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MRS. RILLA BINKS

621 S.W. TEMPLE

SALT LAKE CITY UTAH

Beloved Companion:

INITIATION - (CONTINUED)

The processes of enlightenment are the result of very simple changes. It is just a matter of maturing certain sensations, thoughts and qualities which are dormant in all men, but which must be awakened. Only those who carry these simple processes to fulfillment, with patience, diligence and love can expect any Illumination.

Out of meditation the organs for functioning on the Inner Planes are developed. Inner Sight is awakened, Consciousness of higher levels of contact are unfolded, and gradually the candidate is prepared for the actual Initiation itself. These organs may be called Spiritual Eyes; they help us to see on the Inner Planes, to become aware of the vibrations of those higher levels, and to utilize the teachings which are given us there. When one reaches the stage where the Spiritual Eyes are opened, much lies before him; he is not yet fully developed, but he is well started on the way, and from that point forward may choose which species of development he is going to concentrate upon. If he has passed thru the initial stages of development, from the first step of curious interest to actual awakening, he has already proven his endurance, his courage and his sincerity. The gifts of the Spirit are his, but he still is responsible for using them correctly, and constructively, for himself and his fellow-creatures.

The question as to whether one is preparing correctly for Initiation involves several things. First, he must be assured of his physical organism being prepared to undertake these various exercises. Usually those who start out on the Pathway are well fortified in this respect; they are careful of the physical body, they do not use it recklessly, for as long as it is the Temple of the higher vehicles it must be tended and cared for, just as one would a machine which was valuable and delicately constructed. The physical body is the machine which is used by the higher vehicles to manifest on the earth plane, and of course must be protected and nurtured that it may at all times operate with as complete efficiency as possible.

Now when we speak of the strain involved, we are not referring to any particular Initiation Ceremony. We are referring rather to the strength required for continuing on the Pathway thruout one life or many lives.

The second consideration is the development of the ability to concentrate, and to use these forces of meditation in a constructive manner. All who are successful in the business world, all who are successful in the scientific world or in the arts, must necessarily know how to concentrate. If concentration is so necessary, for success on the material plane, how very much more essential it is for the development of the higher faculties! So when the Occult Schools teach concentration and recommend it as necessary for the Occult Pathway, they are automatically training that student in the developing control of the higher vehicles, and at the same time teaching

him a practical, useful exercise that can be employed for betterment on the physical plane. Concentration means the elimination of superfluous ideas and thoughts. It is cultivating the quality to do one thing at a time, and to do that thing well. We cannot scatter our activities and expect to become efficient in any of them, but if we can direct all of our vitality into each thing that we do, giving that interest, whether it is a temporary or a permanent one, the benefit of our complete attention, our work is easier, it is more free of error, and more satisfying as well.

Now the use of concentration in Psychic or Spiritual work has the same effect. We learn to withdraw within, to Spiritually and mentally focus the consciousness on an illuminating, enlightening point of interest. In doing so we concentrate our Spiritual energy to that focal point. In the exercises of the Tree you are told as to concentrating upon the various Sephiroth and the Paths. This is excellent training. Select one of these for each of your meditation exercises, and endeavor to become completely aware of all of the correspondencies of that center. Don't try to remember them, as far as repeating the names and correspondencies by rote, but try to feel these correspondencies associated with that location. If concentrating on Tiphareth, become conscious of all that that Center portends; feel the illumination of the Sun, become conscious of it as a center of energy, perceive it as the highest point to which Man may attain in complete consciousness, and still be a member of the human race. If we become completely absorbed in Tiphareth we of course receive the Initiatory Degrees of that Sephira. But reaching that point is a matter of time and training. In our beginning work we can approach that complete absorption by gradual stages, and by restricted, controlled and governed meditation periods. It is so with every Sephira.

At first we may only have a few seconds of actual "realization." Later on this period may be extended to a full minute. As time passes, and as our daily lives give us further advantage of training in practical objectives we find our inner powers increasing with a proportionate rate to our intellectual and practical understanding of Inner Truths to every-day life, and there comes that time when we are freed from the Wheel of Birth and Death, and proceed from Tiphareth to Inner Plane activity, exclusive of the physical level.

