

LESSON II.

THE LAW OF CAUSE AND EFFECT.

We are very happy to notice that the first lesson has created a number of questions. When people ask questions you know that they are working upstairs, there is a problem, and we are very glad to know that the questions have been well above the average and show real progress in connection with the subject. Before, however, we take up the matter of the questions, we want to be sure we cover all the material to be considered in our second lesson.

To-night we are going to discuss first of all the Law of Cause and Effect. There is really hardly a necessity for a definition,--the Law defines itself. It means there is an absolute balance in nature, if, for any reason, this balance is temporarily tipped, Nature reasserts equilibrium inevitably. We find this Law working in our personal life through the balancing of Causes to their Effects. Every Effect must be equal to the Cause which produces it, no more nor no less. Every Cause must be consistent with the Effect which it produces, and can be neither more nor less. Therefore this Law is the foundation of the justice of personal integrity. It is the real foundation of our belief in esoteric philosophy. It is the one thing the intelligent human being has to depend upon, nor should he under-estimate the significance of this one thing. It is the most important thing in the world. It is man's promise of absolute right. It is the promise that by no means whatsoever can the conspiracy of man interfere with the workings of Truth. All so-called interference is either imaginary or temporary, and inevitably the Universe again asserts the Law.

This Law of Cause and Effect appears in the philosophy of nearly all people. It finds one expression in the Golden Rule, which has been traced in forty-eight religions. It finds its scriptural interpretation in the statement "As ye sow so shall ye reap". It finds its parallel in the Buddhist statement, attributed to Guatama Buddha, to the effect that all Effects follow their Causes as the wheels of the cart follow the foot of the oxen. There can be no discrepancy of any kind whatsoever.

This involves a new attitude toward life. It is something which cannot be easily adjusted to an insufficient philosophic or religious background. It demands a whole philosophy of life established on individual honesty, not only honesty in weights and measures, but honesty in thinking, honesty in feeling, honesty in consciousness. It demands more than honesty. It demands integrity.

Therefore, the Law of Cause and Effect, if you sit down and think about it, insinuates itself in everything you do. Everything you believe must either agree with this law in principle, or else your philosophy must be discarded. That which is not reconcilable to the Law of Cause and Effect cannot be accepted as a living philosophy, regardless of the distinguished names appended to the belief or the wide prevalence of its acceptance. The Law of Cause and Effect must be the rule of thumb by which we measure all things.

This realization brings us not fear but rather a philosophic acceptance of fact. A philosopher is not a person who is attempting to move the Universe to his own purpose, but one who realizes the perfect agreement of the Universe is the secret of individual salvation. Death results from the process of this perfect adjustment under our existing condition, and the perpetuation of life to its reasonable expectancy is assured by the acceptance of the Law. The Law of Cause and Effect, is the beginning of a philosophic life. The acceptance of the Law is the assurance the individual who lives this way has achieved a certain philosophic maturity.

Fortunately for the serious thinker, all of the religions of the world agree on this point. Some emphasize it more than others, but there is no great faith belonging to man that does not contain in its scriptural writings a definite statement of the Law of Cause and Effect, but in some theological writings this has been obscured by centuries of theology, but it remains, even though it is ignored or lightly considered. The Law of Cause and Effect is the keystone and cornerstone of the whole structure of the philosophic life.

The Law of Cause and Effect works in various ways through the Laws of Nature, so-called. The word Nature as we now use it is merely a term not understood and intended to include all phenomena not presumably directly attributed to a Divine origin. Therefore we are illuminated by Divine Nature and we have indigestion because of natural law. All things that relate to natural phenomena, all the various bodies that are the composite of energy and form, may be said to be natural. Therefore Nature is a word we use frequently and understand imperfectly. The Laws of Nature should be more carefully defined as the Laws moving through Nature. The Laws of Nature are the extension of Truth through form. They must be regarded, therefore, as symbolical of Divine Principle, symbolical of Divine Will, symbolical of the manifested extension of Consciousness and Law.

Now in order that we may not again become too confused in our terms, we must define again the proper terminology to be applied to the Infinite First Principle, or Eternal Principle, which we generally call God, which to the philosophically instructed person is not a personality but a Principle, Eternal Truth. This may be called Spirit, may be called Cause, may be called Law, may be called Truth, may be called Beauty, may be called Virtue, may be called Integrity,--all of these terms are suitable to distinguish First Cause, but none of these terms, whether you term it Absolute Spirit or Consciousness, none of these terms are adequate because man at the present time does not possess the faculty to understand or properly define that which is the Sovereign Cause of himself and all that lives. Therefore, if we use many terms, it is because they are familiar ways of designating an Eternal Truth.

(a) Evolution.

