

Alice Bailey Talks

Talk to Arcane School students given on Friday, October 29, 1943

[This talk continues with the Tibetan's commentary on a sentence from Rule One: *The clear cold light shines forth and cold it is and yet the heat – evoked by the group love – permits the warmth of energetic moving out*, then moves on with his commentary on the next two sentences.]

AAB: We have an exceedingly practical teaching this evening, and yet it is on such a high level it is difficult to think it through. [Reading from *The Rays and the Initiations*, p. 38-39]:

Before proceeding to study the final phrases of Rule One, I would call your attention to the fact that the initiate has faced two major tests, symbolically described as “the burning ground” and the “clear cold light.” Only after he has successfully passed these can he – or the group, when considering group initiation – move forward and outward into the wider reaches of the divine consciousness. These tests are applied when the Soul grips the personality and the fire of divine love destroys the loves and desires of the integrated personality.

AAB: It is that thought that lies behind the something that the mystic talks about, that the Christ expressed in the dark night of the Soul when he said, “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?” – only a sense of emptiness, the result of passing through the burning ground and the clear cold light. [Continuing to read on p. 39]:

Two factors tend to bring this about: the slow moving forward of the innate conscience into greater control, and the steady development of the “fiery aspiration” to which Patanjali makes reference. These two factors, when brought into living activity, bring the disciple into the center of the burning ground that separates the Angel of the Presence from the Dweller on the Threshold. The burning ground is found upon the threshold of every new advance, until the third initiation has been taken.

AAB: This is significant because it isn't altogether outside of our experience. We are thinking about something we all know something about, because our Soul has grasped our personality and we don't have the same desires that we used to have. The thing that I think you will see emerge this evening is something we have to prepare ourselves for. That is the loneliness of the disciple, because as you move forward into the burning ground you leave so much behind you, and as you go forward into the clear cold light you don't see, although you are seen. Here we are functioning as a group, or endeavoring to. I think we have to consider this paragraph not only from our own individual experience, but also from the point of view of group experience. We know individually something about the burning ground and the temporary isolation that it brings, and something about the clear cold light when we have passed through the burning ground and have gotten rid of that which blurs the vision. But what does it mean when we as a group go into the burning ground, into the clear cold light and pass through the door of initiation? The Dweller on the Threshold is the disciple on the threshold of initiation, and the Angel of the Presence is the full revelation of the nature of the Soul.

What about the *group*, the *group* Dweller on the Threshold and the *group* Angel of the Presence? The group Dweller is the sum total of all the faults and failures of the group members. Do we have to go through the burning ground or have we been through it? And having been through the burning ground are we in the clear cold light in which we see the vision, or does that lie ahead? I am so tremendously impressed with the spiritual opportunity ahead of this group, provided we can do what it takes and stand what we have to stand and remain unalterably unified – as Souls and as personalities. I have been amazed at those who drop out simply from lack of persistence.

RK: We cannot be successfully unified as a group unless we are all focused on the same vision.

AAB: The Tibetan says somewhere that we go from unity to disunity to unity again. The undeveloped person is unified; the person who has made Soul contact is unified. And this goes on to become a definite and permanent condition. In between there is a shifting of focus and disunity. In a group like this, if we were evolved beyond where we are, we could have a beautiful time working together. In the ordinary group there would be some one person who would lead the group, and it would be unified by that person. But in a group like this, where we are all doing our own thinking, the unity established is a definite purpose. We are at the point where we might go on through the burning ground, into the clear cold light and into the door of initiation, or we are at the point where, given certain circumstances, we might enter into a phase of disunity. It wouldn't be based upon any one person but upon our each being preoccupied with our particular burning ground. We would be preoccupied with what we as personalities are going to do or not with the group purpose. However, please know I am not saying this because there are any symptoms of it.

RK: It is amazing what is happening in the world in the way of unity.

