

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 24
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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Greetings in the name of the Lord. I bring you blessings, my friends. Again I will answer your questions tonight, instead of holding a lecture. I will resume regular lectures after most of your questions have been answered. It is a very good sign if my little group has questions, for this is proof that your minds are active, producing, searching. This is always the first step to spiritual development, to an inner awakening. And therefore we consider it important to satisfy your queries as much as this is possible and postpone the regular lectures. However, I will point this out: There are some questions that I will not answer as thoroughly as some of you may wish, for we can see that taking up time on these matters would not be of real importance for your development, at least at the present time. On questions that have real significance and importance we will spend more time. I also wish to inform you that I plan a new series of lectures after the present questions -- or some new ones that may come up -- have been taken care of. This series will represent a development course. For many friends here sincerely wish to advance spiritually and yet do not quite know how to begin, or what to do -- all those friends who do not come for private sessions. It is important that they have a definite idea how to go about it in actual practice. And so we will be working together in that direction. Thus, the following series will deal with the systematic development of the spirit and the soul. It will help you to solve your psychological problems as well as can be done without a personal teacher. I will show you exactly how to go about it. In-between, I may give a single lecture on a particular subject, as I have done in the past. It may appear to you, at first, as though it had nothing to do with this development course, yet you will eventually find out that it does have a close bearing on it.

Before I turn to your questions, I would like to say that I recognize in this room a sad heart. Oh, there are a few people here with problems. There is a sadness here, a very specific sadness. Every type of sadness or sorrow can only exist because you human beings are ignorant of the perfection of the Creation, of the perfection of divine law. And whatever happens must be for the good. It must come out as a happy solution in the long run. For this is the way divine law is made. So wherever there is sadness or sorrow -- or disharmony for that matter -- it can only exist because of your ignorance. And the more you come here, the more you learn and especially the more you become a better person. The more you develop spiritually, the more the curtain will lift and you will realize that there is never any cause for sadness. There is nothing that can ever cut you off from God and from all of those you love, no matter what may happen now. Real truth, absolute truth, can only give reason for rejoicing. I know it is difficult for you to understand this. And if you can understand it at all, it is only in your intellect, where perhaps you can grasp this truth. But you will have to come to know this truth in your innermost being, so that you feel it through and through without any question in your mind, without any doubt. And if you have not achieved this goal yet, you know what remains for you to do. If sadness, or disappointment, or any lack of understanding comes your way, the reason is that you should use these events to get yourself a little further up on the ladder.

And now, my friends, I am ready for your questions.

QUESTION: Is it all right if we ask first the questions on the "Pistis Sophia?"

ANSWER: Yes, I would suggest that you ask first the questions on the "Pistis Sophia" and then deal with the other general questions you have, as far as this is possible tonight.

QUESTION: Is the scheme or skeleton of the "Pistis Sophia" about the spheres a factual or a Gnostic concept -- the division of the different worlds -- from the Ineffable to the Outer Darkness? If not, it is no use going too deeply into it in the discussion.

ANSWER: Let me put it this way: Roughly speaking, it is correct with minor deviations, with minor errors and omissions. I mean, there is a little more to it and some of it is a little different, but on the whole it is rather correct. But the names, of course, are not necessarily those that we use. For we, in the spirit world, have a language of pictures, as you know. We do not pay too much attention to the actual names, but in essence, in meaning, it is more or less correct. Nevertheless, I would like to say that at the present time it is not important that we go too deeply into this. Perhaps when you have finished, my friend, with your lectures on the "Pistis Sophia," I will then give you at one time or another a little more information on this subject.

QUESTION: Why did Jesus need the reinvestiture of His robes of glory -- there are three -- before being able to speak in openness, face-to-face to the disciples?

