

Pathwork Guide Lecture No. 33
An Unedited Lecture
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OCCUPATION WITH SELF; RIGHT AND WRONG FAITH

Greetings in the name of the Lord. I bring blessings for all of you, blessed is this hour. There are many good, kind, and even spiritual people who say, when hearing these lectures, it is not good to think so much about the self, it would be better to think more about other people. They say occupation with the self leads to selfishness. Of course, it depends entirely on how the occupation with the self is done -- or in what way one thinks about other people. If you think about yourself in a destructive way, in self-pity, complaining about your faith, and brooding unproductively about things you may have missed in life, things you cannot do anymore or circumstances over which you have no control and therefore cannot change; it is evidently the wrong way of thinking about yourself. Whoever tends to this sort of self-occupation should not only apply the advice of shifting the emphasize of yourself to others, but should learn to change the self-occupation into a different direction, namely the productive one. But for those who cannot do the latter yet, it is infinitely healthier to think of other people by helping them, by giving up some selfishness, and by sacrificing something in order to help those who may need you. Those, however, who are ready for the proper kind of self-occupation, the right way to think of others should also be practiced at all times. One does not exclude the other. When you do something helpful and forget your own worries and difficulties, you will do something really worthwhile all around -- for others as well as for yourself. On the other hand, occupation with others can also be practiced the wrong way, and, unfortunately it very often is! If you constantly think of other people's affairs, criticizing them, judging them, it certainly does not help you to become less selfish. The mere fact of thinking about others instead of yourself is no guarantee that you act spiritually, just as the mere fact of thinking of yourself (if done in the right way) is no proof of your selfishness. It all depends how. In both wrong extremes, people so often deceive themselves. If they think about others destructively, judgingly, they try to believe that this is good, holding on to a once-heard statement that occupation with the self is harmful. They use this truth in the wrong way to rationalize their wrong reactions. On the other hand, the unproductive and weakening kind of self-occupation is often hidden under the mask, "I must get to know myself, I must analyze my feelings." But nothing of the sort is ever done. So be careful in what way you think about yourself and about others. Test yourself in this respect too, my dear friends.

There is also another possibility, my dear ones. A spiritually highly developed person may use all his efforts in thinking and sacrificing about others, helping them to the best of their abilities and thus doing a great deal of good. However, even more is expected of just such a person, because his spiritual development would warrant it. And that is the purification of motives, the deep self-knowledge that is an indispensable requirement to spiritual development. Such an individual may neglect this part of his task and escape the issue by the strong emphasis on help to others. Again I say, this help to others need not and must not suffer merely because you know yourself better -- quite the contrary. Please try to find out whether you -- some of you -- may not belong into this category.

All of you who hear or read these words, my friends, are ready for the right kind of self-analysis, which never needs to neglect the helpfulness to others. You may already have the right actions and even the right thoughts in many respects, but as development proceeds, this is not enough, as you well know. It is necessary that your emotions be pure and without deceit. And in order to accomplish this, it is imperative that you occupy yourself with self-probing and testing, severe self-criticism and analysis of your deeds, thoughts, and emotions with regard to spiritual truth and law. For he who does not know himself cannot know others; he who does not understand himself cannot understand others; and he who does not love himself cannot love others. Again the objection may be made "to love oneself means selfishness." Again I say this is true if self-love is practiced in the wrong way. Self-indulgently shirking the necessary pain of life with all its responsibility is the small self that should not be loved, that must be severely treated by yourself. But if you have no healthy self-respect and do not love your greater being, the divine being you are, you can never truly love others. This self-respect and love for yourself in the right way can only come forth if you do all that you have planned in spirit to accomplish on this earth in spiritual development. If this is neglected, no matter how much you cover it with subterfuges and self-delusions, deep in your subconscious the fact is known that you are not developing as you should; that you are not keeping a number of spiritual laws in your emotions, if not in thoughts and deeds; that you are escaping yourself in some way. All this leads to self-despising, which is the true cause of inferiority complexes no matter how well these may be rationalized. Therefore, you can only respect yourself if you do the utmost spiritually -- in self-development, in sacrifice for others. And only when this well-founded self-respect is present can you truly respect others. So you see, my friends, how the circle must close here, too. The more you practice the right kind of self-occupation, the more unselfish you must become, and therefore the better you will be able to help others and do good works for them. Think critically about yourself and be compassionate with others. But how many people, even otherwise spiritual people, do just the opposite. They ignore so many of their faults, their sick trends, even those that are quite noticeable to anyone else. But they are always ready to condemn others, if not in their words, they often do so in their emotions and also in their thoughts.

