

Box 863, Johannesburg
 South Africa
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My dear Ones:

In my last letter I said we would consider the subject of meditation in the next. Meditation is the food of our souls, and an indispensable necessity for spiritual growth and progress. It is quite easy intellectually to see why. For many lives on the "out-going" path we have been learning to give reality and value to the things around us. Now, on the "in-going" or return path we must turn our powers of observation and attention to inner things, and learn to give them reality and value also. We are not making real something which is imaginary or it might be thought "unreal." We are making real to ourselves Something which is always there, something which eternally is.

The Ancient Wisdom has taught us that man is a three-fold being. He has a body to gain experience by, a subtler "soul" whose great powers are feeling and thought, whereby these experiences are thought over and felt and in turn transmuted into mental and affectional concepts which guide and inspire our life. But more deeply hidden than either of these two is that eternal quality in us which shares the underlying Life of the universe, which can never pass away or die, and which shares, albeit as yet unconsciously with most of us, the power and wisdom and love of God. Here lies the true source of all real wisdom and power. How shall we come into touch with it deep within ourselves?

The first thing is to realise by faith alone that it is there and does exist. "Faith" does not mean the ability to "believe" something beyond reason. H. P. B. called it "the soul's unlearned knowledge." Eternity and Reality are always there, whether we understand and realise them or not. But by turning our attention in their direction we slowly begin to realise them. "Realisation is making Reality real."

How is that done? At first in just the same way as we study and observe outer things. When we first turn our attention to it that interior world seems vague and unknowable. But as time goes on it begins to take on a clearer, richer appearance. Look around you. Your eyes see a wonderful world full of rich colour and form, each one of which has an eternal meaning and value. Shut your eyes and look within. What do your mental eyes see? Another world full of thoughts, aspirations, memories, ideals and hopes, which when we know them are even more beautiful and full of meaning. We must get acquainted with our higher, better selves. At present, with many of us, he is more or less absorbed at his own level of life, though from him comes all real love and power. As the Voice of the Silence puts it: "The light from the one Master, (the Divine Life) the one unfading golden light of Spirit, shoots its effulgent beams on the disciple from the very first. Its rays thread through the thick, dark clouds of matter." But as we consistently aspire and strive to realise higher things, we shall attract his attention down here and he will put more of himself into our lives. As Light on the Path says: "He is thyself; yet thou art but finite, and liable to error. He is eternal and is sure. He is eternal truth. When once he has entered thee, and become thy warrior, he will never utterly desert thee; and at the day of the great peace he will become one with thee."

At his level we are one with the Master and also with the Divine Life. To realise him is to draw nearer to the Master and to God. Perhaps that is the meaning of the words of a Master to an aspirant that we should not try to draw Him down to our level but rise to His. In the scriptures our Lord is said to have retired apart into a mountain to pray. Now I do not believe that He went up a mountain for that purpose. It is a symbol indicating how He rose

in the interior worlds to higher and higher levels of consciousness. Whenever we try to think deeply and steadily upon higher things we impose a quicker rate of vibration upon our inner vehicles of consciousness. This sometimes causes a response in the physical nerves, resulting in a certain strain or sensitivity to noise or shock.

Let us take time, however short, to turn our thoughts and following emotions towards all that is lovely, unselfish and true. It need not have a religious tinge. Into a world at first dim and uncertain we walk, but day after day that dimness clears and becomes a wondrous world of vision and beauty. Then it will begin to influence our daily lives, lending dignity, beauty and meaning to every separate action and event. We must use the creative power of the imagination. It does not matter what forms we create for they are but a stepping-stone to greater and simpler realisations. As a Moslem sage once said: "We make the forms, Reality fills them." So the ideas, mental concepts and forms we build are really little windows through which we peer into Eternity and through which Eternity looks back at us. But remember they are windows through which and beyond which we gaze.

Ponder on lovely and true statements from a scripture, a poet, or a sage. Picture to yourself the ideal you long to be and attain. Once Dr. Besant said to Indian students: "Build for yourself a great Ideal - the Ideal of that which you wish to be. Think of it, dream of it, try to live it. One day you will wonder that you have become that fair thing that your thought threw on the clouds of the future."

Think of your Higher Self as a pure white flame, a golden man, a Guardian Angel. Then pass on to picture the Master in any form that appeals to you, but picture His perfectness, beauty and goodness. Offer yourself to Him to try to do His work amongst men. Then pass on still further, to the Divine Life. Think of It as a glowing Light, or an all-pervading Life, or as the everlasting arms of Eternal Love. At the close pour the blessings received on those you wish to bless and help.

More later. With the best of all good wishes to you for the New Year just begun,

Your affectionate friend,