This evening we will first interpret the Laws of Cause and Effect according to the doctrine of Evolution. Evolution as we know it as a doctrine, as a philosophy, was the product of the 19th century scholasticism. It was the inevitable result of the contemplation of the Darwinian theory. The advocates of this theory believed they had established the ascent of man from the most primitive form of life to its present estate, and this ascent, this evidence of consistent improvement over immense periods of time was properly termed evolution. In the minds of those who accepted it in the 19th century, it signified only a constant growth in form. Therefore to the philosopher, evolution is a term properly applied to the release of Consciousness through form. One great student of these matters termed it ideation, the unfoldment not from kind to kind but from within outwardly, unfolding as the Oriental says, like the petals of the Lotus in the morning Sun.

Evolution is the unfoldment from within outward of the latent capacities of man, these latent capacities themselves being part of the Divine Being. Therefore, evolution is not man evolving to Divinity, it is Truth itself, it is Reality evolving or manifesting through man by ideation. It is as though you constantly turned the handle of a spigot wider and wider open so that more and more might flow through it. Man does not grow. What is commonly termed growth is the release of the Divine Principles through ever refining organisms. That which is really growing, that which is truly coming of age, is Reality itself, and those who seem to possess it are possessed by it. Therefore, man may not possess Truth, but by evolution he may gradually come to be possessed by it.

Therefore, man may not possess Truth, but by evolution he may gradually come to be possessed by it. Therefore it is not right or correct to say one man is wiser than another. It is more correct to say there is more of Wisdom manifested through one man than another, even as the relative physical strength of one may differ from another. So what is commonly termed evolution is nothing more nor less than the Invisible Causal Energies of Nature, themselves instruments and part of the Divine Being, slowly emanating through bodies, by becoming in substance ever more like itself. These bodies are refined by millions of years of contact, not with Nature or with man, but contact with the Consciousness within.

Therefore, when the word evolution is used let us try to get away from the makeshift use of it as we find in such eminent authorities as Webster's International. Let us think not of evolution in the terms of the Mid-Victorian Period in England, which was utterly and hopelessly dominated by convention, but let us rather think of evolution as it might be if education released man from ignorance through true knowledge; let us think of evolution as the Universal growing up in the particular, the Universal growing up in the individual; let us think of the body as the earth, in which the plant of life, as Jacob Boehme calls it, derives its nutrition in a sense, but let us more completely think of it as man as merely a channel, a pen in the hand of the ready writer, the media through which knowledge may be released, but never for one moment possessing it himself. He is not to be honored because of it, but the Truth within is to be revered. In our esoteric concept we honor people when only that which is infinite is worthy of honor, and we pay homage to those who possess it. That is why the Greeks are accused of deifying human beings. They did not deify human beings, but they did pay homage to the Deity in human beings when that Deity had achieved a magnificent release. Evolution to us means simply this; it means we are growing outwardly in Space, that we are slowly unfolding, refining, adjusting, attuning the body that it may become a more capable media for the manifestation of the Divine Will.

Now this will conflict with the concept of those people who have personal ~~ambitions~~ ambitions. We like to distinguish between two terms. Ambition is the individual who wishes to be great himself, and aspiration is the individual who wishes greatness may come through him. We can all aspire to be better mediums, but we have generally observed through the Universe there is trouble when human beings themselves go on the rampage of ambition. Ambitions have caused most of the miseries of man because man wanted to be like the Gods. It is not that we should be like the Gods, it is rather that we should be suitable for the Gods to be made manifest through us.

It is a little difficult to comprehend or understand this difference of viewpoint and we may be accused of expressing the sentiments of only one small group of believers, but research proves this is not true. Those to whom we turn for authority, those great initiated Adepts to whom we must naturally turn for properly qualified instructions, regardless of their nation, their beliefs, or their time, they have never differed on this point. The only point of difference is that which has arisen in modern times in which an effort has been made to reconcile the great principles of the classical philosophies to the problems presenting themselves in modern Christian theology.

Therefore we may say, while Reincarnation has been adjusted so as not to be in too glaring conflict with theology, which did not take this important law into consideration, this has been accomplished by means of compromise. Truth has been compromised, for we know that only One is Good. Our Scriptures tell us that only One is Great. We know definitely that the exaltation of the individual has never been any part of the teachings of any of the great Mystery Schools. The realization we are to become worthy to be channels of Truth has universally been taught and believed, but in this late day every philosophy and doctrine we know

has been tampered with, tampered with so as to appear to the mind not capable of accepting the facts, but when we are in a position to accept these facts, it is not necessary for us to assume such compromise. In the actual law of the matter, an Adept, or an Initiate, as he was called in classical writings of India, China and Greece, were never intended to be regarded as great individuals. Under no condition were they to be considered as possessors of Wisdom. They were not great because they possessed Wisdom, they were great because Wisdom possessed them, and they were moved not by human wisdom, but by the Wisdom which had an abiding place within them. Therefore let us remember we must not be deceived by decadent systems, but let us strive for the purity of original doctrines. It is this purity that past generations have been unable to find, but in this more liberal time there is no need for compromise.