The third point to be taken into consideration in this matter of preparing for enlightenment is the development of all of the qualities necessary for such Initiation. We know that in Scholastic work it is necessary that the child maintain a certain average if he or she expects to pass the examinations. Certain fundamental, necessary subjects are assigned to each class of students, and they must pass the average grade in each of these if they are to hope for promotion. Usually this grade is well within the grasp of any who will apply themselves to these subjects. It is necessary that they have a fundamental knowledge of Arithmetic, Grammar, Spelling, History, Literature, Music, etc., even though personal preference may not include one or more of these subjects. We would not consider the child educated if he or she finished school without having at least

a rudimentary knowledge of all of these topics. They are part of our cultural system. It is so with training for Initiation -- we can't expect to enter into the Inner Planes as a qualified Initiate if we haven't passed thru the various problems associated with that development, and solved all of them in at least a partially satisfactory manner. We can't expect a deep desire for Initiation to in itself be all that is necessary, any more than we would expect the child's delight in graduating from the primary grades to be all that is necessary for his promotion. Besides this desire to complete his work, the child must also prove his ability to proceed, actually undertaking subjects or duties which are not entirely pleasant, and completing them is in itself a vital element of training, for wherever we may go we must learn to see all sides of a question, we must learn to temper our own desires with the needs and necessities of others; we must learn the value of sacrifice for the good of some higher aspiration and ideal.

In Occult Initiation we are not assigned any particular subjects, but nevertheless the general qualifications are the same as those used in the educational system. The candidate may have an abounding love for Humanity, but if that love is not tempered with good judgment and discrimination, then these qualities must be developed. Love, uncontrolled, can bring more damage than good. On the other hand, if the candidate has shown a desire to develop the quality of control and understanding, then the abundance of love which that candidate has attained will help to equalize his general standard of development. And so on thru all of the traits of character necessary for Initiation.

Remember that in entering the Inner Plane Temple of Wisdom, some offering must be made. There is no fee levied in monetary terms; the only offering we can make is ourselves. The more developed we are the more acceptable our gifts become, for Initiation implies, as we pointed out in a former lecture, the opportunity to develop still greater faculties, and the opportunity to serve in a larger capacity. The more highly developed we are the more useful our services will be in the Inner Plane Realms. There is no point in our going empty-handed to such an Inner Plane Temple of Wisdom, for there are many things that can be learned here on the earth plane; our incarnation has been given us for the purpose of learning them. To attempt to assail the doors of the Inner Planes without having cultivated the qualities we were sent to earth to develop is very much like a child demanding his certificate of graduation without having attended the necessary free educational classes. The opportunity for such education is open to everyone, just as the opportunity for development is given to everyone on the earth plane. No matter where we may be, there are abounding chances for study, for concentrating upon life's problems, for becoming more aware of Nature, her forces and her influences. Whether we live in the city or in the country, each offers its characteristic advantages; whether our financial status is high or low, we have in such a state, characteristic opportunities which are denied those in other phases of environment. All of these things are a part of our chances for observation. In effect, when we indicate our desire to study the Inner Plane Laws thru Occult work, we are presenting ourselves at the door of the Inner Plane Temple. Sometimes we present ourselves untrained and undisciplined, and therefore must prepare ourselves before we can expect entry. Actual, active, direct Occult

Study is one half of this training; practical observation of life is the other half.

But of course there is a great variety in the qualifications of the Initiate, just as there is a great variety in the qualifications of any specialized Science. It is quite possible for an entire class of graduates in Science, for instance, to receive the same Scientific degree. Some of the members of that class will have just barely passed their examinations. Other members of the same class will have had brilliant careers. Initiates, then, have just as varied qualifications as such earth plane class members. The more highly developed the candidate the more useful his or her services are going to be.

So we can understand, therefore, this mystery of Initiation occurring at so many different stages in the lives of different people. One person who has seemingly had a rather mediocre life, who has never seemed to show any brilliant capacity for any particular Occult phase of endeavor, or philosophical understanding, may, because of the fact that their development has been well rounded and balanced, receive one of the beginning Initiatory Experiences. Their lives may have been so controlled and governed as to merit this early recognition. At the same time, no brilliant achievement had been made, but a sound, fundamental understanding of Occult Principles had been developed.

On the other hand, there are many competent scholars, many who have distinguished themselves in several phases of Occult activity and who have passed far beyond what we would ordinarily consider necessary for Initiation, and yet they are still without that sublime experience. It is evident that in such cases some small impediment has prevented their development, some fundamental, basic necessity for entry into full understanding of the Inner Planes has prevented their Initiation occurring. It is necessary that they wait, therefore, until these needed traits are nurtured, and while doing so their capacity along the other lines in which they are already proficient proceeds to an even greater level. When they are finally initiated, they will, in every respect, be just as highly developed as those who may have been initiated many years or many life-times ahead of them.

In the Bonds of the Eternal Brotherhood.