

Life in the Spirit World

T019 The Inner Teachings 9th September 1936 Pembroke Hall, London

Invocation:

All-pervading love, wisdom and power, we pray that we may become increasingly aware of the glory of the spiritual life; we aspire to greater knowledge and wisdom through deeper humility of spirit and await the incoming of Thy light which revealeth the wonders of the universe. Unite all these, Thy children, in a common love and sympathy and may all arrogant and critical thoughts be laid aside; may we stand together as children of Thine, seeking through communion of spirit the greater wisdom of life.

Amen.

Greetings beloved, our subject tonight may on the surface appear somewhat ordinary, but perhaps it may present fresh fields of thought. The world of spirit, the spirit world: this idea is usually associated with the heaven places, with certain spheres to which man passes on leaving this mortal life. Many find it difficult to understand the spirit world, and when told that the spirit world is a state of consciousness within the soul, rather than a place or a state of life outside, find it very difficult to comprehend. You have been told that time and space do not exist in the spirit world, yet you hear of journeyings from place to place, from sphere to sphere, and so the idea of there being no space and no time in the spirit world is incomprehensible to you.

Let us consider the inner consciousness. Those who can respond to the finer vibrations of the astral world know that it is not merely thought which links you with that astral or spirit world, but rather a feeling, a realisation, or a vibration of the soul. The spirit world is not a place outside your present world. Some conceive the spirit world as being in the planes surrounding the earth, and indeed you are told this is so, and yet we come and say that the spirit world is within you. How are we going to connect the two ideas of the spirit world as a plane of life outside the physical, and the spirit world as being contained within the soul?

I want you to experiment as we talk. I want you to close your eyes and turn your thoughts inward. Now, do you become aware of a life which is very real, within your soul? Yes, we think we are aware of a vibration, a plane of consciousness which we can alter by our aspirations. We can be aware of a plane of consciousness within which is dull and dark, or we can increase our awareness to a finer, quicker vibration and become conscious of a like sphere of life. As our thoughts become more beautiful, so the light within appears to grow brighter. If our thoughts remain ugly and dull, so the world within remains drab and ugly. So we find that the world of spirit is reflected within the mirror of our own soul.

Do you see? I will try to give you an illustration. Some will take a country walk and see very little. They stay unaware of the beauties of nature. They have not reflected their surroundings. Another soul will take that same walk and will become aware of maybe a thousand little details apparent to him in the hedgerow and fields, in the bird life, in the sunlight, in the shadow, and in the atmosphere—many details he will note. He is not merely observant with the physical eye, but with the spiritual eye also. Conceive a third man* taking that same walk. He too has become more sensitive still to the spiritual life behind the physical form, and his sight again has greatly increased. He will not only see all the details of a physical nature, but

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also become aware of the pulsation or vibration of life and great beauty which permeates the physical manifestation. His soul will reflect the spirit world.

*[*For editorial policy around gender, see the introduction.]*

With each incarnation the soul follows this process of growth, and when man passes away from the coarsest envelope, the physical body, and enters into the next state, the astral body, unless that soul's light has grown bright through earth experience, or the development of what you call character, he will be unable to see and enter into the beauties of that spirit world. But in the process of the soul's journey, it eventually sheds that envelope of astral matter, that which is gross and dense falls away, and so on, through all planes of astral and mental life, until at last the pure soul enters the heaven world.

Nevertheless, unless the man develops strength of character and greatness of soul during his earthly experience, his vision and his surroundings even in the heaven world will be limited. It is similar to the man on your earth who has had very little, beside the man who has an extensive education. The first man is very limited in his ability to appreciate, to understand matters that perhaps he has never heard of. He is unable to appreciate art, literature, music, because, untrained, he knows nothing about these subjects, but a man who has had opportunity, and used his opportunities, has a wide scope, and many interests and joys; therefore his enjoyment is greatly enhanced. I do not compare these two men from a spiritual aspect, but give an illustration showing awareness or lack of awareness of those things which bring the fullest appreciation of life.

Place the two men of earth in the spiritual world. On earth it is a question of mental equipment and knowledge; in the beyond, a matter of life's experience and soul knowledge, or awareness of the finer vibrations. This awareness is acquired only through the greatness and humility of the spirit; it depends not on circumstances, material conditions, nor intellect, but on the quality of consciousness, on the love of that man and his tolerance towards all men, his sympathy—in other words his greatness of heart and beauty of character.

And now a word about the actual place of the spirit world. If it has place, then it must be outside yourself—and yet all is contained within!

Now astral matter—because this is the condition which most concerns you on earth—astral matter interpenetrates physical matter. If a spirit enters your home, he does not see the actual furniture, but he sees the astral or etheric counterpart of the physical furniture. He is unhampered by physical matter, because he does not manifest in the third dimension. To him physical matter does not exist—but the astral matter exists, and it is that which he sees. As with a beautiful scene, it is the astral counterpart of which he is aware.