It is so important for all of you, my friends, to learn to accept other people's shortcomings, as you must learn to accept your own shortcomings. Here, too, the right way to do so is all-important. I have discussed this subject often enough, so I will not go into it here again how one's own faults must be properly accepted. It means neither self-abusing despair and discouragement because you discover yourself more imperfect than you thought you were; nor does it mean to want to remain as you are. Always and always, you will find two entirely wrong extremes and the one and most difficult, right middle path, concerning every individual human trend. Therefore you will perhaps come to a better understanding that nothing in itself is ever good or bad, right or wrong, but is always the how. This right middle path between the two wrong extremes determines whether you are on the right track or not. So only when you accept yourself in the proper way, will you be able to accept others as they are and live according to this one spiritual law that demands from you to use your efforts where they can bring results -- and that can only be yourself. You are the only person over which you have the power to bring about a change. You can never, never change another; therefore your efforts are lost in this direction. Yes, you can help to influence another person inasmuch that he or she may then decide to change himself or herself in turn. This influence can only be truly productive if you set the example first. As long as other people's faults bring you disharmony of any sort, this means that deep down you resent them as they are; you want to change

them into different beings and resent it even more that you cannot do so. This inner reaction means the breaking of a spiritual law. And this should be the best indication to you where you stand in accepting yourself as you are, in all humility. The more serene you remain in the face of other people's faults, the more you have accepted yourself as you are and thus have a healthy basis in your soul, no matter how many imperfections there still are in you. But the more you fight inwardly against other people as they happen to be presently, the more you are not really accepting yourself. Think of that too, my dear friends!

So you must learn to accept people as they are, to be tolerant of faults you yourself may not have. But often you go even further than that. You particularly condemn in another person the very faults you yourself possess. You are not aware of this, of course, yet it is so. Only by getting to know yourself thoroughly, for instance, do you accept other people better, understand them better, love them better. In order to be tolerant, you do not have to be blind. It often happens that a basically intolerant person does not want to see another person's fault if there is a strong love or sympathy present. He does not want to see the faults in this case because deep down he is afraid that by having to notice them, he could not go on loving the person. This, of course, is nothing but intolerance. If you could accept the loved one as he is, you need not close your eyes to his faults. In addition to this wrong reaction in itself, such a person will then be convinced he is extremely tolerant because he never sees the faults in those he loves -- another of these masks man so often takes on. Real tolerance, real acceptance is to be found in the person who clearly sees another's faults because he is not afraid to love and respect any less because of them. With such an attitude, you do not only help others around you, but you help yourself. My dear friends, I beg all of you to think carefully about this subject. In your next meditation, ask yourself whether you are too critical of others, do you actually condemn them, even if you do not consciously think so? But your emotional reactions to other people may amount to that. Test yourself in this respect. Ask yourself, furthermore, if you are not blind to some of your own mistakes while you are so busily fighting those of others. I can assure you, if you do that and react in the right way towards your findings, you will gain a great new peace by this change of attitude. For what robs you of your peace and inner harmony is never what others do, but always and solely your own wrong attitudes and inner fights against conditions you cannot change and, what is more, you are not supposed to change. You are supposed to change yourself. And once you have done that, you will be free, and you will feel a new independence of other people's behavior or reactions, that can never bring you any harm in the last analysis.

