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Website:

www.edgarcaycenewzealand.com

Link to Search for God Lessons:

www.improvetransform.com

Email:

rainbowjournal@live.com

Postal Address:

Brian Alderson

Unit 5, 425 West Coast Road, Glen Eden, Auckland, 0602, New Zealand.

Telephone:

(09) 818 9552



FROM THE EDITOR

As this, the eighth year of the Rainbow Journal, comes to a close I would like to thank readers for your support and special thanks to those who have offered me encouragement, which has giving me the motivation to continue producing the Journal.

One of the messages of the Course in Miracles is that 'we learn by teaching', and in this respect I have learnt so much in attempting to put my thoughts down in writing. It is not that I have any special

insights into the themes written about but these are the areas which have concerned me most and ones which I am seeking answers. So I hope that in writing about them I will not only offer readers something to think about but also help myself by clarifying my thoughts.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a New Year full of peace and joy. *Brian Alderson* ΩΩΩ

WHY DECEMBER 25TH?

For a Christian Christmas is one of the two most significant and sacred periods of the Christian calendar, the other being Easter. December 25th was the day in which the birth of Jesus is celebrated while Easter is a time to reflect on his crucifixion and resurrection. Although the actual date of Jesus' birth is unknown it appears that December 25th has been chosen because of the significance of that date in some ancient religions and beliefs. For example celebrations on December 25th were associated with the worship of the sun and the winter solstice.

In his article 'What is the Significance of December 25th' Dr. Lee Warren wrote: "As the sun makes its journey in the heavens, it moves from the summer solstice, which is June 21, where it is at its highest point in the heaven to the winter solstice, which is December 21, where it is at the lowest point in the heavens in the northern hemisphere. This is one of the shortest daylight periods of the year and the longest nights. The ancient cultures saw the

victory of the sun over darkness by the daylight period getting longer after December 25, which is why they call it the birth of the sun (son)."

The book 'Two Babylons' by Rev. Alexander Hislop shows the pagan belief in this day. "In Egypt, the son of Isis, the Egyptian title for the queen of heaven, was born at this very time, ... about the time of the winter solstice. The very name by which Christmas is popularly known among ourselves- Yule-day - proves at once its Pagan and Babylonian origin. Yule " is the Chaldee name for an 'infant' or 'little child;' and as the 25th of December was called by our Pagan Anglo-Saxon ancestors, "Yule-day," or the "Child's day," and the night that preceded it, "Mother-night," long before they came in contact with Christianity, that sufficiently proves its real character."

So both Christian and pagan sources regarded December 25th as a special day celebrating peace, hope and goodwill to all men. ΩΩΩ



THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS

At a reading given on 20th December 1936 Edgar Cayce was told: "You will have before you the members of the Norfolk Study Group #1 who have gathered here seeking a reading which will give them a better understanding and deeper appreciation of the birth of Jesus, the Christ. ." The following was his response:

"In giving to these, then, that seek to know more of that circumstance, those conditions as surrounded that you call the first Christmas: Do not confuse yourselves. While to you it may be a first Christmas, if it were the first then there would be a last; and you would not worship, you would not hold to that which passes.

"For time never was when there was not a Christ and not a Christ mass. But in giving that interpretation of what this Season means - that birth of Jesus as became the Christ - to this world: In giving the circumstance, much has been recorded as respecting this by the writers of the Gospel, especially by Luke; but little perfect concept may be gathered except you as individuals seek to experience what such an advent meant or means to your life as an individual.

"For knowledge of a thing or a condition and the wisdom that is presented in that happening are two different things. What you hear you may believe, but you will rarely act as if you believed it unless you have experienced and do experience that 'God so loved the world as to give His Son' to enter into flesh, that flesh, that man, might know there is an advocate with the Father; and that - as you in your material experience see - Life coming from out of nowhere to enter into materiality, to become a living expression of those promptings of the heart.

"That has been the experience of that soul in its varied spheres of

consciousness, to give such an expression. That is the purpose for which it has entered - to give the more perfect concept of the relationships of man to the Creator.

"Such we find as that happening in Bethlehem of Judea ages and years ago, when that channel had so dedicated itself to the service of her Maker as to become mother, wherein the whole world is shown that this must come to pass in the experience of those who would make themselves channels through which the Holy Spirit of God may manifest; that the world may know that He, God the Father, keeps His promises with the children of men!