AAB: It is prefaced by a period of tremendous disunity. People have asked me how we have escaped the disunity from which so many organizations have suffered. I have been going through the fourth degree students – some came in 1923, 1926 – and here they still are just as sweet and loyal and focused on moving the group purpose forward. Maybe there is no risk of disunity. I don't know. I am not sounding a warning, but it is what this paragraph lays the foundation for. I have seen so many things happen in groups. The nearer we get to our goal the greater the force we have to handle, and what will it do to us? I have seen so many people drop out because they couldn't handle the force that came through.

RK: I remember some of the letters I read with you in connection with the new book [DINA 1] – lovely people, but they couldn't stand the force.

AAB: There was not a single case in which they couldn't get along with people in the group, but in one case a man, a very powerful person, was driven onto the astral plane by the force that he contacted, and he became engrossed in astral phenomena. Although the Tibetan warned him over a period of years that he was being glamored by the astral plane, he kept on. There was also the case of a man where the force made him a victim of inertia, and he was so strung out he couldn't do anything.

W: It isn't necessarily any fault of your own if you can't take it, is it?

AAB: I think the word "fault" is wrong. It means a weakness in yourself, ignorance. You have to remember that people at our point in development know a great deal and, if we will, we can use the knowledge that we have to overcome what the clear cold light reveals to us of ourselves. You go through the burning ground and it burns out some of the things in you that are undesirable, but what is burned out you have to replace or you are in trouble. We can't plead ignorance. That's just giving way to our personalities.

M: What makes us do it?

AAB: Ancient habits, old rhythms that we haven't overcome.

M: Is that what the Tibetan means by fires of mind – is it our intellectual capacity?

RK: He contrasts it with fiery love.

AAB: I don't believe the fires of mind have anything to do with the burning ground.

M: The fires of mind have to be quenched before the fire of will can come through.

FB: It's the same as killing out desire. You have to get control of the mind so that it doesn't run you.

AAB: No, I don't think it is the same thing, because the one that goes through the burning ground into the clear cold light and through the door of initiation is the Son of Mind, the product of the two minds, abstract and concrete.

M: What is it that must be quenched?

AAB: I know quite well what it is – I am quenching it all the time – the lower concrete mind that says do thus and so when the Soul knows it shouldn't do thus and so. I think it is kama-manas. The fire is made by that which must be burned and that which burns.

RK: Abstract mind, concrete mind, the Soul, the Son of Mind.

AAB: It is in the papers on the Antahkarana. [R&I: 441-530]

P: It seems to me that it is the fire of intellect that involves pride. All those different fires have to be merged into the steady glow of the abstract mind, which has the quality of wisdom and is without pride. You can be glamored by intellectual curiosity and get nowhere. I think that is the aspect of mind that has to be controlled.

JL: The Tibetan says on p. 261 of *Cosmic Fire* that the principle of mind is the only thing that can bind the lower four and higher three.

AAB: The principle of mind is the Son of Mind, the Soul. The Soul is the principle of mind that will fuse the higher three and the lower four. It is the middle principle, even on the mental plane. We have abstract mind, lower mind and Soul. You can shift the analogy all the way down and make mind the connecting factor between Soul and body.

RK: That is what I thought you were referring to. The Tibetan speaks of "knowledge-wisdom" as synonymous with "force-energy." The Bridge has to be built by the aspirant who is focused on the mental plane because it is built of mental substance, and it is mental substance in three grades that must be used. The three aspects of mind – mental permanent atom, the Son of Mind or Soul, and the mental unit – are all involved. I suppose what we are working for is Soul perception where the Soul is aware on its own plane, and we can do the work in group formation. It seems to me that I can only be aware of that if I recognize that it is the greater being in whom we live and move and have our being. It involves recognition of the group, and it is this greater entity that fuses us.