Now I would like to discuss two facets of faith. First, there are many people who are sincere in their endeavors in spiritual development. Yet their faith is not whole. There is always somewhere the doubt hidden: "Is it really true? Is it not imagination? Am I not deluded about all this?" I would like to talk about what to do with such a trend in you, my friends. For there are many of you who find themselves in this position. In the first place, it is not advisable to push this sneaking doubt aside. You are doing so, often in sincere good will. Part of you does not want to have these doubts. And somehow you think by hiding the doubts, they will disappear. But as you know, nothing that is pushed into the subconscious can be really successfully dealt with. You are afraid to let the doubts rise to the surface because you assume that that might change your course; then you might not go on in your spiritual endeavors. But this need not be so. If you once clearly understand that your doubting part is not the whole of your personality and that in spite of its existence, there is also another part in you that does believe, you will not fear that the realization of your doubts may lead you to give up your spiritual strivings. In all respects the human soul is full of contradictory

currents. The sooner you understand this and will not despair when you encounter the negative part, the part that you do not want to recognize, the better it will be for you. The trouble to do this arises by your mistaken notion that either one trend is true, or the other. Both have their reality in your soul and fight with one another. This fight can never be successfully carried out as long as you lack the courage to acknowledge the side in you that you do not like to own. It will be easier to do that, as I said, if you understand in principle that you can and do consist at the same time of two contradictions in one respect. Whether this concerns this question of faith versus doubt, or any other character problem, makes no difference. Once you have acknowledged in yourself that doubting part, my advice to handle this is to know that it is also God's grace when this complete knowledge -- I do not even say faith -- and the experience of God's existence is given to a person. Try to develop your own humility in this lack of complete faith. Say to yourself, "I have not deserved this grace yet. I am not the judge of what I deserve or not. I have to fight my way through with my half-faith; the willing part in my being wants to develop and become a better and emotionally more mature person so as to handle life better and love and help others more effectively. In this endeavor, I will patiently and humbly wait until the grace of God is given to me." If you cultivate these thoughts and these feelings and if you continue to battle with your lower self that always wants to obscure the way and obstruct your path, one day, I can promise you, this complete faith must be yours. Because you will have experienced God in such a way that you will be utterly convinced. But just as other people's experience and grace cannot be convincing for you no matter how hard they may try to tell you, so will it be when you experience God's truth and existence in your life. You will not be able to transmit this to others who are still battling for the attainment of this divine grace: complete faith. Each individual has to gain this major experience and change in soul development by his own efforts.

Another facet of faith is this: there are people who have complete faith, as complete as this is possible for the individual. For every impurity of the soul somehow influences also the completeness of faith. But about this, you are usually unaware. Perfect faith would mean no disharmony in your life whatever, no fear in any respect. But none of you is that far. But there are some in whom faith is stronger than others. But often in people of this kind exists an unrecognizable feeling or trend that he or she is something special for God. He is a favorite child of the Lord. He holds a very particular position in his relationship to the Father. He is something quite unique, and thinks he can possess God for himself. This is a harmful feeling, and also a dangerous one -- dangerous because there is so much pride contained in it and also because it is so very easy to deceive oneself. The self-justification is always ready at hand that all this is wonderful and an expression of one's devotion and spirituality. Here we have one of those cases where good and pure motives -- the desire to come near to God, the love for the Creator -- mingle with the bad and impure ones -- spiritual pride and separateness from one's fellow creatures. Since you will be utterly unaware in your intellect that such feelings exist in you with regard to your relationship with God, it is your task to test yourself if and how strongly this may apply to you. When you have discovered such feelings, even to a small extent, think that you are not any more than anyone else in the eyes of God. This feeling that you are something special for God can be considered as a transitory state in your development. Your longing and love for God is awakening before your pride and self-will have left you. And these two opposite trends combine in this temporary state. But you must be aware of it, and you should not believe for one instant that this is right and good. It is part of the growing process that has to be finely sifted and purified by yourself. I invite those of you to whom this may apply to test these feelings when you think about God, when you feel God, when you strive in your desire to get nearer to Him, which is all as it should be. But isn't there somewhere

this hidden feeling that you have never acknowledged in which you believe yourself nearer and dearer to God than other people? The root of this feeling may even exist in people whose faith is not real yet. But it will come out stronger -- as the transitory process mentioned before -- once faith becomes whole. So please, my dear ones, test yourselves here too. And when you have found that this may apply to you, at least in a small degree, you should begin to work very concentratedly on your relationship to your fellow creatures. You will often find that there is a particular intolerance in people who feel themselves specially loved by God. There is often even a kind of arrogance towards others, perhaps not always in your outward behavior, but in your inner attitude. Try in your meditations to choose a person you do not respect particularly or perhaps even one you like least of all the people you know or one that particularly irritates you. Then think how very much God also loves this particular person, just as much as He loves you -- even if the other person happens to be spiritually less developed. This will be a wonderful exercise, exactly the medicine you need, my friends.