(b) Rebirth

Now we are going to touch on the second of our subjects, Rebirth. We have been talking about it all the time, but it is necessary to restate because we are now searching for certain clear definitions; we are searching for certain factual things rather than terms. Therefore we may say Rebirth, Reincarnation is that part of the Law of Cause and Effect that manifests as the Law behind the constant recurrence of man in this material world. In other words, it is the Law ~~of~~ that teaches that every individual lives more than once in this world, and having lived more than once in this world, his Law, his life and his order and his periodic return is controlled by Law.

Law is a very hard thing for some people to understand, they get it mixed up all the time with the police force. We are not referring to material things. We are not referring to the statutes on the statute books.

To us Law means simply this: The Will of the Infinite for its Creation. The Will of the Principle is the Law of those things which are the emanations of that Principle. Law, therefore, is really Eternal Right, beyond which there is no recourse and no need of recourse, for what individual can ask for more than Absolute Right.

Rebirth can properly be described as the periodical manifestation of a Principle, which, according to certain Laws within its own structure, returns at various times for the purpose of Evolution, or Ideation, based upon the inevitable and irrefutable fact that no living creature can know all. There is no one who can know all in one life even if he lived to the age of Methuselah. We must realize definitely life is divided into periods. First is the period of growth, in which we assimilate society within ourselves. Second is the period of personal development in which we struggle toward Truth, and beyond that comes generally a third period, in which the body is no longer capable of sustaining the purpose of mind and will, therefore, for all practical purposes growth is apt to be slowed down. The longer the individual lives in a failing body, the less of growth can be accomplished, therefore, it is better to give him a new suit of clothes and start him out again, on the basis we can only assimilate a certain amount in any one period of time.

Those of you ~~men~~ who have traveled and have gone into museums and great art galleries know you see the first three or four pictures and after that it becomes one great blank. You cannot take it in. All you can say afterwards is "It was marvelous", but you simply cannot take it all in. To visit one art gallery successfully will require weeks, months of going in with your eyes closed as though you were blind, opening your eyes and studying the object you are approaching. That is the only way to go to an art gallery. Of course, when you open your eyes you may be startled; you may have stopped before a Surrealist picture, but we know in living we become numb to experience. We are tired. We are no longer capable of assimilating all the things which happen to us, then comes a time when rest is necessary, and that rest is part of the Law of Life. Fortunately we are removed before we become immovable, before we reach the point when we are no longer capable of actually growing.

Therefore, to the philosopher death is not a disaster, it is an opportunity. It is the privilege of breaking up environment pattern, breaking up mental patterns, breaking up ego patterns, getting rid for awhile of the great "I am" with the result we come back and build a new personality relieved of the weight and burden of our own previous conclusions. It is necessary, normal, proper, reasonable, and just as necessary as teething, or any other peculiar experience which is man's in his lot of normal life. Rebirth from a simple physical standpoint is the rebuilding of organisms to be ensouled by Principles. These organisms are the vehicles through which these Principles function for a short time and then are cast off as we cast off worn out clothing or a pair of worn out gloves. It is absolutely necessary that rebirth or reincarnation should be. The body of man in its own particular vibratory rate cannot stand indefinitely the impingement of the higher rate of consciousness. There is a friction to this complex or compound, which ultimately destroys the compound. Lord Bacon was well aware of that because he had written on his tomb, "Let all compounds be dissolved." It is only when elements are reduced to simple structures that we begin to perceive they are reidentified as one pattern. As children make mud pies by the shores of the sea, so men make bodies and cast them away again.

If we can come to the realization we live forever and we are never going to be without experience, and yet, Oh, Blessed Truth, we are going to be able to get a way from ourselves, how marvelous it will be. Just imagine sometime we are going to get away from ourselves. Of course, we will have a new self to get along with, but at least it is a change and most people will hazard much on change. We get release from the fact we have built a terrific identity complex. "We are us", and if anyone tells Mr. Smith that he isn't Mr. Smith, Mr. Smith is annoyed no end. Mr. Smith has attitudes, political alliances, and in the course of his life he has gotten himself into so many difficulties there is nothing but death that will get him out. Mr. Smith has developed all kinds of physical ailments. Mr. Smith has temper fits. Mr. Smith has a bad heart; everything you can think of afflicts Mr. Smith. Some of the lesser ones by effort and industry he can cure, but before we leave this world we get ourselves so completely entangled up that leaving it is the only solution. There is one other solution and that is philosophy, because philosophy is capable of getting us out of tangles. If we use it as a tool we can release ourselves from the tangles, gain the proper experience and enrich our consciousness, but only philosophy can do that.

