

Life Hereafter

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The subject this morning, "Life Hereafter" – "Life Hereafter," a very interesting subject – a subject I must warn you, if you do not know anything about it now, you won't hereafter, so let's get busy.

These are facts. Many people, it is our idea of death, or our lack of our idea of it, that prevents us from treating this subject of "Life Hereafter" and death in a practical way. We have not investigated those things which we can, if we would. And investigating this thing called death, we'd understand it, and we would be able to then see the continuity of life, which is eternal.

Life hereafter, remember, means that you know, and can enjoy at will, the Universal Consciousness, which is present in all things of which your soul is a ray, and my soul is a ray. If you understand that, and there is no break in the continuity of consciousness, then "Life Hereafter" for you is solved. Life doesn't change. There's only one life, that's God's Life itself – His One Consciousness plus His Energy. But it is the break in the continuity that deludes us. We must do away with that, and, of course, the way to do away with that is through meditation.

Meditation is a must. You cannot know anything about "Life Hereafter" unless you meditate. Meditation is the way that you and I know the Universal Life underneath all life, the One Eternal Consciousness of God. That is the first thing to realize, that meditation is a must. You will never know what's coming after this life unless you know it right here in this existence. Knowing it in this existence, there'll be no break in the continuity, that's all. There'll be no change of which you are not familiar.

It's the fact that you are not familiar with the death – the change called death – that you do not understand it. But you can easily understand it through meditation – right and scientific meditation. This thing called death is simply conscious sleep, that's all. Every time you meditate, meditate, you do a little of it. You die just a little bit, so to speak. And if your meditation is awful good, you completely die from this outward existence, as St. Paul did – "Behold, I die daily." He simply died to this outward, worldly consciousness, and he was conscious of the One Universal underlying Consciousness of God Himself.

That's what we have to do. Doing that, there'll be no break in the continuity of consciousness. Meditation alone can give us the experience of conscious sleep, that's all, and thereby immortality.

Immortality is simply that you realize the One Consciousness of God. That always was and will be. That doesn't change. We change, because we're attached to these intimate, and states of consciousness – waking consciousness, subconsciousness, and such things. And our soul – the immortal, never being born, always was, and will be – becomes attached to these states of consciousness, which change and pass away. This worldly consciousness of this body will pass away. Now, when the soul is attached to it, so attached that it believes it to be the body and so forth, it must pass away. That's the trouble. Meditation will break that attachment.

Meditation will help you and help me to understand the one underlying Unity of God's Presence. So "Life Hereafter" depends on that, that we realize, as our Master called it, the Immortal Wakefulness. Isn't that wonderful – the Immortal Wakefulness. Think, when you, at will, can immediately be in that Immortal Wakefulness of God. It is that Immortal Wakefulness that supersedes this worldly consciousness and permeates all states of consciousness hereafter. Remember that. That's the matrix, so to speak. It is that word which the Master gave us, the Immortal Wakefulness. Those two words the: Immortal Wakefulness. In your deep meditation you are so awake that everything seems wonderful. There are no problems. Why? Because you are then, at that time, in that Immortal Wakefulness in the Presence of God. There is your answer.

If you want "Life Hereafter," get busy now. Know about death now. Don't wait till it comes, it'll be too late. You won't know anything about it, but know about it now and then you'll understand "Life Hereafter." You'll understand that Immortal Wakefulness of which our Master speaks. And instead of being something to be feared, something to be misunderstood, it is something to look forward to, because in that there is no pain, no duality, no likes and dislikes, just the Unity of God's Presence, His Great Peace, and His Great Love. Remember those words, "Immortal Wakefulness," which our Master has given to us.

Just like in the motion picture, if you can realize as you are enjoying, or not enjoying the motion picture, that the light behind is producing it, the light and shadow; if you can understand that, then when the motion picture ceases, you'll not be disappointed, because you will be one with that which is causing the light and shadow of the motion picture. It is that Immortal Wakefulness, the Light,

which produces all things, that is what we must understand and make our own. Remember those two illustrations of the dream state. Master used to say, the dream state of consciousness, and the motion picture. The dream state of consciousness, you must liken to this worldly existence. When you wake up from it, where is it? Where is the dream? It was nothing but your own consciousness through which light was passing, that's all.

