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## When Sorrow Comes Help Found in the Edgar Cayce Readings By Dorothy Evelyn Stanley

When sorrow comes with its indescribable numbness that seizes and freezes the mind, the heart and the body, words of comfort - no matter how well intended - remain without meaning. If bereft by sorrow ourselves, we cannot listen; if trying to speak words of comfort to some one bereaved, we find there are just no such words.

At first the impact is sharp and the loss deeply felt: death remains an inescapable sorrow. And as it is an inevitable part of life itself, it comes to all. Sooner or later we all come face to face with it and must find our way, rebuild our world which has crumbled, resolve our reasons for living.

There are as many different reactions to sorrow as there are different personalities. Yet we all are laid wide open for the entering of doubt, self-pity, guilt, self-reproach, bitterness and even crumbling of faith. Almost all of us ask the same questions: "Where can I find courage to meet this tragedy?" . . . "What can I *do*, to find the way back from this shattering grief?"

The answers are not simple and do not come immediately. Death raises all the infinite questions, each answer seeming to end with another question. What is the meaning of life? What are the relationships between people - between life and death? What is the

meaning of death? Whence do we come -where are we going? What is the purpose of living?

There are many complex and erudite answers to all these questions which men have thought about for many thousands of years, and about which many thousands of books have been written. Yet each of us must travel the road alone. We must all find our own answers.

The Edgar Cayce readings offer much help, many constructive thoughts in this search for answers -this groping to find our way. The readings tell us that we are never asked to bear more than we can take, if we put our trust in God. This is a difficult thought to accept when we are in the midst of loss and our grief is most acute; yet step by step, - little by little, the truth of this thought begins to shine through. And we learn another lesson from the readings; namely, that it is not so much *what* happens to us that counts, but what happens *to us*. What we make of what we have, putting forth our best efforts, is the price won and the hurdle passed.

"For one enters a material sojourn not by chance; but a continuity of pattern or purposes is brought into being; and each soul is attracted to the influences which may be visions from above. Thus *there* the turns in the river

of life may be viewed. To be sure, there are floods in the life dark days and days of sunshine. But the soul-entity fixed in a purpose that is creative may find the haven of peace which is declared in Him." No. 3128-1

Over and over again the readings point out that the soul is created in the image of its Maker, with free will to choose to incarnate and reincarnate on its way to perfection. All souls are free. We do not even *own* our children: they are only lent to us for a time, on their way to their own soul development.

We must therefore not make the mistake of trying to hold on to the person we have lost. The soul has been freed from earthly bondage through death. It has passed through what the readings call "God's Other Door" and we must not hinder or retard it by our own selfish feelings of possessiveness, loneliness and self-pity. We can still help the loved one we have lost. We must turn away from thinking about our own needs and think of the needs of the person we have lost – the new problems that soul must now meet. We can help, really help, by meditation and prayer for the dead. There is much solace in this thought that we are not cut off; that there is still a way in which a feeling of nearness and at-oneness may be attained. At first we are bound to say, "Now it's too late!" It is not too late - our love can still reach out, and help can still be given.

"Thus we are admonished to pray for the dead, *for they only sleep* - as the Lord indicated. And if we are able to attune ourselves to them, then we may help. Though we may not call back to life, as the Son did, we can point the way. For there is only one Way. We can point to that one Way which is safe in Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Light." No. 3657-1

As we pray for the loved one who has left us, we must visualize that soul surrounded by the light of the Christ, during that time of sleep (varying periods, the readings tell us); so that the light we see and project around the soul will in turn help those who love it over there, to find it and help it.

Then slowly and gradually, as we pray, we find a new concept of the relationships in the world of soul and spirit. Where is a conscious turning from our own selfish grief, from feeling sorry for ourselves to the unselfish hope that our sorrow may not keep the soul the inter-between plane; that it must be helped to go on to its greater destiny. Thus we make our sorrow a soul-builder and helper, in a loving, unselfish and constructive way.