ANSWER: You all know, my friends, that spiritual objects, whether landscapes, clothes or whatever else -- it always seems so unbelievable to human beings that all this should exist in spirit or in subtle matter -- are only an expression of the state of mind or of the state of affairs. Such objects are not as you may think, merely symbols that express a meaning for you human beings, but is quite the opposite. Your objects, whatever you have here on this earth sphere, are nothing but symbols of what exists in the spirit world. In other words, it is the other way round. Now, due to the series of lectures I have given on the Fall and on Salvation, you will understand that Jesus, when He came to the earth sphere and afterward to the spheres of darkness, had to become in a way like other humans. He had to leave behind, so to speak, a lot of His knowledge. In spite of this, He is so great that considerably more knowledge remained with Him than with any other being. Still, the greatest, the last of His knowledge and light, He could not take with Him. Now, these robes are the expression -- you might say, the symbols -- of His knowledge, His glory and elatedness, which He could not possibly take with Him while He was dealing with the earth sphere and the lower spheres in connection with His task. For then, as you will readily understand now, His task of salvation could not have been accomplished. Only after the task was completed could he return and resume His former state of utter perfection, or reassume what He left behind. And only then would full knowledge would come to Him again.

The same principle reigns when higher beings of the world of God occasionally visit creatures dwelling in spheres of lesser light and development for the purpose of helping them. When they manifest, they appear to these beings not as the angels of God they are, but have a similar outer appearance to those they visit. They will, with rare exceptions -- and these exceptions exist too -- not manifest in their full glory, in their light, in their beauty, which also means the beauty of spiritual

robes. The moment higher beings descend into darker worlds, their appearance automatically, according to law -- unless special measures are being taken for special purposes -- alters and assimilates the appearances of the surroundings. Through this process some of the knowledge remains behind -- not all, but some. It has to be that way, for the simple reason that if the lower-developed beings would see an obviously higher spirit -- an angel for instance -- they would without question and without a doubt flock to it and follow it. These creatures are obviously not happy, and seek salvation. And as you humans also constantly hope for, they too desire salvation by outer means. They would say: "Ah, this is an angel of God. And therefore this is good." But actual salvation can only lie in self-recognition and self-purification in whatever world you live in. Therefore, a being has to learn first of all to discriminate independently, to think and choose freely, out of his or her own accord. They cannot do this if there is an influence by a glorious apparition. And this is why, for instance, also on this earth sphere, people of higher and lower development live together with all the grades in-between, having no outer mark that indicates their spiritual standing. People have to learn to make their own choices as to whose influence they are willing to accept by weighing the meanings of the various influences. The choice has to come freely by proper and independent discrimination. As I said, there are cases when an angel of God can manifest in your world, as well as in the beyond, but these are particular circumstances that warrant these measures. Yet as a rule, whenever a higher being manifests to beings of lower development, they show themselves in outer form as those beings for these very good reasons. And it was the same principle with Jesus before he had completed His task. Is that clear? [Yes.]

QUESTION: Are the disciples of Jesus powers which do not have to reincarnate again and do they represent in a symbolic form psychological aspects of human types?

ANSWER: There are two questions here. To the first question I say: There are some among the disciples who do not have to come back anymore and some others who do, but they are very highly developed now and have great tasks to fulfill on this earth. I explicitly beg you, my friends, not to ask me which of the disciples do not have to reincarnate anymore and which of them may be alive now. I have very good reasons, particular reasons, why I do not want to discuss this. And it is not important for your development to know this.

As far as the psychological aspects are concerned, I would like to say this: The whole Bible, the Old as well as the New Testament, can be interpreted on many levels. The lowest level would be the historical one. There are, of course, many errors and many omissions, historically, which have to be expected. Then there is the level of spirituality and symbolism -- the level that you might call metaphysical. And there is -- and this is, perhaps, the most useful for human beings in your present state of development -- the psychological level. For everything mentioned in the Holy Scriptures also has this level, in addition to the others. One level does not exclude the validity of the other. And even though many of the personalities in the Scriptures were actual persons -- not all of them, but many of them -- they, at the same time, represent psychological aspects. Because of the existence of these different levels simultaneously, the Holy Scriptures are such a magnificent, outstanding and unique document. Meaning is to be found on each of these planes. It is inconceivably "artful" -- to choose this word -- to have the Bible constructed in this way. You can never know how strongly and resourcefully God's Spirit World has actively helped to create this marvel, already foreseeing the many human errors that inevitably must slip in, in the course of time. Despite these errors, the Bible is something that has never been duplicated, but there are extremely few people, indeed, who understand the Bible from this point of view. Many perceive one level,

perhaps a few even two levels, but there is hardly a person who can grasp all the levels contained in it.