And as I say to you, the human soul is a very complicated "machinery," if I may use this expression. Purification does not lie in the fact that you simply overcome your faults. That is not so easy and takes a long time. It is only possible after you have well understood many of your trends and reactions you are still unaware of. So your immediate goal cannot be perfection even though it is the ultimate goal. Know this ultimate goal, but work first towards the immediate one, which is knowing and accepting yourself as you are; having no illusions about yourself; attaining a healthy attitude towards your shortcomings; learning to live according to life's rules; not shirking from the sometimes necessary difficulties; and so on and so forth, in short all that you are learning here. Only after this is accomplished will you gradually begin to alter some of your wrong trends and begin to react differently, but only then. Purify your motives first, clarify them. Separate the wrong ones from the good ones in one and the same action or reaction! That is your task at the present time. And when your faith is lacking, do not stop in these strivings. For you are a good person, and as a good person, you want to become better, wholer, purer, more loving so as to do more good around you. So even if you cannot undertake this hard work at all times for the sake of God because you are not always sure that He really exists, do it for your love for others that is basically in you. It often happens that he whose faith is still weak has a greater love for other human beings than those whose faith is strong and who feel, as mentioned before, that they hold a special position in God's eyes. Both is a transitory state and will one day even out and harmonize in perfection.

And when tests are coming to you, as they must, you should pray that your thinking capacity will not be paralyzed too much. For that is what usually happens to a person who finds himself in a difficult situation. Just hold on to this thought: "Father, give me a clear outlook even though I find myself confused and unhappy and mixed-up at this moment. Help me not to forget what I otherwise know. Let me see Thy truth in this situation, not as it appears to me at present in my very limited outlook." We can often observe that when you are in a test, you see things completely distorted, while you are convinced that the negative outlook you have is the only truth -- and that is why you despair. You even forget in such moments what you otherwise know perfectly well. You become so paralyzed by the forces of evil that you have drawn towards you that you cannot think and see what you would ordinarily think of at once and see quite clearly. It does not occur to you to ask for the truth of God because, even for that, your thoughts are too much encased in darkness. Only after you come out of this darkness, will you be aghast how you could have been so blind. You can save yourself many a difficult hour by turning to God at once and by realizing this fact I am explaining to you. Fight this temporary blindness by training your thoughts and your subconscious

to get a strong hold of this fact. Train yourself for that before tests so that you will meet them with better mental equipment.

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

QUESTION: Why is it that so few people are given these spiritual truths and know about a communication with the spirit world? Are we so much better than others who do not know about all this? What is the criterion for being elected to be guided to something like this?

ANSWER: A communication with the spirit world of God is rare because it is extremely complicated. The dangers of not holding through on this path to attain communication with divine spheres are great -- once psychic abilities have been trained. Many a medium starts the right way and is later brought to fall because of his or her pride or other inner stumbling blocks. Whatever you have on earth of good quality is rare. Bad quality or mediocrity is more common in anything -- so also in this. The criterion of who is destined to be led to such a communication, which is of course a grace of God, cannot be explained in a few words. I might say that a great majority of human beings are not ready yet to make use of these teachings. They have many other things to learn first. They can fulfill their lives in other ways, wherever they stand. They will meet situations in which the decision with their free will determines whether they fulfill this incarnation or not, just as you have to do with the knowledge you receive. But what is demanded is simply on a different level. On the other hand, there also exist people who are so highly developed that they do not need such help -- or even who should not have it. To find answers in themselves is expected from them because of their higher development. So people of higher development than your own, as well as people of lower development, can find what they need in this particular life in any of the existing religions. They can find the essence in it and build up on the truth that can be found in any religion, while disregarding the human errors. This is a decision in itself for an individual. He who listens into himself will find intuitively what he needs for this life, what to cultivate, where to stress his development most. Whoever strives for spiritual development will ultimately reach contact with the divine world, whether this happens through mediumship or in other ways. And it is the aim of the spirits of God's divine order to bring you all so far that you have a personal contact in one way or another, not necessarily through mediumship. But where the need for the type of help and instruction as can be given by the spirit world is recognized, guidance will come forth to afford the person this possibility. And whoever has been guided to a group like this, it means there is a good reason that should not be ignored. It happened because it was planned that way, because for you this is the best way to develop and fulfill your life. I will not go as far as to say that it is your only chance and if you do not take it, you will be damned. But I say when such guidance has taken place in your life, do not dispose of it lightly. Do not consider it a coincidence, that you just heard about it, and then look at it as you would view anything that might just take your fancy. Try to see there is a little more to it than that. Go a little deeper. There is a good purpose of your being here. Through this help you will find answers in yourself and solve problems you could otherwise solve only with infinitely greater difficulties, if at all. Not that this is the only way to solve them, as just said, but if you are blind to this help which is greater and directer help than many other ways, it is likely that you will be even more closed up to other means that may show you the way out. The way the spirits of the world of God show provides a possibility for giving you the tools you need in order to gain a victory over your lower self and free you from your inner chains that other ways do not show quite so clearly. So the fact that you are brought here is not necessarily because you are a "chosen one" and higher than everyone else; but for your present development, this is the best way.