And so, when you wake up from this dream of this outward existence, it's the same thing exactly. It will pass away, it will go into nonexistence, just like this, your dream at night does. And what'll be left? That consciousness which produced it – the Immortal Wakefulness of God. It is so simple, isn't it, but so difficult. We've all cracked our heads trying to understand it, and we'll go on until someday, by the Grace of God, He'll say, "What's the matter with you, there it is?" As it says in the Gita¹, "Seeing, I saw." And so that's the way God will, His Grace will descend upon us, and we will know, we will understand, because we are simply a part of Him. We are all a ray of His One Great Omnipresence. How can we ever die? Surely we will understand "Life Hereafter."

So, "Life Hereafter" is known only through the intuition, which is in that Pure Consciousness. When your consciousness is adulterated by outward living, and all sorts of states of consciousness, then the intuition cannot flow. Intuition is in that Pure State of Consciousness, Immortal Wakefulness, of which Master spoke. And that intuition is through, in and through, all states of consciousness beyond this one with which we are familiar right now. We exercise intuition even while living. But when you exercise it by will, and know the underlying Unity of God's Presence, then it is your own. Then it can never be taken away from you. It will always be with you.

Now by stilling bodily activity – this is the key - to say these words in a short time is difficult – but, to still all bodily activity, to still all mental activity, and to still all emotions, and to still the heart, and to still the breath, when you do that, then you will have that Pure State of Consciousness. But while these oscillations are going on – oscillations of thought, oscillations of bodily activity, oscillations of emotion, oscillations of the restless heart and breath – as long as those are going on, you cannot know that State of Pure Consciousness. Just like we have a big ocean here, and the waves are all dancing around, you cannot understand the calm sea beneath, can you? Therefore, that's why to know life eternal, we must still these waves of consciousness, as thought, breath, emotion, heartbeat, and

¹ The Bhagavad Gita

such things. And when we do that, when we do that, then we can prove immortality. But you cannot prove immortality, you cannot, you cannot prove "Life Hereafter," while these things are going on. It's impossible, because "Life Hereafter," as I have said, depends on that one State of Pure Consciousness in which intuition manifests. But when you still these different vibrations of which I have spoken, by the simple technique, highest technique of concentration, which many of you know, when you do that, the heart is still, the breath is still, and the thoughts have gone to rest, and the emotions are quiet. When you do that, you have a state of consciousness which is God Himself. It's as simple as that, but it's very difficult to still these various waves. That's why this show goes on. That's why the Lord has a good time with this show, because it's difficult to still these waves of consciousness, the different waves of living.

Now, going on just a little bit further – to understand this "Life Hereafter," as I have said, that we must understand that Immortal Wakefulness. That's the most wonderful thing. That's why in your meditation you'll feel calm, because you're in that state, that Immortal State of God's Wakefulness. He's not hot and bothered like we are all the time. He's enjoying that. We get mixed up in the show, in the dream. That's why we suffer. We must be as He is. And that's what He wants us to be, if we'll but do our part. And so it is that Universal Consciousness which we must realize and know. That Universal Consciousness which does not change. But it is so easy to be wrapped up in things that change. It is difficult to do it, but it can be done. That's why the Master came. That's why He gave us the various techniques. That we might know, as He knows, that underlying Universality of God's Presence – that Immortal Wakefulness.

People come to me with a big, long question – big, long list of questions – and they get in there, and just as soon as I can, if it's possible, and it is God's grace, His Presence, that Universal Consciousness is there, and suddenly they say, "Well, I had a whole list of questions I was going to ask you, but I don't seem to ask, ask them now." I said, "That's fine, that's fine." They've got what they want and need. Who cares about the questions, if you get the end, if you get the Presence of God? And that's how wonderful God is. Do not think that I do it. Do not think that you do it. You do not do a thing, but God does it. And He does it so wonderfully well, if you'll let Him do it, and just be willing, and be a willing instrument.

