

YOU ARE ALL INVITED TO A BANQUET

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Read by Richard A. London in the Blue Star Memorial Temple

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In the Master's Message to the 2000 Convention, He said:

"My Beloved Children:

"I bring special greetings as you assemble in convention. We who labor on the inner planes are with you at this time. Your work, our work, cannot be separated by time or space. To advance Our work of the uplifting of all created consciousness, you must accomplish your own work. Do you realize your responsibility? Do you recognize your privilege? I have told you again and yet again you have been given the Charge and the Trust that through you is made the possibility of carrying the Light of the New Day into the darkness of a suffering world.

"It is up to you; and your unswerving determination to walk the path of discipleship will assist us to spread the Light and Love of the Indwelling Spirit to all who hunger for spiritual sustenance. This is not a matter of your convenience; it is a matter of your one-pointed dedication to Truth. This is not a matter of your endless repetition of high-sounding phrases, it is a matter of your action, of making the Truth a living part of your life. A simple assignment; and yet the more simple anything appears to be, the greater and more complex it is in reality.

"From the beginning of the Temple work I have tried to impress upon you that 'there are no little things.' Every great event rests upon the foundation of some seemingly little thing, some simple action, and you may rest assured no Initiate of The Lodge will waste time, force, or knowledge in propounding a conundrum; or for amusement, direct the accomplishment of a useless task. If you refuse to learn the alphabet of life, you can never understand or speak its language.

"The Language of Life is to be used by you on the physical plane which, at this stage of your unfoldment, is your primary place of experience. Until you are able to bring Eternal Truth into expression in the world around you, you cannot progress further on the Path. I have given you instructions past telling, inspiration, admonitions, and My boundless love. All are expressions of the Eternal Truth. What do you wait for? Why do you ask for "new" material from me? You already have all the strength and help you need. Your pure purpose, pure heart, aspiration, and perfect love for God and all humanity will take you over the most terrible pitfalls in

safety. Fearlessness, Faith, Hope, Trust, Joy, and Love are your milestones on the Path.

“Renew your pledges to the Lodge and strike out with confident step, light heart, and eyes ever on the Goal.

“In tender Love, I am your Father, Brother, Hilarion.”

Twenty-one years [now 24 years] later, I would ask just how *have* we all assimilated the force generated by His words, how *have* we renewed our pledges and stepped out with confidence, with a light heart, and with our eyes fastened firmly on the Goal? We need to remember none of us can answer such a question for anyone else, ever. On the other hand, can we honestly answer those questions about ourselves, to ourselves with open minds and hearts?

It is time to make an honest and loving evaluation of the past years and our efforts toward the only real, soul goal which is that of our spiritual unfoldment. Propelled by our highest aspirations, we tend to want to live on the spiritual plane, in some sort of Nirvanic cloud of Light, letting the physical plane, that low, dense, dark plane sit in a sullen lump somewhere else. And yet...the Master lovingly emphasized, “The Language of Life is to be used by you on the physical plane which, at this stage of your unfoldment, is your primary place of experience.” We can have aspirations for spiritual growth, hold our ideals firmly in our hearts, and yet in the great paradox, we must do this on and through our primary place of experience, the physical plane, with our present personalities, intellects, and bodies, however poorly or perfectly we think they function. We are our own worst enemies when it comes to judging our perceived faults. And I would venture to guess that we seldom, if ever, sit down and make lists which acknowledge our *strengths*.

I can remember as a classroom teacher there were classes that I clicked with, there were days that really worked, and there were other classes and days that were dismal. Cal Poly sponsored a program to improve teacher excellence. The top teachers in each school in Lucia Mar School District participated in the program during which we learned techniques to replicate the good days and diminish the bad ones. It was revealing to honestly critique one’s own performance. It was in the little things in the fields of vocabulary, discipline, subject matter, preparation, and enthusiasm where the difference between inspirational teaching and ho-hum teaching was apparent. Has the concept of “little things” ever come up in our Temple Teachings before? How many scores of times?

At the least hint of criticism, the natural human tendency is to become highly defensive or to go on the attack ourselves. This is true even when we are the subject of criticism

from ourselves! To be truly effective, it takes the realization that the chatty brain mind is not who we truly are, that we need to let the real self be the head of the evaluation team, and that we can indeed step aside into the place of honest self-appraisal.