And you may have earned merits in former lives that you wished to utilize in this way before you were incarnated, instead of using these merits in a different form.

QUESTION: Are people with emotional difficulties, or even with a split personality, born with it -- have they brought it with them or have they always acquired it in this life?

ANSWER: Oh, no, it is not acquired in this life. Whenever a really severe disturbance exists, it cannot be caused in this life alone. What is caused in the same life can never be so strong and severe. A severe problem must have its cause not only in one former incarnation, but probably in many. It is a chain reaction. If a soul avoids his task, his development, his self-recognition, if he is escaping his own problems and thus does not fulfill in an incarnation what he is supposed to, the problem is bound to increase in the next incarnation. That is why I always emphasize it so strongly: what you can accomplish now is so much effort and hardship saved later. You have no idea how much. When I say "saved," I do not mean this in a sense of punishment, damnation, or anything melodramatic or drastic of this sort. But the longer you evade your own problems and inner difficulties, the more they will twist in you. And in the next incarnation you will bring this problem with you. Now, in a soul that goes on and on and on avoiding the issue, finally an incarnation comes when this evasion is no longer possible. By that time, the inner conflict has so strongly increased that the person is forced by his own past neglect to finally take care of it and to face himself. Karmic law works that way. What you often think is cruel is the most beneficial thing in the world. Because if karmic law would not work in such a way that your own evasions finally lead you into such a situation that you cannot evade it any longer, you could not ever come out of the vicious cycle. So karmic law is the most merciful there is, even if at the time, with the little you see, it seems cruel, it seems hard. But it is not, my friends, because you always tend to judge with the tiny detail and outlook you have at your disposal out of a very huge picture. And this great picture you ignore, mercifully, too, for that matter, but that touches other problems. So to come back to your question, any personality problem, if it is serious, is bound to be the product of many evasions and flights of the self in former existences.

QUESTION: Would you elaborate on the problem of suicide? In what ways and effects does it manifest in spirit, and what are the consequences, graduated by different motivations and circumstances, that lead a person to that act in life?

ANSWER: The motive to commit suicide is again the same basic problem I have mentioned before, at least in the great majority of cases: to evade and flee the difficulties one has really created himself, either in former lives or in the same one. And this is of course a grave violation of divine law. One has to pay for it. There exist mitigating circumstances, for instance, if a person is very sick and is tortured by such pains and therefore does not have the capacity to think anymore. These are mitigating circumstances and are taken into consideration. But that does not mean what has been evaded does not have to be gone through to the very end. For no one is given more to bear than he or she is able to. And every hardship is but the effect of a cause that was created by the self and, therefore has to be solved and gone through by the self. The sooner you recognize this and train your emotions to accept this basic law, as your intellect may do already, the healthier it may be for you -- the less danger exists for you that, emotionally at least, you are under the impression that whatever you suffer could have been avoided if other people would have acted differently or if life would only have been "kinder" to you. So even in such a mitigating circumstance, the suffering that

has been avoided must be gone through in another form, perhaps in the world of spirit, perhaps in another earth life. It depends and cannot be generalized.

