

Neville Goddard Lecture



The Tree Of Life

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Our evangelists, the unknown authors of the gospels, knew that people understood best what they could see in picture form, so they told God's plan of redemption in the form of a tale that it could be seen and not forgotten. They knew the risk they ran. They knew that those who could see the picture mentally could easily mistake the personification which conveyed the truth for a person and the vehicle which conveyed the instruction for the instruction, yet they took the greatest of all truths and embodied it in a tale, that it may enter lowly doors.

It was Paul who said: "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified? Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh?" I tell you: the entire Christian and Jewish world has ended with the flesh. They are unable to think of Jesus Christ as a pattern of redemption, but only as a man of flesh who is unique and different from themselves. Paul is urging all to see the Spirit, the pattern which is contained in every child born of woman and to remember that spiritual pattern called Jesus Christ. I tell you: belief can cause that pattern to be fertilized, then the time element will enter for its development and no one can stop its fulfillment. Just as the egg in a woman does not unfold until it is fertilized, so is this spiritual seed in man. After fertilization a built-in time begins, and the savior in man (which is a pattern) begins to bloom.

Man has been taught to believe that Jesus Christ is a man external to himself, but Jesus Christ is contained within man as a pattern. He is God's vision of man and that vision is

forever. It was God who said: "Write the vision, make it plain upon canvas so he may run who reads it. For the vision has its own appointed hour; it ripens, it will flower. If it be slow wait, for it is sure and it will not be late." The pattern is perfect, and from the moment of fertilization a built-in time schedule begins, and thirty years later the tree of life comes into bloom. I have experienced this pattern. It is not unique to the thing called Neville, but is a pattern which is contained in every child born of woman. It has bloomed in me in its fullness and now I know that Jesus Christ is God's eternal plan for man's redemption. When I share my experiences I do not make any claim to be better than or above others, I simply reveal how the tree of life has bloomed in me. That is all.

Now, the story is told that he took twelve up to Jerusalem, and said: "All that is written of me by the prophets must be fulfilled." Although they heard his words they did not understand them, for they could not grasp what the prophets had said. Only the Risen Christ can interpret scripture. Only his finger can trace these ambiguous statements and give them their heavenly meaning. Reason can give you many meanings, but the real meaning can only be betrayed by the Risen Christ because he has experienced it. Only one who has been born from above can reveal the truth of the statement: "You must be born from above." I have heard unnumbered arguments about that statement. Some claim it means a radical change in one's behavior, as those who were once violent become quiet, tender, and considerate. But I tell you: it hasn't a thing to do with that. The event is literally true. You are actually born from above. This I know from experience.

In the 50th Psalm the Lord speaks, saying: "The world and all within it is mine. The cattle on a thousand hills are mine. If I were hungry I would not tell you, I would simply slay and eat." And in the 17th chapter of John he says: "All mine are thine and thine are mine." If all that God the Father possesses is yours, must you confine this thought only to things of this world? Could you not go beyond this world and enter his nature? What is the nature of He who owns the world and all within it? Is it not Fatherhood? If all that He is, is yours to know, and He is God the Father . . . then you must know that you are God the Father. And to know that you are a Father you must have a child to bear witness to that fact, and God's child is yours. God gave himself to you one hundred per cent, saying: "All mine are thine and thine are mine." Only one who has experienced this can compel such an ambiguous statement to yield its heavenly meaning. Only when the tree of life begins to bud and bear its fruit in you, will you know who you really are.

Why are you weak? Why are you limited in this little garment of flesh? Because of God's incarnation. He is not pretending he is in a human body. God had to empty himself of all

that is he. Though he was rich he became poor, that by his poverty you may become rich. His incarnation is a complete embodiment wherein He took on all of the limitations of human knowledge. Incarnating myself in a little time slot called 1905, I took upon myself all of the beliefs that are related to that time. Born a Caucasian under the British flag I adopted the American flag. These are my restrictions. The beliefs I inherited as a Britisher and adopted as an American were woven together within this time slot, and they are all limited. In order to make them real I had to make it a complete incarnation. If I did not it would not be a real incarnation and only a masquerade, and God is not masquerading in this world. You completely emptied yourself of your true identity to take upon yourself the limitations and restrictions of this world. And while you are here, God's pattern unfolds from within and you discover that you are He.