AAB: One of our School students came to see me yesterday. She is one of four people who form the Federal Committee on Personnel in every department of the government throughout the country. Under them are 55 people situated in 18 of the larger cities who are responsible for the work. They handle over three million people. She says that she and two of the three men working with her are very anxious to start a meditation group that will stand behind the work. The 55 people meet once a week and, through interchange of thought between people who have meditated, they hope to produce Soul awareness, because it is essential that they arrive at an understanding of the Soul of the people. [Reading further on p. 39]:

The "clear cold light" is the light of pure reason, of infallible intuitive perception and its unremitting, intensive and revealing light constitutes a major test in its effects. The initiate discovers the depths of evil, and at the same time is enticed forward by the heights of a growing sense of divinity.

AAB: It takes courage to discover the depths of evil. I find that people will not face up to the depths of evil in the world around them. They run away from it. But it is a grand thing to have a growing sense of divinity. It is too cold to always live on the mountaintop; you have to go down into the valley. I think that is what the clear cold light forces one to do. [Reading further on pp. 39-40]:

The clear cold light reveals two things:

The omnipresence of God throughout nature, and therefore throughout the entire personality life of the initiate or of the initiate group. The scales fall from the eyes, bringing about – paradoxically – the “dark night of the Soul” and the sense of being alone and bereft of all help. This led (in the case of the Christ, for instance) to that appalling moment in the Garden of Gethsemane, and which was consummated on the Cross, when the will of personality-Soul clashed with the divine will of the Monad. The revelation to the initiate of the ages of severance from the Central Reality, and of all its attendant implications, descends upon the one who is attempting to stand “in isolated Unity,” as Patanjali calls the experience.

The omnipresence of divinity within all forms pours in upon the consciousness of the initiate, and the mystery of time, space and electricity stands revealed. The major effect of this revelation (prior to the third initiation) is to bring to the disciple a realization of the “great heresy of separateness,” as it focuses in him, the separated fully conscious individual – aware of his past, conscious now of his ray and its conditioning power, focused in his own aspiration, and yet part of the great whole of nature.

AAB: If this group really functions rightly, we will find that our united wisdom, our united reason, is infinitely greater than that of the individual. That is why the Master has an ashram, because the united interplay of many minds produces something that the individual could not produce. This group, when it is really integrated and when it takes up problems and thrashes them out in the clear cold light, will produce something that we could never have produced or conceived of alone.

I imagine that the real horror of the dark night of the Soul is the complete sense of futility. You are right up against the great revelation of divinity and then you have a revelation of yourself and a revelation of all the evils in the world. Here is divinity, here is evil, and here are you. You have to face the evil. What are you going to do?

RK: Christ said, “And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.” He had to hold on to the whole.

AAB: [Reading further on p. 40]:

From that moment onward he knows that divinity is all there is, and this he learns through the revelation of the inherent separativeness of the form life, through the processes of “the dark night of the Soul” and its culminating lesson of the significance of isolation and the freeing process, which brings about the merging into unity through the emission of the sound, the cry, the invocation, such as the cry of the Christ upon the Cross symbolized. His exact words have not been transmitted to us. They vary for each ray, but all bring about the recognition of divine merging, in which all separating veils are “rent from the top to the bottom” (as *The New Testament* expresses it).

AAB: Notice that the rending is from the top. The personality rends from the bottom.

RK: That’s the way the darkness of Earth goes when the sun rises – from the top to the bottom.

H: In one of the world's Bibles there are ten pictures from the scriptures of Zen Buddhism of a herdsman leading an ox around. Each picture grows lighter starting with the head and ending with the tail.

AAB: [Reading further on p. 40]:

The omniscience of the divine Whole is also brought home to the initiate through the medium of the clear cold light, and the phases of "isolated experience," as it is sometimes occultly called, is forever ended. I would have you realize what this can mean insofar as possible to your present consciousness. Up till the present, the initiate-disciple has been functioning as a duality and as a fusion of Soul-energy and personality-force. Now these forms of life stand exposed to him for what they essentially are, and he knows that – as directing agencies and as transitory gods – they no longer have any hold over him. He is being gradually translated into another divine aspect, taking with him all that he has received during the ages of close relation and identification with the third aspect, form, and the second aspect, consciousness.