Now a spirit who comes back or enters into your condition of life is aware of the astral counterpart of your earthly surroundings. Everything physical has this astral counterpart, but to him there is a lightness, a translucency in all he sees. Your spirit friends may have their spirit home very close to yours, there may be an actual interpenetration; this is where there is

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no such thing as space. There is this interpenetration of all spheres of spirit life. All is a question of vibration, and your vision of these things depends upon your ability to quicken your vibration and respond to the vibration of the astral or the spirit world. You do not need to die to enter the spirit world.

Q.Is that astral influence felt more in some parts of the country than others?

A.You mean that in some parts of the country there is an accumulation of astral forces? Yes, you are right. You have an accumulation of humanity in certain places on earth. So also on the astral plane. There are certain places, centres of power, where the rays of light have been concentrated for a period of time, and in such places you will feel greater force.

Q.Are the Druid circles etc. still drawing these forces?

A.Time does not exist in the spirit world. In Druidical centres the forces are just there until the ring or the magic is broken or dispersed. There are similar rings in existence in the astral (which interpenetrate certain spots on the earth) and people sensitive to the astral life feel such vibrations.

Q.Is that why one feels a terrible sense of fear in some places?

A.Remember that in the spirit world are not only human forces, but also sub-human. You will find influences of a negative character at work in some mountains, but others are centres of light. Perhaps in place of 'good' and 'evil' I should say 'positive' and 'negative', because each aspect is necessary for the balance and the evolution of life. This is difficult for you to understand, but it is so.

In mountainous districts, some discarnate souls who are young, and bound by fear and hate (for where there is hate there is fear) try to hide themselves; they are fearful of the light, and so go and hide in the crevices of the mountains and rocks. In spiritualistic rescue circles poor souls are brought for help to the earth plane simply because they cannot stand the light of the more developed discarnate souls who would help them. They convey the impression that they dwell in dark and rocky places and actually hide there, much as men on earth might do. It is of course the etheric counterpart of such mountains to which these souls are attached.

You are contacting the spirit world every moment of your life, and it depends upon your vibration as to which strata of the spirit world you respond to. The lower strata will bring a great deal of sorrow and annoyance, the higher strata joy, happiness, beauty, even godliness. You can tune in to any note you like.

Q.Then we take it that the grim places on earth are actually attuned to similar places in the astral world, and environed closely by the lives of people in the lower astral?

A.Exactly. But do not think, however, that people dwelling in slums*, for instance, are necessarily attuned to slums in the astral world. There are souls living in slums who actually

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have a very bright soul, which they demonstrate perhaps by beautifying their slum in many small ways.

*[*Use of this word would have been considered normal in the 1930's but, of course, would not be used now.]*

Q.I was thinking rather of the forbidding places of the world uninhabited by man.

A.Exactly. Let us bear in mind that the condition of life in which man finds himself is entirely a reflection of within, much as an individual's home and surroundings is a reflection of the character.

Q.Do *all* souls choose the conditions in which they will be born, or only in some cases?

A.There is not flesh for the one and fowl for another. A law, beloved, applies to the whole human family. Every soul at the close of each incarnation gradually passes upward, shedding the outer or the denser envelopes which it has acquired. When the soul is stripped of all these, it comes face to face with God, or looks in the looking-glass of life, and knows what experience it requires. A previous incarnation has created the necessity for a certain experience. A soul knows that to gain certain knowledge or grow in strength, it needs a certain type of life. Urged by the wisdom of the God within it, it chooses its life.

Q.Does that mean that a soul may come back as, let us say, a murderer?

A.When you get greater understanding you cannot judge even a murderer or a thief. You do not know. What did the Master Jesus say to the woman taken in sin? 'Let him who is without sin amongst you cast the first stone. Does no man condemn thee? Neither do I condemn thee.'* You cannot see the experience which that soul is gaining as a result of that life of apparent depravity. You only see in part. Maybe many of us have been through the pathway of depravity, maybe many still have to pass that way. Are we not murderers ourselves to some degree? A man may murder in his heart and in his thoughts, which is as great a sin as murdering the body. Have you thought of that? A man can steal from another soul, not his watch and chain, nor his money, but something more precious—his character, his goodwill, his good intention. Higher in the scale of evolution, the sins of the flesh show themselves as not the worst; the sins of the mind are greater still.

*[*The biblical quotation is John 8 v.7]*

You must get weary when we continually say—love, love, love, love. You think it is so simple, and yet there are many who do not know how to love. Those who have received the light understand what love means, and that it is a power for them to use.

Q.Where does the ego reside in the physical body?

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A. Some say that the ego* does not reside in the body at all, but outside, above. White Eagle tells you that it resides within the heart. That is according to my vision and my understanding, but perhaps you will not want to accept that.

*[*When White Eagle uses the term 'ego' he does not mean the term in the way some psychologists use it but rather, as here, to mean a higher, larger self.]*

Benediction:

And now, beloved, with hearts full of thankfulness to God our Creator, we close this joyous intercourse. We pray, Divine Spirit of all wisdom, love and power, that we may attune ourselves to those spheres of light and truth where dwell the great souls. And as we tread our path, give us grace to hold out a hand to our brother who falls behind, and strength to clasp the hand of the brother above. And so may the unity be ever strengthened through our love.

Amen.

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Afterlife, stone circles, karma, learning