QUESTION: The names -- I think you answered that now already -- of the I.A.O., Sabaoth, Barbelo, etc.; of the "Pistis Sophia" -- are they of any importance to discuss?

ANSWER: No, not presently. Perhaps at a later date.

QUESTION: In the last lecture you explained that the physical existence on this earth sphere for the fallen spirits was not chosen in an arbitrary form but is, in fact, a result of the degree of density they had by that time. Was there a reverse procedure of this when the Fall occurred? Or was it sudden?

ANSWER: No, it was not sudden. It cannot be sudden. I even mentioned that the Fall was also a very gradual process. But the earth sphere did not come into existence in the process of the Fall. Its existence is a result of redevelopment. The various stages of the Fall manifested in other forms. In explaining part of this, I will take care of another question on the agenda. Some of you have wondered whether a spirit, before being ready for incarnation, has to go through these various stages.

Here are the facts, as well as I can transmit them to you, at least in a condensed form: I have mentioned that in the Fall, a plurality came into existence from a unity. In other words, a splitting occurred. It is not only that the one being, the dual being, split into half, but as the Fall continued, the split multiplied and multiplied. And some of these part-souls became, as an expression, mineral, plant and animal life. Before the earth-sphere existed, these expressions existed in other worlds or other forms, and when the world of matter came into existence, these part-souls incarnated in these various forms.

In other words, mineral, plant and animal life on earth are, to some degree at least, expressions of manifestation on the downward curve until they reach the stage where they are ready for human incarnation, with longer or shorter periods in-between -- this varies with the individuals -- of existence in lower worlds than the earth sphere. The higher the curve goes upward, the more these particle-souls unite again. For instance, the split is stronger in the mineral kingdom than in the plant kingdom, and the latter is a further split than the animal kingdom. The part-soul does not always have to go through the same forms of existence on the downward curve as on the upward curve, but sometimes it must go through the same types of incarnation. This varies and happens perfectly and minutely according to law.

Now you may wonder about this insofar as you have beautiful mineral, plant, and animal life, and why these forms of existence should in many cases be still on the downward curve and thus be further back in development than some souls who are obviously in a less harmonious state. To this, my answer is: Not all beings are equally guilty in the Fall. And besides, it was never the entire personality of the unified beings that was responsible for the Fall, but certain personality trends which lend themselves to the deviation from divine law. Nevertheless, the entire being fell.

Now, the beautiful and harmonious manifestations in nature -- whether on the downward or on the upward curve -- are expressions of the parts of the spirit that were not, or only to a lesser

degree, involved in the deviation from divine law. You all know that certain animals, for instance, have been and still are dying out and other forms of animal life come into existence. The same applies to plant and mineral life. This is due to the fact that the expression of manifestation is also influenced by other beings who, as you know, are able to create worlds and types of manifest life-force. The more your desires and goals are purified, the more you automatically contribute at the same time to the creation, and thus are able to change it for the better, even as far as the part-souls on the down-curve are concerned. Can you grasp at all what I am saying? [Yes.]

QUESTION: It is terribly difficult to understand, but I somehow grasp that they have to collect themselves later in order to incarnate as humans?

ANSWER: Yes. The fluids of the several particles will connect when they reach a higher form of existence, just as when the dual beings, once having reached that state of perfection, will flow together and become one. It is the same process in principle.

QUESTION: Yes. And my question was: The spirits in darkness, do they have to go through all these stages and then...