The only exception is when a person is obsessed. Obsession is, as you know, a karma. It is true that in many cases at its beginning stages obsession can be fought to a degree. But if one's entire strength and concentration is not summoned, this karma will have to be borne. In obsession, one's spirit is out of the body, and an unclean spirit takes possession of the body. In such a case, the deed of suicide will be attributed to the spirit who has taken possession, and not to the spirit who is by that time helpless and looks on in great anguish without being able to do anything about it. Then this is a suffering both have to go through, which, again, is just and for the good.

Concerning the consequences, it is very often -- again we cannot generalize, there are exceptions -- as some of you have seen recently, that the person who has committed suicide will have to go through this act as long as the natural life would have been over, according to plan, unless this soul is capable of turning to God and thinking things over and assuming a different attitude and thus a willingness to face and shoulder the problems he has avoided. If this happens, the procedure before, during, and after suicide, which period is, as you can well imagine, an extremely painful one, will cease; and the respective soul will be guided into a sphere where it will have the opportunity to face the problems he has avoided and be fulfilled, although in a more difficult way than it would have been possible in the first place. I think you all know that one of the main factors in suicide motives is shame. It is much rarer that a person commits suicide out of physical pain than out of shame. Even if the superficial motives appear to be different, in most cases the underlying factor will prove to be shame. And what is shame other than a form of pride? One is ashamed to face other people with something that causes acute embarrassment. Of course, the motive is also frequently the unwillingness to shoulder life's responsibilities and pain. And the motive of shame belongs also into this category, but flight from life can have many facets.

It will be easy for you to imagine that it is extremely rare indeed that a person who is ensnared in this constantly repeating process of suicide, reliving it again and again, will find the strength to even think of anything, let alone to make a change of attitude that has led him to this act in the first place, at which time it would have been much easier to effect such a change of attitude rather than in this horrible experience. To a smaller degree, every one of you experience the same in your daily life. When things go comparatively well, it is easier to turn to God, to re-evaluate your own attitude than when you are in the midst of certain types of pain and confusion. Therefore, I say to you, prepare yourself for these times of tests when it is not so difficult. To an infinitely greater extent, the soul who has committed this act, experiences what you often go through, namely the inability to think of anything at the moment. Suicide causes a tremendous shock to the whole nervous system of a being. This shock is mostly so great that even things are forgotten at the moment that were most natural knowledge to this person when not in a shock. The person is simply not quite there with all his faculties. So it is rare indeed that he can get himself out of this state before the time would be up anyway. But there may be, in individual cases, the grace of God working. Perhaps a former merit of the soul in a previous incarnation can be used in special circumstances to liberate it a little earlier than otherwise possible according to law. This particular merit was meant to be used in a later incarnation and would have been beneficial then. And now it may be used for the purpose of a quicker liberation of this procedure, and some new merits will have to be acquired in order to enjoy the benefit that was planned with this particular merit for the incarnation in question. Perhaps this will open a new vista for you, my friends. All of you have

many merits acquired in previous lives or in this one, which you do not always receive in this incarnation. There are good and wise reasons for that. The time will come when the use of these merits will mean more to you. By the same token, it may also be true that you do not live through certain demerits now that have also been saved up for a later period. It would be too difficult for you now. All this is judged in extreme wisdom and kindness. But concerning the demerits possibly waiting for you, you have the possibility in this life to annul them by striving twice as hard. So it may be with a soul who has committed suicide, that it is given a merit to liberate it from this experience a little earlier. He may be liberated at an earlier period in principle, in certain cases, but that never means that he does not have to face and go through exactly that which he has tried to avoid. All the shames, humiliations, pains of loneliness, or whatever it may be have to be faced, and the cause found in one's own personality and not outside of it, which notion lead to this flight in the first place.

QUESTION: You mentioned that such a soul is lead into a sphere where he has the opportunity to learn and go through the experience. Does that mean that in those spheres, similar temptations as in life exist? Let's say the soul has committed larceny or murder, and commits suicide in wrong repentance. Does that mean he can live such an experience through again in a sphere?