So it is either philosophy or death. That is why the Mysteries always played dramas relating to the ritual of burial, because enlightenment and death are both the universalizer of personality. The great part of Mr. Smith's problem is usually that he is Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith's ego has twisted itself and worked itself around so that the things which happen to him hurt him. He is easily offended. You cannot injure that individual who is impersonal. It is the illusions of the entity that get us into most of our difficulties, and the only way Mr. Smith can finally be laid to rest is to have Mr. Smith cease to exist.

So the next time the Principles behind Mr. Smith come back into incarnation they are Mr. Jones. Now that in itself is not a great help, because Mr. Jones can get himself into all the trouble Mr. Smith was in, and generally does for the first four or five hundred lives, but at least it is a new viewpoint. Mr. Jones gets into all kinds of difficulties, but they are different difficulties; Then Mr. Jones lies down and the principles behind him appear in the personality of Mr. Brown. Now Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones have ceased, but a certain residue of experience has remained, constituting what we call the soul, therefore, Mr. Brown is going to be wary about the mistakes Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones made, because he doesn't know how he knows, but he senses something is not quite right about them, therefore he makes a lot of new mistakes, entirely original, but a change is always a new start.

Mr. Brown does not have to remember he was Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones because if he did his heart would be broken in the cradle. He would never live to reach maturity, he would worry himself to death, he would destroy himself, if he suspected all the mistakes he had made. He could not live long with the memory. The only thing he seems to be able to do is to avoid the mistakes Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones made. It is an instinct. People say he is a little smarter than other people. He is a little wiser merely because in the unconscious background lies the experience of those two previous personalities. He doesn't remember them, he is not Mr. Smith or Mr. Jones any longer, but the memory lingers on. Something remains as an inducement to ability, as a warning against error, therefore, we find some people who simply have better judgment than others. It is not generally due to the fact they study more, but rather they have more innate intelligence, and innate intelligence is accumulated through ~~x~~ lives. It is not absorbed in books.

(c) Karma.

Now we have to consider the third part of our subject, Karma. The Hindu word Karma does not actually mean the same thing compensation means in English, but the differences are such only the Oriental scholar is capable of differentiating between them. They are subtle meanings, and we are not a subtle people. Our literature is not subtle, our art is not subtle, we have no capacity to appreciate great subtlety, therefore, for us Karma must be Compensation. It is the Law of Cause and Effect in its aspect of determining the right and wrong action of individuals. Karma does not exist in any kingdom below the intellectual level. For example, the animal does not have Karma, Karma is the result of the action of the individual intelligence and not of the collective intelligence. We will have something to tell you about that later. In the collective intelligence, it is not the individual creature, but the collective unit that has karma; therefore, the individual animal is not capable of it, but that we will discuss in a future lecture.

Karma may be said to be action and reaction in life. Various schools have different terms to explain karma. One school invented the term "Cash karma" because we are rather cash conscious and we could understand the meaning of it. Cash karma simply means karma that immediately follows action so there is no great interval of time between them and the relationship is evident. Under cash karma would be for instance the child who tells a lie and is spanked. That is a very simple example of cash karma. The child does wrong and suffers almost immediately, or as soon as it is discovered.

Another form of cash karma is, we take part in a shady money deal, we intend to cheat someone, the deal falls through and we are the ones to lose, - ~~is~~ cash karma. We wanted to get more than the thing was worth and had to take less. We eat a Welsh Rarebit at night and it does not set so well. It is karma interpreted on the cash and carry basis. It is making a mistake and the mistake comes home and roosts immediately, and if you have an inquisitive mind you relate the two incidents. You may not enjoy the relationship, but it dawns upon you you are personally responsible. You do wrong and you suffer. There is scarcely a day that goes by that some cash karma does not arise. We try to avoid something and as a result have to meet something three times as bad. We try to get out of ~~the~~ something, and then find the only way out is through it. We gradually learn if we weigh our ~~fish~~ with the meat, the store eventually closes. If we only put eleven eggs in the bag, the customer does not come back. It is the obvious simple thing that happens all the time. A cross word, - we get one if we give one. A stupid mistake, we are uncomfortable. A thoughtless action, it doesn't turn out well. All of these things are evidence of the failure on our part to use the best we know on the solution of a problem, and for that we suffer.