Now, if we know this Immortal Wakefulness in life, now, we will be aware of it later. That's the important point. That's why we all must get busy. We must, every day, give so much time that we contact this state, which doesn't change,

this Wakefulness in God. And then when you, at will, can bring it on – think of it – when you’re worried, and things are not going as you’d like to have them go, and you could, by will, just bring on this state that you feel in your best meditation, wouldn’t it be wonderful? That’s what you must do. When you can do that, then, then you’ll be conscious of “Life Hereafter.”

I have a reference I’d like to read at this time, and remember the one thing, if you cannot do it, if you cannot do it right now in this existence, you will not be aware of it after death. Make it your own, now. And you have the ways and the means through the Master’s efforts, and through God’s grace. And so, from one of our Praeceptor’s², we have this about the Universal Consciousness, of which I have been speaking. And there’s one great truth in this reference I’ll give you, I hope you grasp it. "This Universal Consciousness is that consciousness common to saints and souls who are liberated. The devotees of God who understand this world in which they live, and the attachment thereof, and are freed from it, they are in this Universal Consciousness. Their greatness and spiritual development is not comparable. The greater the people are – you cannot say, that saint is greater than this saint. There’s only one Consciousness of God, one Universal Consciousness, and when you have that, you have it. And when you have it, you cannot compare whether one saint is greater than another. That is, you cannot compare, as if some surpass others. They are one in God. Their Consciousness is Universal."

Isn’t that wonderful? I’m waiting to get to that place where there’s none of this, you know, “better than you are,” “I’m better than you,” and so forth. Where there is not this, all this competition. But in the Presence of God it doesn’t have to be, because everything is there. So that’s the thing we must have, and if you have that in this life, you will know about “Life Hereafter.”

Now, what you know about “Life Hereafter” depends upon what you know about death now. I’m not bringing up this morbid subject of death because I like to talk about it. But I’m bringing it up to spur you on to try and understand it yourself, and you have the simple ways and the techniques of Self-Realization Fellowship – especially the simple Hong Sau technique, or the highest technique of concentration. In that, if you will do it, you will experience conscious sleep; you will know conscious death of which St. Paul said; and you will also know that you are immortal, by that one technique, if you will only do it. From there

² The original name of the Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons were “Praeceptum.”

on you can rapidly attain the Universal Presence of God, the One Consciousness of which I have been speaking.

And one or two stories about death. Would you like to hear them? It's kinda hot here, and I guess that's as good a subject as anything. Well, Mary said to grandpa, she said, "Were you on Noah's ark?" He said, "Why no, Mary, why do you ask?" "Well, why didn't you drown?" That wasn't very good, was it?

Well, I have one here though that's very nice. There was an old gentleman that was passing a bus intersection, and when a live Saint Bernard dog brushed by him and pushed him over. Must have been a large dog, but that's what it says here. And then an instant later a sports car came around the corner and sideswiped him, so to speak, and really did do damage. And a gentleman came by and asked him if the dog had hurt him. He said, "No, the dog didn't hurt me, but that tin can tied to his tail certainly ruined me." So there you have it.

Oh, I have one more. I can't let this one go by, because it's quite good. It says it takes hundreds of nuts to hold a car together, but only one in the driver's seat to scatter it all over the highway. So, I think we all feel better about death now anyway. And so let's go on. That must've have been some dog, wasn't it?

Now our Master says these words, which we must remember. This is a key to this subject, "Life Hereafter." He says, "Those who try," – try, t-r-y – "Those who try by devotional yogic methods to understand and perceive the phenomena of sleep and death, during their conscious physical existence," – that's the key – "during their conscious physical existence, it is they who can retain their consciousness after death."

That's all it takes. The performance of these yogic methods, which many of you are familiar with, during this lifetime, and be conscious of these states of sleep, conscious sleep, and death, then you'll have the consciousness necessary to know "Life Hereafter." Those are our Master's words. And the Hindu masters have given the methods. And you have the methods right in your Self-Realization Fellowship teachings whereby you, you can see that land of the Fourth Dimension. The Land of the Fourth Dimension is where we live in the Energy region, so to speak. Land of the Fourth Dimension, that's the Kingdom of which Jesus spoke when he said, "My Kingdom is not of this world." Not of this outward, worldly existence with its laws, but of the Laws of Energy. The Astral Kingdom is the Kingdom of which Jesus was speaking.