Jesus Christ is personified in scripture as a man, but you are that man. You are the one who will experience the story of the gospel. Man cannot understand truth in its unvarnished, unveiled state, as I tell it to you. They can accept it only when it is embodied in a tale. And the one billion Christians and Jews of the world, not understanding the great principle, worship its personification. They would not believe me if tomorrow I told them that Jesus Christ is a pattern. That he lived and lives as the only reality. But I tell you: Jesus Christ is the only thing worth living for, because unless he unfolds himself in you, you are as nothing. Only as he unfolds himself in you can the tree of life bear its fruit. It is my hope that the day is not far off when you will be called by the Father in you and his vision of you will be fertilized.

Christ is God's vision of man, which is fertilized by union with God, at which time a built-in time table begins. There will be thirty years between that fertilization and the first bud to appear on the tree of life which you are. And from that moment on you can count the days, which will add up to one thousand two hundred and sixty. This is the story the Christian world observes and calls Easter. We think it is a unique day and keep it for a person, although Paul condemned the keeping of any day, saying: "I notice you observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid I have labored over you in vain," because Christ is not a person.

If you would only bear in mind that Easter is the moment when the eruption occurs, you would realize it could be any day. It could be now, right in this audience, and at any moment in time. If you can recall the moment you had union with the Risen Lord, you will start your mission based upon experience exactly thirty years later. You can count it to the very day. The first bud to appear is your resurrection, which is nothing more than the transformation of the cross, which is the transfiguration. It's a complete change of

being. Thinking now as a being of flesh, you resurrect into and think as a being of Spirit once more. I know, for I have experienced this change, yet I remain in the flesh to tell it to you to the best of my ability. Not everyone can take it, but I try to make man see Christ as a principle rather than a little historical event . . . which he is not.

Jesus Christ is history, in the sense that the pattern erupts in a person at a certain moment in time. Two thousand years ago the tree of life began to bear its fruit, but that tree is every child born of woman. Blake saw it so clearly, and said: "The gods of the earth and sea sought through nature to find this tree, but their search was all in vain; there grows one in the human brain," That is where the tree of life begins to bloom again. In the winter the tree is leafless and appears to be dead, and then one morning a little leaf appears and you know the tree which seemed dead during the winter is alive once more. Like the tree you awaken and come out of a body that appears dead when you look at it. And then the leaves begin to unfold, one after the other, as the tree bursts into bloom and you fulfill scripture. Then you, who know you are the Resurrected Christ, share your knowledge with a world who believes in a little flesh and blood one, and cannot believe you because all they can see is that which covers your true identity.

Scripture has taken place in me. I, the Resurrected Christ, am speaking to you through a garment called Neville, and because of my experiences I can trace these ambiguous statements of scripture and extract their heavenly meaning. In the 24th chapter of the Book of Luke it is said that only after the resurrection could anyone understand what he was talking about. Prior to that no one understood, not even his twelve. They questioned his meaning when he said he would rise again on the third day, and they could not understand when he said he had to suffer first, rise, and then bring them with him into the same kingdom that his God had prepared.

This month everyone will celebrate external mysteries and keep alive the memory of a man. But Jesus Christ is not a man; he is God's pattern of redemption for you. The same pattern is buried in all. It is the divine vision God keeps in time of your troubles. Regardless of the state you make manifest on the outside, God sees you as his pattern in full bloom and his vision has its own appointed hour. It will ripen and flower. If to you it seems long in the coming, wait . . . for it is sure and will not be late. Then you can count the days between the appearance of the first little sprig (which is resurrection) and the descent of the dove which brings the tree into full bloom, and it will be exactly one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Now, what on earth would you hear that would compare to this story? If you owned the outer world but did not become God, it would be as nothing, for everything here will fade. How many civilizations will rise and fall before the culmination of the whole, no one knows. Today we think America is forever and Russia feels the same way. England thought their power would always be great, as did ancient Rome, Greece, and Spain; yet they all came into being like a wave, then breaking, dissolved into nothingness as their power diminished.

