truth that life is purely natural and that it carries on under an automatic system. Man can sow seed and be sure of the result. He can plough the fields and scatter the seed and is quite sure that the seed will grow into grain that will give him bread to eat. And this he believes is due to natural law, the law of nature. Now what is nature? The ancients worshipped nature as the Mother God, because they saw in nature the continuation of life. All the way through the ages the soul of man in some form or another has worshipped God. Now, man sows and he reaps without thought of God and without thankfulness. No one can see what is taking place in the seed when it is laid in Mother Earth. It is one of those invisible processes of life which man takes for granted, the same as he takes the harvest for granted. He does not even think of the possibility of there being no harvest because it always comes.

At the same time man plants his seed in faith, an inner knowing and assurance that his seed will grow to maturity and give him bread and fruit and flowers and all the beauties of nature. Man lives by breathing and yet he cannot see the air he breathes. His heart pumps his blood round immeasurable distance round his body [*sic*]. There is so much going on in physical matter which is unseen and man accepts life, turning a blind eye to the divine Intelligence which is sustaining his life.

But there is a time, as we have already said, when man is shaken into the admission that there is a power which must be an intelligence and a more than ordinary intelligence: a divine Intelligence, something far superior to man’s mind and intellect. The manifestation of this Power and the demonstration of its love is all round man. But there is something more lovely than the manifestation of nature. This is the quickening of the divine man, the quickening of the life of the son of God, the seed of which is planted in every soul living. But tonight the point we wish to stress more than any other is thankfulness. We are not going to suggest to you that you make yourself thankful because you are told that it will open wide the gates to you, to enter into greater blessing. That is not the way to tread, but we are going to emphasise this truth that initiates all the way down the ages, the religious men and women, have always had a ceremony of thanksgiving for their food. Different rituals were performed. Different ceremonies were gone through, but always with the one supreme point. The apex of their understanding was, ‘Thank our Creator for what we receive’. As we have already said today,

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people do not think to say thank you to the Creator. They take all that they can get, as much and more than they need. But such taking must come to an end.

Our people in the past (we are speaking of certain races in which we once lived) would never take from the harvest, would never take any food to their lips without first casting a piece into the ceremonial fire, the fire which represented to our people eternal life, the ever-living God, the Creator, and the very first portion was thrown to it. We see here that you are [adhering to] the same ritual. You bring your harvest gifts to God, the Great White Spirit, and as you give, beloved brethren, as you give so you receive. You cannot give, particularly when you give from your necessity (it is not quite so good to give of your superfluity). When you give to God of your necessity, or even to the work of God, the work of the eternal, invisible Spirit, that giving must inevitably bring the same blessing, the same gift only very much amplified. The very act of blessing means receiving. As you give so you receive in full measure 'pressed down and running over'. Give of your spirit, your heart. Material things are important and necessary to all people but more than this is the spirit of giving, of loving, of serving, of praise and thankfulness to the Giver of all good gifts. Is it possible for man to give too much? Man cannot give too much, even though he strip himself to the uttermost. Very quickly the power gets to work to re-clothe him in even richer garments. It is the law; the law which flows on and on and on. It is life.

What do you think is going to happen to mankind? What do you think of life and death and the hereafter? The spirit of man is eternal. The death of the physical body makes very little difference to the man because he faces reality. Whereas on earth he is living with a mask on his face, when he has shed the mask which is the material part of him and he enters the next state of life, there he faces reality and he sees himself at last as he truly is. It may be a very much better self than he deems possible while he is living and doing and fulfilling the law of being and the commands of love. This life of spirit continues for incarnation after incarnation until there comes a period of rest, of quiescence. Sometimes it is called the 'cosmic night', but even in the night, even in the darkness, spirit is still aware of itself and its Creator. It is only resting quiescent.

Then comes the next great outpouring of cosmic life; the life of the spirit goes on eternally. You have illustrations in the ancient teachings of the Scriptures, of eternal life. The phoenix cannot die. From the dead ashes of the phoenix there arises new life. You have this demonstrated very simply in your natural world. The sowing of the seed, the coming of the spring, the summer, harvest and winter, when Mother Nature returns into herself and there is a time of quiescence, of sleeping, of rest. There comes forth a new, fresh movement in the earth. The song of the birds at mating time and all life stirs anew. And man once more has food, both spiritual and physical, if he will take it.

And so, my beloved ones, we want to leave you with this message of thankfulness for your life. It may be difficult at the moment but it will not remain so. If man gives according to the Divine Law, he will most surely reap a golden harvest. Only those who have reaped that

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golden harvest of spiritual joy and delight in their hearts can ever know of the true blessing of God upon all his creatures.

Now as this is the festival of the harvest, we will take at this stage of our service an invisible but nevertheless real communion with God. It is customary in the churches throughout your land to have the physical form of the sacrament; the visible bread and the visible wine. But there comes a time when man does not need the visible form to remind him of that inner life, that inner partaking of the bread and the wine. At the festival of harvest this was always celebrated by true communion between man and his Creator. The corn is the visible symbol of the physical life, the symbol of all that you in your life must eat. The wine is the symbol of the grace of God; the sweetness of the spiritual life, the spiritual power, the breath of God. The bread cometh from the earth, the wine from the spirit ... for he said, 'I am the true Vine'. In taking the wine, remember this. Now close your physical eyes and senses to partake of this inner sacrament of thanksgiving and at-one-ment with the almighty spirit of your Creator ... and know with faith, which is an inner knowing, that His presence in form is with you now, asking you to celebrate this Harvest Festival.

'Take, eat the invisible bread, symbol of the earthly creation.... My cosmic body.

'Take and sip the mystical wine, invisible symbol of my spirit, of love for you, remembering me, for I am with you always, even unto the end ... and the beginning.'

Amen. Amen. Amen.

And you, beloved brothers and sisters living on earth, are surrounded by a shining company – the White Brotherhood in the heavens who still love and labour with you for the upliftment, the spiritual evolution and the complete perfection and happiness in all God's creation.

Oh, such a company of shining spirit forms are with us now. We are together, at one in spirit, and between your earth and our spirit world there is no division, only a curtain created by the mists of the material earthly mind. And you, dear brothers, have been given the power and God's will within you to raise that curtain and enter into the fullness and glory of that eternal spiritual life.

We thank God, our Creator. O Lord God, we, Thy children, thank Thee. Our hearts overflow with thankfulness for all Thou has given and for all Thou hast done in Thy great wisdom and love.

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:

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*natural world, nature kingdom, Divine Mother, motherhood, life after death, rebirth, renewal,
cycles of life, Eucharist, ceremonies*