ANSWER: They do not have to go through all these stages again, but just some of them. This is again according to individual characteristics and individual considerations. I could not possibly go into all the details of what is considered, how this works, etc. You could never understand it.

QUESTION: Between incarnations, is the density there indicative of the development? Can one become suddenly so high or so low that one cannot see them?

ANSWER: In ordinary circumstances, unless special measures are taken, as I said, you can only see those of your kind -- in spirit too, unless you reach a certain stage of development. Then you can see those which are of lesser development. [Does that mean that there is an equivalent of spirit density for the incarnated density?] Certainly. As I explained last time, your physical matter with this kind of density is one type. And spiritual matter, according to the various spheres, is of another type. It is all matter in different degrees of density. It is only for your human conception that you think this is physical and then you imagine just one other category -- the spiritual. But this is wrong. There are all different degrees. Does that answer your question? [Yes. Thank you.]

QUESTION: How can a dormant power of concentration be revived?

ANSWER: This is very individual, but in your case I would like to give you special advice and I will need a little time -- just a moment. This is what I have to say: There is both a great strength and a little tense strength in you. As long as you do not relieve the tension, it will be difficult for you to awaken the strength. In order to do that, you will need to take certain measures yourself. And when you do that, you will actually begin to feel this tenseness and when you do feel it, then you will be a step nearer to releasing this clot you have in your soul.

As long as you cannot clearly feel it, you will be unable to eliminate it, for you cannot handle something you are not aware of. You may be aware now of the existence of it by its symptoms, but you do not understand yet what it consists of. And this is why you have to find out. Your past

endeavors of concentration were going in a wrong direction, my friend. You will have to change the direction of your search, that is, you have to probe into your own soul, getting to know yourself fully. Forget about your inability to concentrate generally for the time being and start searching for your own soul, your own innermost feelings and motives. This is the only way you can dissolve the knot in you. This is the only way you will begin to feel the almost physically appearing clot in you. And when you find it, do not push it back, thinking you can eliminate it that way. On the contrary, welcome it like a long-lost friend and draw it out into consciousness.

You may ask: How do I go about it? This I could not possibly show you even in an entire lecture, but you will find the answer, my friend, by following my instructions in the series of lectures I will begin shortly. I mentioned earlier that I will start this course through which all my friends who do not attend private sessions will be able to proceed step by step in the proper direction of inner self-development, of making hidden emotions, fears or problems conscious and dealing with them properly. Your question now touches merely a symptom of an entire psychological block and this cannot possibly be solved by one answer or simple advice I could give you now. This you must understand.

The only thing I can tell you now is that you have searched in the wrong direction. You have to search much nearer, in yourself. You have to start on the road of self-recognition in a much more profound way. It is a new way of life and you will be able to get really started when we begin the course. It will mean a lot even to those friends who come privately to work with me. This will not be a waste of time for them, but will be an additional help, even though some of what I will say will not be quite new to them. Then you will learn, my friend, how exactly to go about dissolving this clot or block, step by step. You cannot do it by one single measure, by a certain prescribed formula, but it is a new way of life, as you will see, too. Your spiritual foundation is a good one and this helps. But it is something psychological that is in your way. I mean to concentrate on this in the course we will begin. As long as the psychological blocks are not dissolved, the spiritual development cannot go on -- or if it does go on in some way, it is not a thorough or an efficient way. There is then always a discrepancy that you have to iron out sooner or later. If you do not, it will finally backfire. There has to be harmony between the spiritual and the emotional levels. For the time being, it is important for you to realize that you cannot dissolve such a psychological block in any other way than the one I will guide you on in this group; that you have so far searched in the wrong direction and have to alter the direction by asking yourself about yourself and giving yourself extremely honest answers. Meditate on this. Find out what your fears are, what you really desire, who you really are.