"And the hour approaches when nature is to be fulfilled in the natural courses in the experience of the Mother, and His Star has appeared - and the angels' choir, and the voices of those that give the great message! Who heard these, my children? Those that were seeking for the satisfying of their own desires or for the laudation of their own personality? Rather those close to nature, to the hours of meditation and prayer, and those that had given expression, "No room in the Inn!" For no inn, no room, could contain that as was being given in a manifested form! For He came unto His own. For there was nothing made that was made to which He had not given life, to whom He had not given, 'Be you fruitful, multiply' - in yourself; in yourself may there be the propagation of your own specie, of your own self!

"Only then to those that sought could such a message come, or could there be heard the songs of the angels, or that music of the spheres that sang, 'PEACE ON EARTH - GOOD WILL TO MEN!'

"For this, then, is in every birth - the possibilities, the glories, the actuating of that influence of that

entrance again of god-man into the earth that man might know the way. Thus this comes at this time to bring to the hearts and minds of those of that Glad period the fact that not only 1900 years ago but today, He may be born into your own consciousness, your own understanding; He comes unto His own!

“Aren't you His? Have you claimed Him? Have you put on the Christ, even as was and is exemplified in that life, that birth, that death of Jesus, the Christ? For He is your Elder Brother, He IS the babe in your heart, in your life; to be then even now - as then - nourished in the heart, in body, in mind. And indeed do His words become more and more then of meaning, 'As you do it unto the least of these, your brethren, you do it unto me!' For as you behold the face of your friend, of your neighbour, of your foe, yes your enemy, you behold the image of your Saviour.

“For you are all His, bought not only with the birth of the God-Child into flesh but with the death - that you might know that He, your Brother, your Saviour, your Christ, has been and is the Way to the Father in this material plane. For as He chose to enter, so you have entered. As He chose to live, so may you live. As He chose to give of Himself that there might be a greater understanding, a greater knowledge; yes, the showing forth of the wisdom of God that God IS love, poured forth upon the children of men in this experience.

“And as these changes come and as you make known that as has been the raising of that consciousness of His Presence in your experience, by your dealings with, by your conversation with, by your life with your fellow man, so may you hasten the day when He, Christ, may come into your own heart, unto His own peoples, to reign; yes, in the hearts and lives!

“Then indeed should each of you

at this Glad Season make the hearts of others Merry by your own happiness in the birth, the life, the death of your Jesus, your Christ! Know this had no beginning in the 1900 years ago, but again and again and AGAIN! And it may be today, He may be born into your consciousness; not as a physical birth - but each moment that a physical birth is experienced in the earth is an opportunity for the Christ-entrance again!

“Then what are you doing about it in your daily life, your daily conversation? For not by might nor in power, but in the still small voice that speaks within, you may know as He has given so often - 'Peace - it is I! Be not afraid, it is I,' your Saviour, your Christ; yes, yourself meeting that babe in your own inner self that may grow even as He to be a channel of blessings to others! For as you do it unto others you do it unto Him.

“May the Peace, the Joy of His Consciousness, His Presence, His Joy be yours this day; yes, all your days in the earth! For He is nigh unto thee, He is in your midst!

“Praise the Lord that gave, then, His Son; that you might know Him!”
262-103.

A year later, on 19th December 1937 he was asked to give a message to all the study groups that had formed in Norfolk:

“As you approach the Season that to every student of Christian thought means so much, know that the birth of the Christ- Child in Jesus has meant and does mean more and more in the thought and the activity of the world as a whole. And you each here may judge within yourselves as to whether the world is growing better or not according to that conviction, that feeling within your own self that what the Christ-mass or Christmas spirit means is being manifested in your daily life and your associations with your fellow

“For unless this fact is a personal experience, then to you - as an individual - it is not being accomplished. But you each here, feel that the peace within - as comes from the meditating upon the desire to be what the Father-God would have you be through the

promises in the Christ-Jesus - IS making your life, your associations with your fellow man, more and more in keeping with the Christmas spirit; that commandment as He gave, 'A new commandment give I unto you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you.'” 262-116

THE STAR OF CHRISTMAS

The Course in Miracle text also gives messages for this time of the year:

“The sign of Christmas is a star, a light in darkness. See it not outside yourself, but shining in the Heaven within, and accept it as the sign the time of Christ has come. He comes demanding nothing. No sacrifice of any kind, of anyone, is asked by Him. In His Presence the whole idea of sacrifice loses all meaning. For He is Host to God. And you need but invite Him in Who is there already, by recognizing that His Host is One, and no thought alien to His Oneness can abide with Him there. Love must be total to give Him welcome, for the Presence of Holiness creates the holiness that surrounds it. No fear can touch the Host Who cradles God in the time of Christ, for the Host is as holy as the perfect Innocence which He protects, and Whose power protects Him.