Now the real crystal ball, the real crystal ball of the Hindu masters, and other great saints, is the Spiritual Eye. That's the crystal ball in which they look, because through the intuition of the soul there they see all things as they should be, not as they seem to be. They see them in Reality. And so the crystal ball is spoken of as the Spiritual Eye, the Eye of Intuition, Star of the East, Eye of Energy, the Single Eye, many things are spoken of in reference to this Single Eye.

And so, seeker's of truth – which you all are, you wouldn't be here if you were not – seeker's of truth must cultivate, must cultivate this Spiritual Eye, this Single Eye, the Seat of Perception. This is where you contact, as I said in the beginning, the Universal Presence of God, the Universal Consciousness common to all saints, common to each and every one of us, if we make it dynamic to our consciousness. So we must do that, we must cultivate this crystal ball, if you want to call it that. We must cultivate the Single Eye of which Jesus spoke. "If thine eye be single, thy body will be filled with light." Not solar light, Spiritual Light, Astral Light, Eternal Light from which all things have come. Cultivate that through the practice of the things which our Master has left for us. If you look through that Spiritual Eye, especially if you look through the Little Star in the Center into the Internal Kingdom, then you'll realize what St. Paul said, "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard, the things which the Lord has prepared for those who love Him." You cannot love God truly, except through the Single Eye of Spirit. That's why Jesus said – what he meant – "My Kingdom is not of this world."

Lahiri Mahasaya, one of our greatest saints, said this same thing very pointedly. He says, "Penetrate the little star in the Spiritual Eye." Penetrate it. Do not just look at it. That's not penetrating. Merge through it. Be one with it. Penetrate it into the Internal Kingdom within, the Kingdom of the Infinite. Now in that Kingdom is the Universal Consciousness of which we have been speaking. Know that, and you will know "Life Hereafter." As you look through that Little Star, if the Grace of God comes, you will see, not only the sun, of which we are familiar with of this worldly existence, you'll see not only the sun at this point [Doctor points to the Spiritual Eye], you'll see the Sun of Righteousness, the sun of the Great Sun, the Sun from which all Power and Energy comes, spoken of in Malachi³, "with healing in its wings." Wings means rays.

So the Eternal Truth is there. And, if you persevere, and you pray to God, and you cast yourself at His feet, and the Light of His Love comes upon you, the

³ Malachi 4:2

Glance of His Grace, you will see the Sun of Righteousness in all its Glory, by these simple techniques which our Master has left for us. Why? Because he saw the same Sun of Righteousness, and having seen it, he can give it to those who follow. Such is the Spiritual Law. Heaven and the "Life Hereafter" does exist; it does exist, but you will never know it exists until you prove it. Therefore, follow the Master's words. Those who, by regular devotion, yogic method – those who meditate regularly, and during this lifetime understand these states of sleep and death – it is they who'll be conscious of "Life Hereafter." No one else. You cannot know something unless you know it. Therefore, if you want to know "Life Hereafter," follow the Master. Do what he has said. Know those states of sleep and death. Having that, you will know you are immortal, and nothing can harm you in any way.

Now, we have one or two words about "Life Hereafter," perhaps you'd be interested in, which I have been giving in Encinitas under the subject of "Karma of the Spirit World." And "Karma of the Spirit World" simply means the action of those spirits on the other side. Just like in this world we act, we move, and we do certain things according to certain laws. So on the other side, in the exactly same manner, you will do things, and you will act.

Now, there are two kinds of people on the other side. Those who are conscious, and those who are not conscious. Now, if you're gonna do any acting on the other side, you must be conscious of it before you reach it. Those are the two kinds of spirits. There aren't any others. If you're not conscious in this room, you're not conscious, are you? So on the other side. Those who have attained, by their efforts, and by following the Master, consciousness of the other side while here in this life, it is they who will be conscious on the other side. Those who have not done it will not be conscious. Take your choice. You will know "Life Hereafter," if you follow that rule.