That will get you started on this road. If you succeed in finding out something about yourself in the meantime, if you can answer some questions that you have not answered so far and thus begin to gain greater self-knowledge, you may occasionally come to feel this block very clearly and what its real significance is. This block does not merely consist of one thing, but of a number of interacting subconscious tendencies, fears and resistances. These use up your inner strength and, among other things, prevent you from being able to concentrate as much as you desire.

You are not satisfied with my answer, I know, my friend. It is not what you would have liked to hear. You would have liked to receive one ready-made recipe, supposed to dissolve your difficulty with one sweep. But, unfortunately, it can never be done that way. It is only through the long road of self-knowledge and self-recognition that the answers will gradually make a whole, the

answers that you yourself have to find. Everything else is not truth and therefore I cannot say it. But where humans do need help is to know how to go about it, and that you will learn gradually by following this course. There is a great possibility in you, spiritually speaking, but this is blocked by psychological subconscious trends which can be dissolved only in the above-mentioned way. There is no ready-made formula. That is the truth, my friend, and I know you do not like to hear this. I can do you much more good telling you the truth than telling you something according to your expectancy. And you have the means at your disposal to find out that it is so.

QUESTION: First, I would like to ask if you can see my thoughts.

ANSWER: Not while I am in the medium. For, while I manifest through a human being, the same matter stands in my way as the matter you have in your way while you are in the body. But when I am out of the body, then I can see thoughts. But mostly I will not give an indication of this. There are times, again according to law, when I may give hints -- and only the person himself or herself will know about it. But mostly I will not do so, because, you see, we have to be discreet about this. We cannot violate your free will. If you choose to mention something, then it is a different story. But as long as you choose to keep something secret, I have no right to violate your free will.

QUESTION: I was wondering about what goes on outside of the Plan of Salvation. Are there any new spirits being created and do pure spirits still fall or do purified spirits still fall anew?

ANSWER: A re-purified spirit cannot fall. That is impossible. And whether the spirits who have not fallen so far or those who will be created later will fall in the future, that, my friends, I do not know. And no one knows that. But if they do, the Plan of Salvation is there and they will not have to go through certain stages again that have been accomplished already once and for all. New spirits are not being created for the time being, not until this Plan of Salvation has found its conclusion.

QUESTION: What is the majority at present? The pure spirits or the fallen spirits?

ANSWER: This is really unimportant for you to know.

QUESTION: The Book of Exodus says that the people were told to collect manna only for one day and on the Sabbath for two days. If they collected for two days on any other day but for the Sabbath, it rotted but for the Sabbath it did not. What is the meaning of this?

ANSWER: The manna is the symbol for spiritual strength, spiritual truth, divine blessing, all the material you need to advance spiritually, to find yourself and God. With the people of the best intentions -- the most diligent workers in God's vineyard -- it is often timing that is so important: the proper distribution, for instance, of the active and passive forces. I will soon give a lecture on this subject. Both forces have to be utilized harmoniously in the human soul so that each fulfills its function properly. Often one side of your nature tends to be overactive in the wrong way while your other side is overly passive, again in the wrong way. When you are spiritually active, you tend to hoard the strength you may need for the morrow, or the knowledge that you may need for the morrow. This cannot be done. The text you quoted says, in different words, that you have to live in the moment, or what you call the Eternal Now. Each moment has its own requirements, and

meeting them can only be done by living completely in this moment. It also says: you should not take on more than you can chew at the present time.