There is nothing personal in it. There are no forked-tailed demons getting ready to pitch us into perdition with pitchforks. It is what we ourselves do, creating an unbalance and Nature righting it by the principle of compensation. This goes on around us all the time, and we observe another thing, in this, as in human laws, ignorance is not regarded as an excuse in any case. If we do a wrong action through not knowing any better, we are still apt to suffer. The small child may be only three years old, but if he sits on a keg of gun powder and throws a match in it, the fact that he is baptized has nothing to do with it, nor the fact that he does not know any better does not mean the young infant is going to escape the result of Cause and Effect. Therefore the fact we feel sometimes that we are unjustly treated is usually because we have not done the best we could.

Now in addition to cash karma, which is the kind that we find almost immediately delivers, there is a second form which may, and usually does, consummate in the life, but not always. For example, dissipation in youth, suffering in old age. An individual starts out with wrong ideas, he ends up miserable. If you do not play the game the way the Universe demands, it is just too bad for you. Therefore wrong policies long held, ruin the life; wrong ~~ambitions~~ ambitions, long sustained, result in the Napoleonic crisis. Whatever we do anywhere through life that is wrong, it is very apt to catch up with us again that very same life, therefore many people are constantly suffering and they do not know why. They go to be psychoanalyzed but it doesn't do any good. A psychologist can help you but he cannot make the individual correct the action.

So there is karma that extends over a period of a lifetime. The young athlete dies at forty simply because he put too great a strain on his body. The Universe is not so interested in reasons, apparently as in facts. You may have the best intentions in the world, but if you do wrong you pay for it. The answer is to do the right thing, to have the courage, the wisdom, the stamina to do right because as surely as bad karma comes home to roost, so does good karma. Good karma results in the improvement of the individual's condition and environment. Things well done will be rewarded, whether we recognize it or not. All the good things we accomplish guarantee our security in times of stress, and those who live well are rewarded by the consequences of Right action. So karma must not always be regarded as evil. It is merely Cause and Effect, impersonal, absolutely devoid of any interest in what religion we belong to or what ~~race~~ race there is no possible way of escaping karma, regardless of the various promises offered throughout the ages. You have to face it, and mature thinking people want to face it.

Now the third type of karma is that which is carried from life to life; the karma which demands an environment suitable for the experience, an environment in consistence with that in which the individual then lives. This karma is then carried over, not as a personal or particular action, but as an impersonal accumulation of unfinished business. It is the man who through scheming and conniving causes much misery and suffering, the dishonest politician who brings suffering to thousands through his action, the dishonest leader who leads his followers into misery and dupes and deceives them, these kinds of actions generally require another kind of life to settle, and that results in the individuals being placed in the most uncomfortable positions.

The greater problems take greater cycles of action. It is very much better the individual should never indulge in any action that brings collective misery, because if he does, regardless of his status here, he is going to be a very unhappy man. The same is true of the reverse, right action. The individual who actually improves others, makes more secure and happy the lives of others, is building the greatest good karma. Buddha said to convert a man is good action, that is, to convert him to the Law; to convert several men is better action, but if in your power lies the ability of the conversion of many, that is still better action, gaining more merit. The more good we accomplish, the more we enjoy ourselves, and we frequently start in to enjoy it right away, and for those people who are very miserable, there is usually a reason, and philosophy is a solution whatever the reason may be.

In addition to this larger accumulation of karma, there is racial karma, national karma, the karma of institutions and organizations, and every compound man can build, because it is the inevitable fate that all compounds must be dissolved and all compounds must ultimately dissolve themselves.

Now when we have this broad viewpoint on the subject, we must go back to something not quite finished and which will inevitably ~~reappear~~ re-arise for consideration. We have to have a much better understanding, a much more practical understanding of the thing that reincarnates. If we do not we are going to miss a large part of the meaning of our entire course of lectures. We must understand the incarnating principle, and here we come against a duality of viewpoint, loosely termed Eastern and Western, but the terminology is not correct because in the doctrine of reincarnation there is no East or West. It is quite inconceivable the Universe has a different plan for the Occidental than the Oriental. In the Occidental world we have not the natural alacrity to assume responsibility, but the East is not afraid to face Self. In the West we are different in this viewpoint in that we have ambitions, and it is uncomfortable for many people to believe that the Law of Incarnation is going to ~~make~~ make it impossible for them ultimately to be superior persons, super-human beings. The Eastern people think abstractly, they do not envy the archangels, but in the West people want to go on to the top. They want to get bigger and better until they are really Gods yet still be themselves. Mr. Smith clings tenaciously to Mr. Smith, but it is one of the things Emanuel Kant proves is impractical, however, it is one of the things the West accepts.

The West likes to believe in conscious immortality, it likes to feel this thing we call man will thimble out the ocean, and this small capacity we have will sometime be vast enough to hold the Cosmos. What other people will do when the Cosmos is in side of us seems abstract, but we have a competitive type of viewpoint, the same kind of viewpoint that makes people want to be better than other people, makes them want to keep up with the Joneses. (I hope we haven't a lot of Smiths and Joneses here tonight, but if we have we are not referring to them. We are not referring to any people. These are test cases, created out of thin air, so if you happen to be sitting next to one do not look at them askance. We are not talking about them.)