“This Christmas give the Holy Spirit everything that would hurt you. Let yourself be healed completely that you may join with Him in healing, and

let us celebrate our release together by releasing everyone with us. Leave nothing behind, for release is total, and when you have accepted it with me you will give it with me. All pain and sacrifice and littleness will disappear in our relationship, which is as innocent as our relationship with our Father, and as powerful. Pain will be brought to us and disappear in our presence, and without pain there can be no sacrifice. And without sacrifice there love must be.” - ACIM Text p.327.

“Holiness must be shared, for therein lies everything that makes it holy. Come gladly to the holy circle, and look out in peace on all who think they are outside. Cast no one out, for here is what he seeks along with you. Come, let us join him in the holy place of peace which is for all of us, united as one within the Cause of peace.” -ACIM Text p.284 ΩΩΩ

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

With only a few days left before Christmas most of us will have done our shopping for gifts with perhaps only a last minute visit to the supermarket needed to buy forgotten items for the Christmas holidays.

What a difference it is now from when we were young children! At that time all we had to do was to wait with great excitement for that Christmas morning when we would rush to the

Christmas tree to find what Santa had delivered for us. Now, as we get much older our Christmas Spirit seems to have all but dissolved. In fact, at times, we may feel more like crying our “Bah, Humbug!” than attempting to spread the message of goodwill to those around us.

Many Christians hold Christmas as the crowning event in the annual Christian calendar. The date of 25th December is said to have been selected

by the church in Rome in the early 4th century. At that time a church calendar was created and other holidays were also placed on solar dates with what they called its “cosmic symbolism” inspiring the Church leadership to elect the winter solstice, 25th December, as the birthday of Christ.

However, today, whether or not the birth date of Jesus is on 25th December is not considered to be an important issue in mainstream Christian denominations; rather, the belief that God came into the world in the form of man to atone for the sins of humanity is considered to be the primary purpose in celebrating Christmas.

So while Christmas celebrations are essentially a Christian event the Spirit of Christmas has spread far beyond the Christian religion to a point where people of all religions celebrate this time with the giving of gifts and the radiating of goodwill. This Spirit of Christmas can stop a war – even if only for a short time. There was a Christmas truce in 1914 during the First World War, when German and Allied soldiers are said to have sung Christmas carols together and otherwise fraternised in a brief moment of peace amid the killing fields of the Western Front.

So if we begin to feel more like Scrooge than Santa Claus we should recall that the Spirit of Christmas is all about giving, not so much of material things but about giving ourselves. This is where Jesus was the shining example. The great gift of Jesus to the world was himself. He lived with and for men. He kept back nothing. In every particular and personal gift that he made to certain people there was something of himself that made it precious.

The beauty of giving ourselves, our love, our consideration, our best wishes and words of comfort and good cheer is that it costs us nothing, apart from a little time.

*I am thinking of you today
because it is Christmas
and I wish you happiness.
And tomorrow, because it will
be the day after Christmas,
I shall still wish you happiness.
My thoughts and my wishes
will be with you always.
Whatever joy comes to you will
make me glad.
All through the year
I wish you the spirit of
Christmas. - Henry Van Dyke ΩΩΩ*

DIVINE GIFTS

We humans are born with instincts. Our basic instincts are the same as other animals, the strongest of which is our instinct to survive. To survive we must acquire for ourselves the necessities for survival, such as food, clothing and shelter. There is nothing wrong with us thinking of ourselves when it comes to getting our necessities however there is a right way and a wrong way of getting. This is what the words of the Bible meant when it was stated “By the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread, until you return to the ground.”

Thus the correct way to acquire our

needs as ordained by God, is through ‘the sweat of our brows’ or *sacrifice*. To sacrifice in this respect means that we give something of ourselves in return for our needs. As the Bible quotation suggests the most common sacrifice we are to make is our labour, the sweat of our brows (whether mental or physical) . Nowadays most of us work for someone for part of each day in return for wages which in turn we use to purchase our needs.