However, you do need a little reserve at certain times for the periods when you cannot muster the strength to have inner or outer activity. The Sabbath, as you know, signifies among other things the day of inactivity, the day of rest. In life, everyone has to go through periods when they cannot muster the force to be active. They are tired, they have to rest. And this may also be good spiritually. Everything absorbed in the period of activity has to be assimilated in the period of passivity. And for these times you need a little reserve, but ordinarily, if you feel in the full strength of active life, spiritually, physically, emotionally, on all levels, you cannot possibly hoard. Human beings do that often, again on all levels. They are so anxious, they are so full of fear that they do not trust God, do not trust the harmony of their own innermost selves that will fit into the scheme of divine law, that will go with the stream. They think they have to take care of the future. By this I do not mean that you should be careless. No extreme is ever right. But live in the now and make the best of each moment. Then your manna will be always fresh and will be given to you every day anew. And simply because you live that way, when the next passive period comes around you will quietly nurse what has so beautifully grown during the active period. You will instinctively sense that you have received enough. But this will happen only when you live in harmony with the movement of the active and passive streams of your personal life, only when you have refined your inner senses so much that you feel clearly what each period signifies: the active or the passive -- the weekday or the Sabbath. The analogy applies also to the duration of the periods: the active periods have to be longer than the passive ones, although the latter always have to reoccur regularly.

QUESTION: The law is, you have to give up what you want to gain. How can we be certain that we are giving up so completely that the idea of gain is not somewhere hidden as a subconscious motive?

ANSWER: The fact that you can ask and consider such a question is already the first step to assure yourself that you are on the good road. You have to be ever wakeful for these hidden motives. Test yourself, check yourself each day in your hour of prayer, meditation and daily review, when something like this comes up. "Oh, here my ego intrudes again. I have to give up craving recognition by others -- or whatever it may be. Then ask yourself this very question: "Am I really willing to give it up, or do I do it because I hope to gain something?" In other words, see if the truth is that you are not able to give it up at all.

If you really want to know the truth about yourself, you can always find it out. This is merely a matter of whether you really desire the truth about yourself or not. If you are unwilling to face yourself with the truth, and rather believe you are living and feeling and thinking in this or that respect according to law, then you will not find the truth. But if you realize that, it is much better. It is the only way, indeed, to recognize your present inability to give something up. It is the only way, for instance, to accept your imperfection in this respect, in humility, yet with the sincere desire to be able to change it, realizing that you need your own goodwill to do so -- your own constant self-honesty -- and how far you are still deviating from the right course. Realize at the same time that you cannot do so without the help of God, for which you should ask specifically every time you recognize your inability in this or any other respect.

The knowledge that you are still not giving up what you want to gain, even though a part of you desires it, is the best medicine. If you can recognize that again and again, and then ask God for enlightenment, strength and higher understanding, to help you want with every particle of your being to purify your motives, then you will eventually succeed, little by little. It will happen not in one sweep, but first just in a small measure, occasionally, and as time goes on and you do not lessen your efforts -- which should never be tense -- you will find it easier and finally it will be your natural reaction.

In the course of this path, you will be guided to situations where you will have an opportunity to do this, when you can prove it by an action. It does not have to be something big and important. Often, the smaller the act, the better it is for you. The less people are aware of it, the better it serves the purpose. No one ought to know but yourself and your spiritual teacher. And if you can really give up without letting the other person involved know, then, once you have tried it, it will be so much easier the next time. This is the way you gradually find the law. Nothing like this can ever be accomplished suddenly or with one single act. It can only grow in constant endeavor, in constant effort. Nothing can be accomplished any other way, nothing that is durable and really solid, least of all spiritual security, harmony and a firm foothold.

QUESTION: How shall we feel or react toward injuries -- as for instance slander, gossip, malicious talk -- with a truly spiritual attitude?

ANSWER: You all know, the answer is to forgive. But to do it, to be really able to do it, is a different matter altogether. The danger always exists that, in your good intention, you talk yourself into having forgiven, while in reality you are doing no such thing. And that, of course, is much more harmful than knowing you still cannot forgive, knowing this imperfection. So the first step is again self-honesty. Compare your actual feelings to the true course you know to be right. In all matters, this remains always the basis of purification, the first step without which there cannot be a further step.

Then ask God to help you again to have sufficient vision to be able to forgive wholeheartedly. And try to pray for the person who offended you. This may cause you inner resistance at first, but if you try again, you will finally be able to do so without inner resentment. Furthermore, ask yourself: "Do I really want to forgive?" You will then see that part of you wants to do it, but another part enjoys not forgiving. If you recognize that, you have a further clue about the truth of your lower nature -- and this is priceless knowledge on the path of purification. Go with this resistance to the Father and ask Him to help you. Realize that you cannot accomplish the least thing without His help. Your part forever has to be goodwill, diligence, and utter self-honesty.