Master Hilarion urges us to consider what we are doing here in our classroom on the physical plane when He says, "Until you are able to bring Eternal Truth into expression in the world around you, you cannot progress further on the Path. I have given you instructions past telling, inspiration, admonitions, and My boundless love. All are expressions of the Eternal Truth. What do you wait for? Why do you ask for "new" material from me? You already have all the strength and help you need. Your pure purpose, pure heart, your aspiration, and perfect love for God and all humanity will take you over the most terrible pitfalls in safety. Fearlessness, Faith, Hope, Trust, Joy, and Love are your milestones on the Path."

As we tread the Path of Discipleship, we must choose the most appropriate learning tools available to us at this present stage of our evolution. In a lesson from *Teachings of the Temple*, Volume 2, we learn: "Through the senses, we contact the different grades of universal substance, material and spiritual. By the material senses, we contact the material world. By the spiritual senses we contact the spiritual world. Therefore by contact of the polarities, these 'pairs of opposites,' we sense pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat, all of which impart what is called experience. By experience, we arrive at knowledge, by knowledge we win the power to discriminate between good and evil. We enter into the light of Wisdom. To strike another key, in the beginning the evolving pilgrim soul possesses the innocence of ignorance. Then at the end by traveling the Path, which is our self, and by contacting its shine and shadows, we evolve through the gateway of Experience to the innocence of Wisdom. We have consciously identified with the Highest Good, which is another name for God."

In His message, the Master speaks of the Language of Life. How are we doing in learning this language? It is a slow process of trial and error, as we watch our children learn their native tongue, not to mention other languages. Of course, we can truthfully say the Language of Life is Universal Truth, which speaks from one heart to another. However, in our classroom of the physical plane, communication with each other is limited by language and our listening skills. We must become proficient in all aspects of this plane. Even if we know the other person well, we struggle in our attempts to communicate completely with each other. It is so important to us that repeated failures leave us undaunted. We find ourselves with hurt feelings, anger and insecurity. We assume that we know so much, when in fact we know so little.

A very wise author said it this way: "How can we hear one another? We are so busy

listening to the many voices in our heads saying, 'He's so stupid.' or 'She really thinks she's important.' or 'What will I make for dinner tonight?' Perhaps it would prove more productive to seek, fully, the thought in the process of communication. Why waste our time and theirs if we are not going to listen? What could possibly be gained in such a vain attempt?

"Here's a novel idea. We could even listen and look for the highest and the best thought, as it struggles to be born, for in the process of talking to each other a thought is brought forth from the mental plane to the physical. In a sense we are all pregnant. We don't even know what the final idea will be, sometimes, when we open our mouth to speak. If we expect and listen for the lowest then that is exactly what we will hear, despite the efforts of our comrade to communicate otherwise. The lowest thought will be manifest thanks to our less than conscious input into the process."

Of course, we could simply not speak to each other, using the writing of letters or emails to say what we think is exactly what we mean. Thus we might avoid the possibility of hurt feelings, anger, and insecurity. But how else will we learn, really learn and move through to the place of wisdom, unless we risk the hurt we might encounter? There is always the possibility there will come the moment when, instead of pain, we experience the uplifting light of true communication, of listening with the whole of our beings, with the expectations of hearing the highest and best from the speaker, and getting it. Hasn't it been suggested that Fearlessness, Faith, Hope, Trust, Joy, and Love are our milestones on the Path? Why is it so hard to see these milestones?

It is no coincidence that Master Morya addressed this problem of listening very specifically in a message entitled *Listen*. He acknowledges we usually listen when others speak, honoring the act of listening politely as a common courtesy in daily living. We sometimes listen to outbreaks of meaningless, worthless babble that weary us because we don't want to appear rude. And we often listen too closely to outpourings of vicious slander, vile refutations, because we perhaps enjoy the sound.

Then there are times when we pay attention to fine music. Master Morya says, "For one short moment your personal self is stilled. In the hush that falls upon you, the ear of your soul is thrilled by the sweet sounds that fall upon it. The lower mind at rest an instant, you are lifted up and above the sordidness of mud and clay. Have you ever thought what occurs in that short pause? Have you ever dwelt upon the changes that take place in that brief spell? Do you know, has the realization never come to you that it is in those infrequent, breath-held seconds that life evolves inward and upward, is lifted out of its heavy waves of darkness to greater and larger opportunities? Do you believe that those silent pauses, however short, contain within themselves enough power and potency to

create or destroy worlds, to redeem or to curse mankind, according as applied, for they are the stations, as it were, for man's opportunity to become one with the whole?

"Does it mean anything to you that in your brief listening to the Holy Sounds, by the uplift you receive, by the aspiration that sweeps through you when the Holy Hush falls upon your spirit, you have power within yourselves to lift up all created things into truer, clearer living? In those quick passing, far separated moments the individual soul evolves more rapidly, progresses faster than it does in years or incarnations of experiences with exterior physical, intellectual forces."