We are a great power today but one day it will come to its climax, wane, and vanish. This is true of Russia and China, too. Nations rise and fall, but the important thing is to individually fulfill scripture. Each and every individual will one day hatch out God's plan called Christ, and know himself to radiate and reflect the glory of God and bear the express image of his person. That pattern is God's vision of you, and he waits for that moment in time when the suffering is over. He knows what you have gone through and in his infinite mercy has hidden them from you. But when the time is fulfilled he will call you, embrace and send you, as himself. Then, thirty years later, the first little sprig will appear on your tree of life in the form of your resurrection. This is immediately followed by your birth from above. Then comes God's son, David, to reveal your Fatherhood. Your spiritual body is split and you ascend into the kingdom, as it reverberates like thunder. Then the tree comes into full bloom with the descent of the dove.

The current issue of the New York Times book review is devoted to religion, of which they make so little. They speak of the Bible as filled with myths and not based on reality, quoting Dr. So-and-so and Dr. So-and-so, who are all men without vision and unable to believe its truth. The evangelists knew this when they told their story, just as the poet Tennyson knew when he said: "Truth embodied in a tale shall enter in at lowly doors."

Scriptural truth is told in the form of a tale so that men will accept it. Thoughts put into picture form can tell a story man can remember, but the uncovered truth they cannot retain. If I tell the average person that he contains within himself a plan which is called Jesus Christ, he could not grasp the thought. But I tell you that Jesus Christ is in you as your hope of glory, and urge you to set your hope fully upon this grace that is coming to you as God's gift of himself. The average person would rather believe that some man is responsible for them, that he died for them on the outside and in some strange way he will suffer for them, even though they suffer. Always there is a "he" on the outside rather than a pattern on the inside. But I tell you: after the tribulations God's plan of salvation will erupt within you, and it will not be one second late in the coming.

Today people are talking about earthquakes and their convulsions. The Secretary of State was questioned for hours on TV today, and he said we had enough armaments to destroy every person in the world a thousand times over, but we need more. When I heard that statement I said to myself: if this isn't an insane asylum, what is? Our congressmen just gave themselves a 43 per cent raise, then increased our tax ten per cent. They call it a surtax. I read in this morning's paper that our city has granted the gas company the right to raise us four per cent to pay their surtax. I am paying my own surtax and now I must help pay the city's surtax of \$21 million. They promise to take it off when the debt is paid. Do you want to bet? We are all like sheep being led to the slaughter.

I do not know how many civilizations will rise and fall before the ultimate has been attained. But I do know that God is in control, and he has planned everything as it has come out and as it will be consummated. No matter what happens, you will not be lost. I know, for the truth of life has bloomed in me in its fullness. There is not a thing left other than to tell it. Like Paul I am remaining in a body that is weak, to tell the world that Jesus Christ is nothing more than a wonderful pattern of redemption, which is contained in every child born of woman. He is God's vision of that child. God does not see the horror the child must go through; he sees only his vision which must erupt, and no one can delay it or hasten its coming. And when it erupts, that individual is conditioned for the new age, called the kingdom of God.

This month, due to tradition, we will observe days such as Good Friday and Easter. Enjoy them if you feel like it. They are lovely, even though Paul felt that because they were kept alive he had labored in vain. But if you do observe the days, see them as a pattern contained in you which will erupt in time. And then, because of your experiences you too will cause these ambiguous statements to yield their heavenly meaning. A few of you have shared your experiences with me and I know your seed has been fertilized, and in thirty years the tree of life in you will begin to bloom, and reach fulfillment in 1260 days. That final bloom is the descent of the dove.

In the book section of the New York Times they made light of the descent of the dove, claiming it was a stupid idea for people to believe, yet it is so true when experienced. And on TV today I watched these so-called wise men sitting before the camera, all well groomed, each playing his part to perfection. They knew they were on camera and everyone was trying to mug that camera, knowing he was being exposed to a nation. Their faces are now registered on the minds of those who think that they are important, and they go blindly on that way; yet the only important thing in the world is to awaken

from this dream of life. And the only thing that can awaken you is God's gift of himself, which is the pattern in you called Jesus Christ. His sleep is your awakening in this world, and his awakening in you is your redemption. Only when he awakes in you can the tree of life bloom once more, as you leave this world of limitation and enter the world of eternity.

Now let us go into the Silence.