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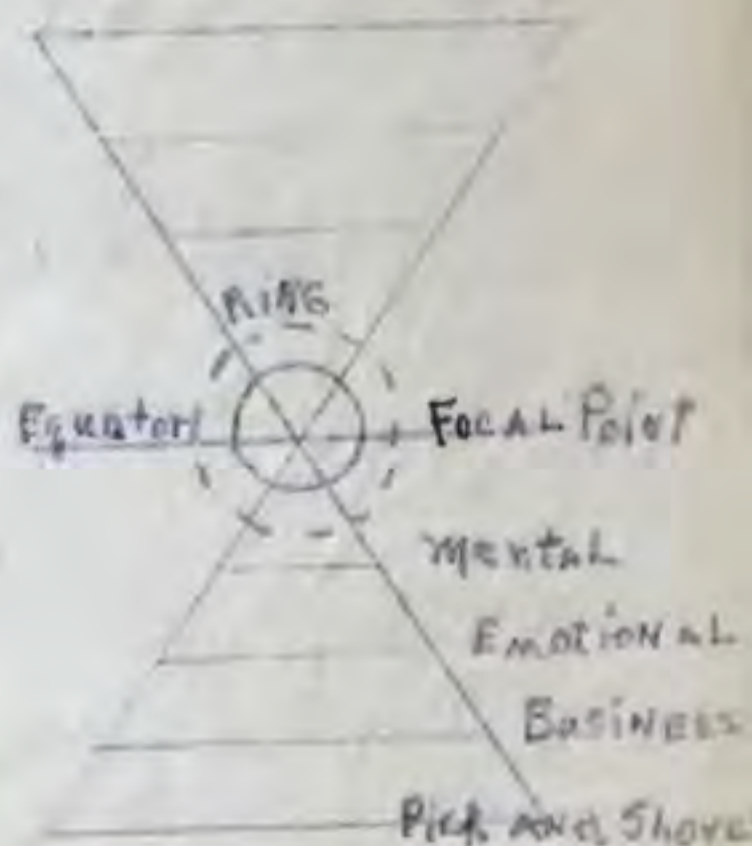
The problem of preserving this Immortal Self does not belong to the Eastern philosophy; Plato did not believe it, the Orphics did not believe it nor the Neo-Platonists. This idea of the eternal self seems to have originated with Christian theology where if you did not have an eternal self, you could not suffer the fires of perdition forever, nor live in heaven forever, so finally a compromise was made, and we have combined this theory with Reincarnation, but there is no such thing as Eastern and Western Wisdom. There are Eastern and Western philosophies, but they all lead to the same place if they are real. Truth is no respecter of continents, races or divisions, and those who are possessed by it belong to the whole world.

Therefore we have to determine more accurately just what actually reincarnates. In order that we may gain a better understanding we feel at this moment we are called upon to be artistic again.

The problem of the Ego is this. We have already pointed out to you the ego is a vortex, or a focal point, like the burning flame of a burning glass when the rays have been focused upon a piece of wood or paper. We know this focal point while not real is still real enough to burn. It is in a sense real, but it is also in a sense unreal, because it is merely the result of concentrated rays through a glass. If those rays were left diffused they would not create a focal point, but united they create a focal point. It is not exactly correct to say this does not exist, but it is correct to say it is not suitable for **veneration** which should be directed upon Cause and not upon the Effect. Therefore, we

want you to consider what happens between lives, what is carried forward from life to life, and in order to do that again we will draw these pyramids with their base in matter and their top in consciousness and the ego in the focal point.

We have told you below the equator there are four distinct bodies. These bodies are the garments or vehicles through which this flame, caused by the focus, manifested. Working down through this quaternary of bodies, the entity begins to produce action. Now action produces a reaction. Therefore with your mental, emotional, vital and physical bodies you are doing things. If it is the emotional body you are using you may be working with a pick and shovel. If it is the next body you are using you may be in business. If it is the emotional body you are using you will be an emotional type of person. If you are using the highest of these bodies you will be an intellectual type, you will be studying. Wherever you are working and using these energies there will be emphasis in that department of life. You will use all four to some degree, although the mental type is apt to ignore the physical, and the emotional type is apt to forget the emotional effect upon his physical body, still they are all bound together and from these bodies there is distilled by experience a mysterious essence, and this essence is Psyche, or the Soul, and this is not to be confused with the psychological concept of it. It is the accumulated experience resulting from Cause and Effect upon these four levels in a lifetime. All of this exists in the Tabernacle Mysteries, where it was called the Altar of Incense through which the souls were ascending to the Glory of God.