He then asks if we want to keep on with the pull of the outer world? Or perhaps we would like to find release? He points the way as He concludes with, "Would you listen to finer, truer, sweeter ecstasies for a season? Would you partake of the permanence of Life? Then have a moment with me alone. I would speak with you where no other ear can hear, in the Presence of none other but your own Higher, Master-Self. I would whisper clear and soft and true the Word that is living Light unto the Soul, Eternal Music to the Spirit. It rests with you if I may speak the Word which is YOUR OWN TRUE SELF."

Notice that throughout this message there is no suggestion of hours of meditation and silence; rather, He speaks of the "one short moment your personal self is stilled." He asks us to have a moment with Him alone. We can choose to bring those moments into a regular rhythm in our lives. In fact, it is our responsibility to do so.

Life with God — All that Is, Father-Mother-Son-in-One, or whatever each one of us calls that Divine Inner Creative Fire — is like a wonderful banquet served buffet style, with course after course laid out in lavish presentations, or perhaps in modest dishes with simple ingredients. We have been given the responsibility of choosing the foods that will nourish all our bodies on all planes of being. We have to choose each day the mental, physical, and spiritual foods necessary for our development. No one can choose for us; no one can chew, swallow, or digest, and assimilate that food for us. Perhaps this is what he refers to with these words: "What do you wait for? Why do you ask for 'new' material from me? You already have all the strength and help you need. Your pure purpose, pure heart, aspiration, and perfect love for God and all humanity will take you over the most terrible pitfalls in safety."

One of those "special dishes" set out on that lavish banquet table is contained in Master Morya's injunction to us, in Seek Within:

"Would you hear what I would speak? Then seek within. Would you feel my Presence near? Seek within. Would you see and know the light? Would you find and hold the Path?"

Then seek within. Would you climb to greater heights? Kinder, truer, more courageous, poised, compassionate, nobler be? Would you learn and admit your faults and make them good by better living? Then seek within, I say. Mark and evidence you would have that I am with and near you, that I walk and talk with you. And you would have others know it too, for you would have them know you worthy. Again, and yet again I say: then seek within. Only so can you know me.

“Only so can you reach me. Only so can you reach others, prove and make plain to them that you and I are one, know one another, as they and I may also know and be, if they too seek within.”

This “Within” place is where the banquet table is set. And yet, our assignment is to seek within, choosing only that which will nourish us in *moderation*. Then, nourished with that spiritual food, we must function more fully on the physical plane, living it, demonstrating it, BE-ing it. It will nourish all we do as we are living our lives, jogging through our days and nights, doing what we need to do to make a living, cleaning the house, doing the laundry, the garden, and the innumerable things that keep us busy every day, all day. But life works in marvelous clarity only if *we ask each day for inner sustenance*.

How do we do this? The prevailing attitude seems to be “Give me a list, preferably a short list, and quite simple. I need to be able to do it fast, easily, and successfully!” Everything we need is within, but Humanity as a whole has forgotten how to listen to that *within* space. Despite the plethora of how-to books on the subject, it really is quite simple. In one of his most pointed, short directions, Master Hilarion tells us to... “Endeavor to cast every thought out of your mind except the one of obtaining perfect tranquility of mind and body. Do not hold your will rigid. Do not make a strong effort at what so many of you term *concentration*, for you frequently defeat the desired end by awakening too much energy. Try to reach the condition between sleeping and waking, as far as possible, though listening with the inner ear.”

Now, as the so-called and highly advertised “New Age” comes more fully into being, we are each being asked to assume our rightful place in the larger scheme of things, of knowingly becoming a co-creator with God. In the moments of stillness when we feel the presence of God more deeply, we can receive the Love that flows unceasingly into our souls and then we are obliged, in this creative partnership, to let that Love flow out into every moment of our day. With joy and love we need to speak to God, to listen to God, to embody all we know and feel of God. We can do this by sitting down at the banquet table of God to partake of the rich nourishment that surrounds us always. It is only through our own choice that we over-indulge or starve ourselves on any plane.

Remember, the Master says: "We who labor on the inner planes are with you at this time. Your work, our work, cannot be separated by time or space. To advance Our work of the uplifting of all created consciousness, you *must* accomplish your own work. Do you realize your responsibility? Do you recognize your privilege? I have told you again and yet again you have been given the Charge and the Trust that through you is made the possibility of carrying the Light of the New Day into the darkness of a suffering world."

Could He possibly be saying, "Get off your comfortable perches and GET BUSY?"

— *Eleanor L. Shumway*
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