Much has been written about reincarnation and karma; a wealth of material is available to anyone wishing to investigate this further. Let us mention here only the consolation which the philosophy of reincarnation offers - the insight gained into the continuity of life.

Reading No. 2448-L reminds us: "For know that what is truly yours *cannot* be taken away from you; nor is any real character ever lost."

Reading No. 281-23 contains this thought: "Life is of God. It is then through Him that your may know its purposes, And your experiences are as given of old: 'Those He loves He chastens, He purges, that they may bring forth fruit worthy of your Lord, your Master.'"

A similar thought is expressed in No. 165-26: "But whom the Lord would exalt, He first brings low; that he may know the strength is of the Lord. Not in hosts but in the still small voice that bears witness with your soul, your spirits that your may walk the straight

and narrow way which leads to understanding."

### **You Are Never Alone**

Then as the first numbness of instant pain gradually lessens; as we grope through suffering for understanding and meaning in our lives; we lift our eyes to Him, the Master and central figure. We see Him, Jesus, of whom the Bible says: "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquity; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed." Isaiah 53 :3-5)

"For in the same manner in which He who is the Way suffered, so must each individual meet that suffering in the flesh; so that he may know that the Savior *bears with* each soul - in that which will enable life and consciousness to be a continuous experience."

No. 5194-1

He who said, "Take up your cross and follow me" is the same one who said, "Come unto me all your that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28) And as Reading No. 3361-1 reassures us: "He withhold not any good thing from those who love Him. If you could always keep that in mind, you would never be anything but smiling even through your tears."

It is in Him that we find firm ground on which to stand, To quote Reading No. 987-4 "For He has known all the vicissitudes of earthly experience. He has walked through the valley of the shadow of death. He has seen the temptations of men from *every phase that may come* into your own experience. Yes, He has given thee: 'If you will love me believing I am able I will deliver you from that which so easily

besets you in Any experience.' And thus He stands; not as Lord but as your Brother, as your Savior; that you may know indeed the truth that gentleness, kindness, patience, brotherly love beget ... with Him, that peace and harmony. Not as the world knows peace, but as He gave: 'That peace I give you — that your spirit, yes your soul bears witness with me, that *you are mine* -I am yours' even as the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. Even so may your soul, your mind and your body, become aware of that which renews the hope, the faith, the patience within."

Then as we put our hand in His, trusting Him, we gain a glimpse of understanding that our stumbling blocks can become stepping stones; that sorrow is a test and an opportunity for growth; that overcoming sorrow means overcoming self.

"Know that each experience in this material plane is for soul development, if used in a constructive manner . . . and often may the body ask self, 'If God is mindful of man, why does He allow me to suffer so?' Know that though He were the Son, yet learned He obedience through the things suffered in body, in mind, in the material or earthy plane." No. 1445-1

The first step towards overcoming sorrow and finding the road ahead is, then, *to accept* what has come. Not in a helpless attitude, but as part and parcel of the earthly experience. This is pointed out on many occasions in the readings, as they bring to mind that "constructive influences can only emanate from good. Good can only emanate from God. Hence that which may be healing of every nature - *any nature* - can only come from one source." No. 336-1

Reading No. 2282-2 tells us, illuminating this very thought: "Now these things are to be met, these

conditions are to be dealt with. But as long as there is a holding-fast to the knowledge that He, the Creator, is mindful; as long as there is an application of self in the correct way and manner; there is given *sufficient strength* to meet these problems."

As we look to the only source of strength and comfort - to Him - we understand what Reading No. 5082-1 teaches: "For His ways are not grievous though they often require the bearing of the Cross; but this is the only way to harmony and peace in the earth - and, to be sure, the only way in the inter-between and the hereafter."

"*Listen!* The Cross brings roses: in beauty, in essence, in purity, in ease." No. 3032-1

### **A New Channel For Love**

So far we have been considering how to redirect our way of thinking, and how to accept what happens as an opportunity rather than a hindrance: to seek Him and trust in His guidance through all obstacles. And yet there is another even greater difficulty to face and overcome.