Now out of physical experience we gain certain lessons; and out of contact with the experiences peculiar to the etheric body we gain certain lessons; out of feeling we refine our emotions; and through our thoughts we gain a certain experience. All of these bodies during the course of one lifetime have their own peculiar experiences. After death and between lives these experiences constitute a hypothetical circle around the ego or hypothetical point. These experiences are the basis of karma, and they are the summary of all action on these planes; they are the very essence of ~~all~~ all of this experience, and they constitute a vehicle called the Soul, and this vehicle when seen clairvoyantly appears as a Ring. It is the Ring of the Nivelung reflected out of the lower world, because in truth and substance this focal point is invisible but is always surrounded by this ring of light, and that is the substance of these bodies.

If you remember in the Old Testament you know the story of the Wandering of the Children of Israel in the Wilderness, that accompanying the Children in the Wilderness was the Arc with the Shekinah Glory, and this is this Ring traveling from one body to another. From this ring of light the Karma of the last life is interpreted, because from this ring of energy is to be derived the very essence of all the new experience in the last life. The result is whatever distortion there is in karma immediately becomes active or is manifested as soon as we build a new chain of bodies.

This chain of bodies created a little confusion last time which we would like to clarify because we appeared to contradict ourselves. If we only appear to do it once we are lucky. We will feel good. We tried to explain to you last week the entity in building bodies descends through the four planes and becomes physical in the lowest. I then told you that the entity goes back up this way to maturity, and most people thought I said it went one way or the other, but it goes both ways. Descending these principles become the nuclei of bodies. After birth up to the various years of life these nuclei become active agents in this way: At birth the physical body comes into manifestation. When the child is year the etheric body comes into manifestation and when it is fourteen this emotional body becomes manifested and when it is

twenty-one the mental body is manifested. The principles descended before birth and ascend afterward. This is the Ladder of the Angels in which in a dream of Jacob the angels ascended and descended, and here we have the chain of bodies.

This little Ring contains the experience of life. It contains more than that. This Ring never ceases throughout the entire cycle of incarnation. It never ceases as long as the individual is going to incarnate. Therefore that Ring absorbs into itself the experience of over 700 lives, and from the experience within it keeps on producing bodies, the bodies in every case emanating from the vibration of that Ring.

The Ego can never be seen clairvoyantly unless it is wrapped with this Ring, because this Ring actually contains with the average individual the experience of more than 400 lives. Toward the center it is blue and toward the circumference gold, and the ring is approximately the size of the top of an ordinary teacup. Within that area, because we have no dimensions in these superphysical spheres as we have here on the physical plane, may be compressed without crowding the experience of a hundred lives. Therefore the ring is the peculiar custodian of karma. The Ring began by being a potential disc in man's first human incarnation. By this time it has become exceedingly luminous. In the last half of the incarnating cycle the Ring becomes dim again, and finally at the very end fades out, and it is because of the fading out of the Ring gradually that finally at the end of the cycle there is no longer any way of producing these bodies, and the end of the life cycle comes when there are no more bodies to be formed, resulting from the dying out of the conflict in this Ring. As long as there is Karma the Ring is animated, but as soon as karma ceases the Ring dies out because of the perfect control of action. Then the Ring dies out. It is only kept alive by the friction and conflict we call the soul.

As far as we have been able to find out there is no such printed description of the Soul. It is usually considered as a reservoir of Good, but in truth it is tied up with the cycle of birth. The Soul contains the experience which can gradually be precipitated into form. The genius of the great violinist, the wisdom of the Great philosopher, the brilliance of the great artist, all of these things may be determined by the analysis of that Ring, but fortunately for the life of man that Ring cannot be analyzed by any human being. There is no possible law by which the highest Adept, the highest Clairvoyant can analyze that Ring. No one except the person to whom it belongs can be a party to what it is. Therefore efforts to tell what people were in previous lives, while there are indications, there is no actual method by which this can be determined.

This Ring contains the focus of light; moving from body to body it takes up its abode in the Aura, and from the Aura is slowly precipitating bodies from the Ring. The Ring may occasionally be seen. There are many records of the investigations of clairvoyants and it is always a luminous light with an immeasurably tiny heart in the center, like the blue heart of a gas flame. This is the thing that goes on, the vortex and the Ring.

Now these two do not constitute the personality. Your personality is the result of the emanations of the four bodies downward and the ascent of the principles upward, which requires approximately from twenty to twenty-five years, and in this we have the personality, the Mr. Smith already mentioned. As soon as the experiences are returned to the disc and only the Ring of fire and the disc remain, then there is no longer any Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith was laid to rest, but the various principles which Mr. Smith used in the process of living have become tools for future manifestations, and this will continue through the life cycle.