The wrong way of getting what we want is by taking from others what we want without giving in return

compensation equal to the value of what we have acquired. This improper acquisition could be by way of theft, deception, plundering, fraud, profiteering, etc. Even lending money for interest was a one time considered sinful and an immoral means of income. These wrongful acquisitions are covered in the broad definition of the eighth Commandment: "You shall not steal."

What we have been referring to here are *material* needs but we know that we, as humans, demand far more than basic necessities to live a fulfilling life. As the Bible puts it so clearly "man cannot live by bread alone." To survive and flourish we all need love. We also need such things as peace, happiness, respect, feelings of self-worth, security and the absence of fear. How then do we acquire these positive feelings and attitudes? Here is the difference between acquiring things of the spirit as against worldly goods. We acquire spiritual gifts by giving what we want. This is a spiritual law related to the Law of Attraction.

By this Law of Attraction the

universe operates through a dynamic exchange. We receive by giving out, like a tap, the more we give out the more that passes through us. As stated in the book "Christ Within": "Man's first instinct is self-interest, self-protection. Even in spiritual things you are constantly seeking to acquire for yourself. You require healing of the body, a rich mind, a true life. This is a God given instinct, and you are to get, but learn that to get is to give. The true law of giving is to benefit all, and thus you bring good to your Self; which, remember, is the great and only Self."

So by following our instinct of God-given selfishness we can acquire all those wonderful spiritual gifts and we do this by giving of ourselves, by giving those gifts we wish to acquire. In Galatians 5:22 the gifts of the spirit are listed as : "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, and self-control."

What wonderful gifts these would be to give and receive this Christmas!
BDA ΩΩΩ

CHRIST IN YOU

Part 1

Lesson Nine

PERSONALITY

Transition from the personal to the universal does not mean loss of identity, but rather a greater individuality. Personality as understood by man is full of limitations. If the disciples were to keep Jesus of Nazareth, they would lose the Christ of God. Jesus knew this and put the temptation of Peter far from him, as He knew His personality was not their greatest good. I come to reveal the Father, and I will come and abide with you forever: these wonderful words were full of meaning and today come with greater power. Only as Jesus withdrew Himself from their midst, could He come

again to all men in His omnipotence.

I have shown you in our previous lesson that spirit is our first and real foundation. It has many channels and modes of expression, but it is the one and only life. Man on the plane of sense has tried to explain with finite mind the infinite wisdom of God. Man has limited the holy one, has dared to speak of God as person. Man, who does not know himself, has tried to explain the whole of God. In all these things you must live, think, and speak only from the spirit, for the spirit searcheth all things. As you sink deep within yourself, a great

meekness fills all your thoughts. You learn of Him who was and is greatest in His meekness and highest in His lowliness. The true understanding of personality becomes clearer to you as you realise your relationship to the whole. Your vision clears; you become filled with holy reverence and mighty hope. Personality is greater than you know, for the weakest person has the whole universe to draw upon – is entirely unlimited.

I say you exist because God is, and all he has is yours. People seem to fail for want of vitality. The explanation of this: each of you is a trinity, living on three

planes – the planes of spirit, souls and body. In most cases there has been an unequal existence on one or more of these planes. You should draw all from the spiritual first, thus feeding the soul covering, and manifestation in the body must follow. Only on earth can man do this great and perfect work. Every spiritual truth brought into manifestation is creative, and all your future is made up by your conquests now. You must consecrate your whole being afresh to God, that He may work His perfect will, bringing harmonious conditions into your life. ΩΩΩ

LAUGHTER THE BEST MEDICINE

Question: Why is Christmas like another day at the office?

Answer: You do all the work and the fat guy gets all the credit.

THE THREE STAGES IN LIFE

You believe in Santa Claus.

You don't believe in Santa Claus.

You are Santa Claus.

As a little girl climbed onto Santa's lap, Santa asked the usual, "And what would you like for Christmas?"

The child stared at him open mouthed and horrified for a minute, then gasped: "Didn't you get my E-mail?"

OUR CLOSING THOUGHT

“What is it all about then? ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, your soul, your mind, your body, and your neighbour as yourself.’ The rest of all the theories that may be concocted by man are nothing, if these are just lived. Love your neighbour as yourself in the associations day by day, preferring as

did the Christ who died on the cross rather than preferring the world be His without a struggle. Know, then, that as He had His cross, so have you. May you take it with a smile. You can, if you will let Him bear it with you. Do it!” 3976-29 ΩΩΩ

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