We must wait in patience to find ourselves and our own way. The most important thing is to prevent ourselves from falling into self-pity, and so we must concentrate with all our might - with every possible effort - upon everyone but ourselves. We must open our hearts to the kindness and goodness of people everywhere. We must learn what it means to need other people, and the need of people for each other. We then become more and more aware of the human spirit, as we do for others, and we indirectly help others to help others, in an interrelationship which in turn brings comfort and solace and meaning into our life.

When we look into the faces of

friend and stranger alike, we come to see the Soul created in the image of its Maker and the divine goodness that lies hidden in men everywhere. If we only look, we can see that there are so many people who need our help, just as we need theirs.

What people need, in most cases, is not so much advice or action as love. Just as "in His service there is joy, peace, understanding, brotherly love and the ability to make a wondrous, glorious life of service to man. For the greater service to man is service to the Creator. For *all are His*. And lending aid to your fellow man in understanding is service to the Creator." No. 8337-20

When the moment comes when we can find love in our heart for all people, everywhere, we begin to be healed of our sorrow.

In the anguish of trying to find a way through the darkness of recent tragedy, the greatest problem is the great fund of love with which we are suddenly left. The love we have been spending on one person lies there, burning a hole in our hearts. The lesson to be learned - a hard one to accept - is that it is a mistake to continue to pour out this love only to the soul who has passed through God's Other Door. We must find new ways to channel and spend this love.

As Reading No. 2389-2 encourages us: "Interest self in others who are less fortunate than self. Hunt out the needy and apply self in helping these. This will more speedily arouse interest in life and life's activities than any other course. And as you do to others, you are doing to your Maker. Realize this as you go about applying yourself for others, and you will find you have a real interest in life."

In an epilogue to John Gunther's book, *Death Be Not Proud*, written after

the death of their seventeen year-old son Johnny, Frances Gunther expresses most beautifully this new channeling of love:

"Yet at the end ... when one has put away all the books, and all the words; when one is alone with oneself, when one is alone with God; what is left in one's heart? Just this: I wish we had loved Johnny more ... Of course, we loved Johnny very much ... Loving Johnny more. What does it mean? What can it mean now?"

"All parents who have lost a child will feel what I mean. Parents all over the earth who lost sons in the war have felt this kind of question, and sought an answer. To me, it means loving life more, being more aware of life, of ones fellow human beings, of the earth.

"It means obliterating, in a curious but real way, the ideas of evil and hate and the enemy; and transmuting them, with the alchemy of suffering, into ideas of clarity and charity.

"It means caring more and more about other people. at home and abroad, all over the earth. It means caring more about God."

### **Each His Own Mission**

As the readings express it: "For with God nothing is impossible, and the individual who gives himself *as a channel* through which influences for good may come to others may indeed be guided or shown the way." No. 165-21

Then as we find ourselves in the service of others by the helping hand we stretch out to one faltering - by the understanding gesture or the loving word we bring into the life of one in need - we come to understand better what the readings mean when they say, "Each soul *enters with a mission*. And even as Jesus the great missionary, we all have a mission to perform. No. 303-1

Not only are we called upon to bear our own burdens and surmount our own obstacles, but we have the mission to pass our experience on to others so that they, too, may see the light of His countenance and find their way.

"Each and every person getting such an understanding of himself has his own individual influence toward the great creation; he has his individual niche or place to fill - his individual unit of work to perform." No. 3744-44

"For attainment alone is not sufficient. The goal to be desired is that we give what we understand so that others may understand. For only in sacrifice is one purged of that which would so easily beset the forces which are manifested through an earthly experience." No. 8337-301

And so we come at last - though the way seems long and hard - through all our various experiences in the earth plane to recognize and accept His way. It is the way of service, of sacrifices of selflessness. It is the way of the cross chosen by Him who is our Master and our ideal. It will lead us into the light of understanding of our true purpose on this earth.

"Each and every reverse; each and every obstacle surmounted; each difficulty has its place.