There is only one way by which the human being can get away from the life cycle and that is by causing the ring to fade out, and through many systems of metaphysics man is attempting to hasten his identification

with Truth, he is attempting to decrease the force in that Ring, because as long as the Ring remains there cannot be a universalization of that individual, but no matter how hard he tries, he cannot affect the Ring. There are no words, no prayers, no mantras by which he can affect it. That Ring is completely Cause and Effect and there is nothing **but** Cause and Effect that can influence it. There is only one way by which it can be caused to slowly die out and that is through the refinement of the personality and the overcoming of impulses which cause the energy to be in the Ring. When the Ring fades out entirely, man ceases to be and we have achieved Nirvana. By means of the end of friction it means again the compounds have been dissolved. The luminosity, the light that emanates from the Ring is evidence of friction, the evidence of one element working upon another. As soon as the compounds are dissolved the Ring ceases and the compounds are dissolved when the four bodies no longer send their irrational impulses upward. As soon as the bodies completely cease, the karma is balanced and the Ring fades and with it fades the personality.

It would be a mistake to say an Adept or Initiate, ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ had destroyed the Ring. He has not. What we call an Adept or Initiate, is a person participating in a secret knowledge by which it may be inferred the Adept, the Initiate, or Arhat, is in advance of the ordinary body of humanity; he may be fifty lives ahead of the average person, he may be nearly to the Infinite, therefore he has dissolved and destroyed Mr. Smith, but he has not destroyed the Ring or he could not be here. The moment the Ring ceases he is incapable of manifestation, either physically or metaphysically. That means with the **dissolution** of that Ring there is no ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ consciousness on the astral plane, the emotional plane nor the mental plane. It means actually the individual has become universalized and the vortex within the Ring has become identical with Being again.

The dissolution of that Ring, according to the Eastern philosophers requires innumerable periods of time, and there is a difference in the viewpoint between the West and East we want to discuss. The West says when the Ring is dissolved, or fades, it fades into a nucleus or shaft of energy where it is then identified with the lower part of the Divine Principle and becomes the basis of function for other waves of manifestation because from all Universal energy all life is derived. To the East the perfecting of the consummation is the breaking of the dam which permits the water to flow back into the sea. To the West, when the consummation of the cycles of life has been reached, the energy of the Ring is dissolved into the lower part of the Divine Principle, where it can be reidentified later with other planes of manifestation. This is a point of difference it is only fair to point out.

This gives us control of certain simple factors used, and we want to sum these up in a few simple words, because we must use them. There is no use to study unless you do something with the things you study. The thing you should do is to use study as the means of accomplishing liberation, not to consider liberation as something you are going to do this year, next year or even this lifetime, but as something toward which you can hasten your way by a rational understanding of natural law. Wisdom consists of obeying the Law, living under the Law and when we live with the Law and under the Law, then we move with it and cooperate with it and achieve the highest degree of Consciousness we **desire**. Not until the final absorption of the Ring is man human. Up to that time he is evolving from the lower condition to the apex of the human state. When this state is finally reached, when he is truly human, then he will realize how primitive it is, it is necessary. It is the foundation of that which is to come.

If we could only help **people** to love the Law, to regard it as the most marvelous, the kindest, the most perfect of all things; to trust in it and trust in it only; to live it gladly even though it may ~~XXXXXX~~ cause certain terrestrial difficulties; to live in it and put **x** faith in it, and to realize the living of the Law is true prayer. Prayer is not asking for things, nor is it glorifying things. The highest aspect of prayer is to realize the rightness of the Law. To live by Divine Law is to live well, to fulfill life, to consummate purpose. Therefore it is

that we should truly love the Law, which in its wisdom perfects all things and brings us finally to the desired goal.

If we differ from this Law and wish it were different, let us remember as we grow wiser we grow in the realization of the Rightness of the Law. Therefore if we do not want Nirvana today, it is because we are so far from it we do not understand it, but as we approach it we will want it. No one has to do what they do not want to do, but when the time is right for him to have it, he will want it.

The only thing we can offer you along this line, we have in one little book called "Magic", which has a diagram of the aura. We also have referred to the problem in many of our books, and we suggest you read them if you are desirous of studying the problem further. Our "Lectures on Philosophy" is highly suitable text book, which you can study from now on, or at least for some time, but we want you to try to inwardly become aware of Truth, to rejoice in Truth, glorify Reality, not because it pleases you, but because it is infinitely wise and appropriate. We want you to prepare yourself so that Wisdom may be fulfilled in you. When this is accomplished the world will go well, there will be peace among men and the progress we so desire.

Notes on lecture by MANLY P. HALL

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