Now the first thing is this: they are called spirits – developed and undeveloped, or conscious and unconscious. Now the developed spirits are – and, I know, it must take in everyone in this room – yogis, saints and devotees. I'm sure everyone here is a devotee of God through the channel of the Master. Those comprise the first state of consciousness on the other side – those who are conscious – those are the developed spirits: yogis, saints, and devotees.

Now all of these, these three, of course, there are many divisions. There are the best, and the middle type, and the indifferent ones. The good yogis, who never fail to do their exercises; the middle ones who are pretty good; and then the

indifferent ones, who, "Well, you know how it is, let's do it tomorrow." That's true. You get that same classification – yogis, saints, and devotees. But one great saint, even the indifferent ones, they will have consciousness after death. They will have consciousness on the other side – all will be conscious of the Om vibration. All will know they exist on the other side. Those who do not attain the state of consciousness here, will not know it, that's all. You cannot get something for nothing, especially in spiritual things. Therefore, let us be, even the "greatest," if we can. But, at least, let us be in this class of yogis, saints, and devotees. They'll all be conscious of the Om vibration.

Do you know what the Om vibration means? In that vibration is God's Consciousness, His Presence, His Love, His Light. That's why it's a wonderful thing to be able even to be conscious of the Om on the other side. All will know of this particular class, the developed souls, they will know they are existing there. And just as you in your meditation, perhaps can go deeper, perhaps you can struggle harder in your meditation. So on the other side, these people will be able to make that definite effort to progress toward oneness and complete Union with God. Why? Because they earned it here, that's why – yogi's, saints, and devotees. Let us realize that one thing.

Now, the others – what of the undeveloped souls, or who are the undeveloped souls? Those who are left, those who are left – ordinary human beings. They are the undeveloped souls on the other side. Yogis, saints, and devotees have made a definite effort to know God. They have followed a channel, which God has sent to them, therefore, they receive something. That means they are conscious on the other side, and the degree of consciousness depends upon their depths of realization of Christ Consciousness on this side. We will not go into it. It extends from simply being conscious that you are beyond this body, and you're awake in Om, to full consciousness in-through another birth, through a mother's body, and into another life. It can extend through those various grades of consciousness. But all, all will know they exist on the other side. All will be conscious of the Om vibration.

Now the undeveloped souls are those who are left – ordinary human beings. And they make up these different classes, which I will give you: moralists, a moralists, a worldly person, a wicked person, and one who commits suicide. They constitute the undeveloped souls on the other side. Why? Because that's what they lived on this side.

A moralist may be, and is, a great moral man – a great man of ethics. He may not be a religious man. He may not feel for God. He may not feel God's Love at all. Therefore, he is classed as the undeveloped one. One in, once in a great while a moralist will have consciousness on the other side.

That brings us to the second class – the second class is the worldly man. The worldly man, one in a thousand, one in a thousand are conscious on the other side. One in a thousand. Why? Because they lived in worldly consciousness and the other side is not worldly conscious. But once in a while, one in a thousand has consciousness on the other side.

Then we come to the next group – the wicked man, addicted to passions, and so forth, some even worse than animals. How can they have consciousness on the other side. How can they? They'll have just what they attained here. Therefore, they will not be conscious on the other side.

And the final class – the suicides, because they hated this thing so much. They hated the body so much, naturally they will not be conscious, and they will not get birth for a long time.

This is the Master's classification in just a few words. I've had to give it to you, but it is a very wonderful and simple classification, if you'll remember it and be sure and be in those first three – yogis, saints, and devotees. A yogi is one who is trying to unite His Consciousness with God, that's all. It doesn't say whether he has or not. He's trying. He's trying to do it, and I know that takes in a great many of us.