ANSWER: No, he cannot be tempted in a sphere in the way he can be on earth. But what he can experience in the beyond is to face up to his wrong deed. He will be tested in a later incarnation on earth as far as the committed larceny or murder is concerned. That part he will have to learn on this earth sphere. But the part of facing his wrong reaction to learn the right kind of repentance, of living through the humiliation and certain consequences that he can live through in a sphere. He will, for instance, meet others, not the same as he would have met on earth, but that does not matter. They may have the same characteristics as those he tried to avoid on earth; he will then go through similar circumstances to admit, to pay in some ways. He will have to live up to that and learn to admit a guilt and take the humiliation that is the result of it. All that can be learned in a sphere of purification. Admittedly it will take longer than on earth, but it is possible to start it there and finish it in a later incarnation. Also in this later incarnation, he will be led to similar circumstances so that the same temptation will come to him that led to the crime. But this has nothing to do anymore with the suicide proper, but touches a different problem.

QUESTION: In other words, this explanation puts away the theory of Freud of the drive of life and the drive of death.

ANSWER: Absolutely.

QUESTION: It is a wrong teaching?

ANSWER: It is. I may perhaps modify one thing. This teaching can be interpreted in a slightly different way when it does make sense. If you translate the words life and death into their spiritual meaning, there is truth in it because you know that in your higher self is always the drive for spiritual life. And what is spiritual life? -- freedom of the violation of spiritual law. And this contains a confirmation to say yes to this earth life in which you are given the possibilities to fulfill. It is the will of God that you live your life to the fullest in the spiritual sense. This drive expresses in also holding on to your physical life. And spiritual death is contained in the lower self that is bound

magnetically, magically to the world of darkness that denies God and his laws. In this tendency lies the denial of life, the spiritual, as well as the physical. When you deny the laws of life in which you have to meet it and yourself, a death wish is contained in this as a sort of by-product. This death wish does not always manifest so strongly as to commit suicide. In a lesser degree it is to be found in all denial of what this life brings you and demands from you.

QUESTION: I would very much like to know what happened to a friend of mine who committed suicide.

ANSWER: I will need a little time to see if I can get the information now. If not, I would have to ask you to repeat the question next time, but I will see. I need a little time. Yes, I can get a picture that has been relayed to me. There is in this person a psychological twist that is quite complicated and not too usual. I could not possibly go into this at this time, and I would not be allowed to do so. It would be against spiritual law to divulge all this. I can only say that in this person are two very strongly conflicting trends -- and strangely enough, my dear friend, very much in the sense that we have just discussed a little earlier. Namely, there is a strong tendency for spiritual life and an equally strong tendency for spiritual death. Both are very strongly developed. They exist side by side, so to speak. To that degree, this is not a very common phenomena. But it had its origins in many previous incarnations. Knowing all this, what led to it, makes it very clear and understandable. Now he has to go through what I have explained. He has to go through it all the more because he has the spiritual understanding. Prayer always helps. It is a light that these unhappy and poor spirits -- whether they have committed suicide or whether they suffer in other ways -- feel as a sort of relief and hope. I will not say that the prayer will change the law and the fate that they have to go through. They simply have to go through it, and no prayer can change that. But the prayer brings momentarily a light that gives them hope and relief and that may even give them a little strength to think and to find themselves. And that is why it is very good to pray for poor souls. In this connection I may remind you of an interesting observation. I have often said to you that all religions contain truth and error. Now, you know that in the Catholic religion prayer for deceased and unhappy spirits is commonly practiced. And you will now see the value of this. It actually brings help and light to suffering souls. On the other hand, you realize that the Protestant religions have completely done away with prayer for the so-called dead. This also contains a part of truth because the realization was made that prayer cannot change what a soul has sown and has to reap. So in that respect there is also truth in this very same opposite idea. This may give you food for thought for many other subjects as well, where different religions say contrasting things about one and the same subject. And truth can be found in both opinions. You cannot save a soul merely by praying for it. That is true. But you can help it a great deal.

And now, my friends, I will leave you and retire into my world. Receive God's blessing for your body, for your soul, and your spirit. Be open and receptive for this blessing that is a reality and not just a figure of speech. Go in peace, be in God.

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