"*Count no condition lost*, rather, make each a stepping stone to higher things.

"Remember: God does not allow you to be tempted beyond that which you are able to bear and to comprehend, provided you make your will one with His.

"And as the days come and go, those conditions which are needed will be given into your keeping so that others may know the way, the truth and the light." No. 8337-9

When we bear our crosses, as He

overcame the world through experiences, we overcome whatever would hinder us in meeting the issues of life.

"For God has not willed that any soul should perish, but purges everyone by illness, by prosperity by hardship, by those things needed; in order to meet self. In Him, by faith and works, are you made every whit whole." No. 3395-1

### **His Yoke is Easy**

Through our service to others, then, we are helping to spread His message and make known His purpose to bring mankind back to the Father. He is indeed "the way, the truth, and the life." John 14 :6

He has told us: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" Matt 11:2

"His yoke is easy because His presence lives with us, protecting us and sharing the burdens that otherwise would be too heavy for us to bear. Then, too, as we come to understand the meaning of our crosses and His abiding presence, our sufferings become lessons of wisdom, our turmoils more peaceful. We rejoice as we find ourselves growing more and more into the likeness of Him who, by the way of the cross, became the Lord of lords and the King of kings. (Search For Gods, Book 1, page 109)

The realization of the awakening of the inner self brings joy and peace into one's life. As our ideal is set in Him, relationships to others become filled with love and understanding - are seen in a new light.

Reading No. 826-11 continues this thought:

"Then to what heights may you attain?

"That height which to your

consciousness is ever clear before the throne of your awareness with Him; the height which is to know the glory of the Father through your dealings with your fellow man; (the height) which is to know no sin, no sorrow, no disappointment - in Him."

Yet patience, as always, is part of the lesson to be learned !

"Knowing that the purpose of life is to become one with the Father, we have to *wait* if we expect to see results in material manifestations. There is no surer way towards realization than to 'keep on keeper on,' in the way of the Christ.

"As we meet the crosses, endure the temptations and overcome them, we become heirs and joint-heirs with Him to the crown of glory. All who fulfill the purpose for which they are called bear their crosses not in sorrow nor in wailing, but in the Joy of the Lord.

"As a *sign* to us who have met our crosses and overcome them, there comes the ability to meet other and greater crosses, in the joy of the Lord; and to rejoice that we are counted worthy.

"Let us enter into the service that may be our part, as channels of blessings to others. In so doing, we become conscious that our lives are spent in the way He would have us go and that His presence abides with us. The door is open . . . Faith is renewed day by day, for we are more able to understand conditions arising - whether from the mental, the material or the spiritual.

"... not in times nor in season nor in any place - but in every place, every day, and every hour - we may show forth His love to those we contact. By our lives, others may know that He walks with us and is our friend." (Search For God, Book 1, pp 111, 112)

"Then let your activities be to set

straight those who have lost their way, here and there. Some need assurance that all is not lost because of ills of the flesh. Some need assurance that all is not lost because what we call death has closed the door. Let there be assurances that *life is a manifestation of God and is continuous* in the experience of all who seek to find companionship with Him." No. 598-1

"Not one sparrow falls to the ground but what God takes note of it; and the same is true in .... man's use of the Creative Force.

"How much more it must mean, then, to each individual to *know*... how great is the power which is set in motion, to bring about manifestations of the Divine which is within; so that man -

all others - our brothers - may know that *God is* and that He is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him . . . as the natural consequence of the Father's love for His creatures." No. 8337-187

Edgar Cayce was once asked by someone for whom he gave a life reading to give an affirmations which would help that person in distress. This was his answer (Reading No. 367-13)

"As you pray - in the morning in the evening - use this:

*Here, Lord, am I. Use me - this day, this evening - as you see I may serve others better; that I may so live, O God, to the Glory of your name, your Son Jesus the Christ, and to the honor of my own self - in Your Name.*

<p><b>NOTE:</b> This is a REPRINT of a former monthly publication of the Association for Research and Enlightenment, Inc.</p>
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