Now going on just a bit further, and then I'll be through – about the Astral worlds. Of course, we cannot take it up in any length, at this time, except, if you'll read Master's chapter in his Autobiography⁴, about the Astral realm. There you'll find all you need to know. One thing which I did attain from one of his little books, The Master Said, from his glossary, and that particular thing about the Astral world is this, "Astral Worlds: The beautiful realms of light and joy to which persons with a measure of spiritual understanding go for further development after death. . ." Those "with a measure of spiritual understanding" – that's why Master cautioned us always, "Do not be looking for manifestations," the different lights and so forth, "but go to God Himself." Get God Himself, that's what you want. You could get the Astral realm, if you want it. But you'll

⁴ Autobiography of a Yogi, by Paramhansa Yogananda, Chapter 43, "The Resurrection of Sri Yukteswar"

have to come from there, either go to the Causal, finally to God Himself. Why not go there first? He can give you everything you need, and He will give you everything that you need. And so even higher, than the Astral realm, higher than that is the Causal, or Ideational sphere. Just a word or two about heaven and such things in which "Life Hereafter" is entered into.

But the thing is, don't stop there. Do not stop there. Get God Himself. You read in the Bhagavad Gita, "My devotee comes to me." Those who want the Shining Ones, the Astral realms, they go to the Shining Ones, "But my devotee, O Arjuna, he cometh directly to Me." That's what we want. Let's not be sidetracked by these Astral realms. They're wonderful, but God is the Most Wonderful. We want Him. We want Him and Him alone, and that's the final answer is God Alone. That's why all the saints say God and God Alone. You'll never be satisfied with these other things, because we're a part of His Great Consciousness and Light and Love. We must have that. We must have Him. The soul will never be satisfied until it returns home once more to the realm of consciousness from which it has come, our Kingdom of Light.

And I'll close with a reference from our Master's book the Autobiography, as follows, and then with a Bible reference or two. "The tragedy of death," says the Master, "is unreal. Those that shudder at it are like an ignorant actor that dies of fright on the stage when nothing more has been fired at him than a blank cartridge. My sons are children of light. They will not sleep forever in delusion." That's the promise. Those are our Master's words. "My sons are children of light." We're not this body, which changes, and gets sick all the time, and gets into trouble, and all sorts of things – behind that is the Light of God and that's what we are. Master says just that, "They will not sleep forever in delusion." It's up to us whether we do it now, or wait. But eternally, or eventually and eternally, we must return home to God.

And from the Bible, one or two references of assurance, which are so wonderful. When you know a thing, it's easy to say, "Yes, I know all about it." But when you do not know a thing, it's difficult, isn't it? We do not know all we'd like to know about "Life Hereafter," but we do have the testimony of the great saints and our beloved Gurus, and our Master, and the great saints of our Bible. And here are one or two references.

First, from Revelation, 2nd Chapter, the 10th Verse: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." "Be thou faithful unto death" – striving to keep the continuity of consciousness through these changeable states in which

we find ourselves. Practice your Kirya Yoga. Practice your highest technique of concentration. Do that, and then you will be able to keep the continuity of consciousness through the state called death. Do you understand? "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." When you can do that, you'll know the underlying Consciousness of God, which is Life itself.

And from Revelation, same chapter, the next verse, "He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death." Once you experience the state of death, even by the performance of your Hong Sau technique, or the highest technique of concentration, it can never touch you again. Once you understand that sleepless state, the state of conscious sleep of which St. Paul spoke, "I die daily." Do it. Every time you do your highest technique of concentration in the right way, you'll reach that state, the State of Immortality. Knowing it, it can never touch you again, the scriptures say.

Finally, St. John, the 8th Chapter, the 51st Verse, "Verily, verily I say unto you, if a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." The key word is "my saying." If a man keep, in an unbroken way, in Christ Consciousness, he will never see death.

So "Life Hereafter" depends on our keeping in that state of consciousness, unbroken State of Christ Consciousness, where, at will, we can be, and feel, the Presence of God. Feel His Love. Having that, we will understand what "Life Hereafter" is, because that is what it will be. God's Love alone has created all things. His Light and His Love has produced all things. Know that. Keep that unbroken state of consciousness. "Keep my sayings," as we read in St. John, and you will know, without doubt, "Life Hereafter."