Another thing that is equally important, not only in order to forgive, but for your development altogether, is the realization that nothing can ever happen that is not based on the law of cause and effect. By this I do not mean that the other person involved is justified or right. His or her wrong may be even greater than your own. And your own wrong may not be in apparent connection with the incident that is its result at this present time. The connection may be indirect and hard to find. But you need to realize that there must be something in you that has, at one time or another, caused this -- some wrong current or attitude, some imperfection in your soul that is responsible for the event. Even if the connection is indirect, it is still according to the law of cause and effect. And if you really and truly wish to find out -- without shirking from the truth -- and ask

God with all your heart to help you, you will receive the answer. Know that there must be something for you to learn and you will learn it.

I cannot emphasize strongly enough that the desire has to be wholehearted, not just asking God once perfunctorily. You must be filled with the desire to find out the cause in you. If you overcome the resistance against finding out, if you keep awake through the days for an answer, without tension, just being aware, the answer may come through other people or through something you read or something apparently unconnected. All of a sudden you will feel an inner echo and you will know: this is God's answer. Unpleasant as it may be, it will be a great liberation, a great step forward -- and this in itself will make it so much easier for you to forgive truly. Then you will be able to embrace the incident, knowing that it helped you upward, forward, nearer to God, to perfection, to happiness that can never be robbed from you. Without this incident you could not have discovered your imperfection and thus you would have remained in a much lower state of awareness, development, and therefore also personal happiness. All this does not only apply to incidents of the kind you have quoted, but to all mishaps. When you come to the point where you embrace the heretofore unpleasant incident because you have understood its healing nature for your mind, body, soul and spirit, then you have accomplished a great deal.

QUESTION: Between what relationships is there a karmic situation, as, for instance, parents, children, husbands, wives, sisters and brothers? Does it go further than that?

ANSWER: Oh, you cannot possibly make a rule on that. In the majority of cases, there are karmic bonds in the immediate family, but not always. It may very well be that there is no karmic relationship with some members of the family. It may be a new relationship that was given because it best fulfills the purpose of the lives of all concerned. And there may be a number of karmic relationships that are not within one's own family. They may exist with people one meets in the course of one's life, sometimes even quite late. For all that there is a good reason and purpose.

QUESTION: The meaning of the question was this -- I did not put it right -- is there karmic obligation outside of parental or husband-and-wife relationships?

ANSWER: There is no such thing as a "karmic obligation." The obligation is a law of love and that applies to everyone. There should not be any difference in your attitude whether the relationship is karmic or not. You do not even have to know about it. You have to act according to the laws of God with everyone alike. There is no difference there.

With this, my friends, I will leave you again. And perhaps next time there will not be quite so many questions, so that I will be able to give at least a short lecture on a topic that I will choose as a beginning for the course.

My friends, I want to tell each one of you, particularly those of you who are troubled, to think of the fact that what you see now is a very blurred outlook, since you are in a heavy and thick cloud. Ask God to give you the strength to penetrate this cloud, to give you at least a small view of truth. But the difficulty is, when you are in this cloud it paralyzes your thinking and your endeavors in this direction. It is often even difficult to muster the strength, the volition to think these thoughts so that you can penetrate, with the help of God, the clouds in which you find yourselves occasionally. But know that you have nothing to fear and nothing to be sad about. Angels of God are forever

near every one of God's children who strive upward with a truly sincere desire. Therefore, rejoice in this knowledge, rejoice upward with a truly sincere desire. Rejoice that God is so much nearer to you, that happiness can be so much nearer than you think if you simply turn around and seek in another direction, if you seek within you instead of without. Be in peace, my dear ones, be blessed, be in God!

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