AAB: That is the real crucifixion.

M: Is that the destruction of the causal body?

AAB: It goes deeper than that. Yet the destruction of the causal body is the effect of that.

RK: The Son of God becomes an adult and takes his place in the company of gods and becomes oblivious to all that is personal.

AAB: He takes his seat at the right hand of God.

RK: He has become one of the Sons of God.

M: Did Christ mean that when someone said, "Behold thy mother," and he replied, "Who is my mother?"

RK: There are two words that suggest what he meant – that we get rid of relationships and obtain identity.

AAB: Relationship and consciousness are the same thing. I suppose that is what the Tibetan meant when he said that after the third initiation the thing that distinguishes you is not consciousness at all; it is something different for which we have no words.

M: Then there really isn't Monadic consciousness?

AAB: We use the word because we have no other word.

M: When the causal body is destroyed then you become ...

AAB: You don't stay still; the process goes on.

JL: Why does the Tibetan refer to personality force and Soul energy?

AAB: You are talking in terms of form. Here he is dealing with initiate consciousness. Form is force.

P: When energy hits matter it becomes a force.

RK: We have gone into the inner room, the upper triad.

AAB: That is why it seems to empty. [Reading further on pp. 40-41]:

A sense of being bereft, deserted and alone descends upon him as he realizes that the control of form and Soul must also disappear. Here lies the agony of isolation and the overpowering sense of loneliness. But the truths revealed by the clear cold light of the divine reason leave him no choice. He *must* relinquish all that holds him away from the Central Reality; he must gain life and “life more abundantly.” This constitutes the supreme test in the life cycle of the incarnating Monad; and “when the very heart of this experience enters into the heart of the initiate, then he moves outward through that heart into full life expression.” Such is the way that the *Old Commentary* expresses this. I know no other way in which to bring the idea before you. The experience undergone is not related to form, nor is it connected with consciousness or with even the higher psychic sensitivity. It consists of pure identification with divine purpose. This is made possible because the self-will of the personality and the enlightened will of the Soul have both equally been relinquished.

RK: Here is a very simple analogy. When you graduated from college you were full of everything you learned there. Then you go out and work and you seem to know nothing at all. The whole thing seems to have dropped away and you have to make your way in a new world, and for a while you seem futile and ineffective.

AAB: I think that is so. [Reading further on pp. 41-43]:

Behind the group there stands the Door. Before them opens out the Way.

Note how this passage reverses the usual presentation. Hitherto, in the occult books, the Door of Initiation has been presented as ever moving forward ahead of the initiate. He passes through door after door into a wider experience and expansion of consciousness. But in the initiate consciousness, after the first two initiations, this is not the realization. It is simply the adhering to an old form of symbolism with the implied limitations of the truth. I would here remind you that the third initiation is regarded by the Hierarchy as the first major initiation, and that the first and second initiations are initiations of the Threshold. For the bulk of humanity, these first two initiations will for a very long time constitute major initiatory experiences, but in the life and realization of the initiate-Soul, they are not. After the two initiations of the threshold have been undergone the attitude of the initiate changes and he sees possibilities and factors and revelations that have hitherto been totally unrealized and unknown, even to his consciousness at his highest moments.

The door of initiation looms large in the consciousness of the neophyte; the higher Way is the determining factor in the life of the initiate of the third degree. It is the Transfiguration; and a new glory pours through the transfigured initiate who has been released from every type of grip by either the personality or the Soul. For the first time, the goal of the higher Way and the attainment of Nirvana (as the Oriental calls it) appear before him, and he knows that no forms and no spiritual complexes and no pull by either Soul or form, or by both united, can have any effect upon his attaining his final destination.

I would like for a moment to refer here to the door symbology as the initiate begins to grasp the inner meaning of those simple words. For long the teaching, given in the clear cold light, about the door and the emphasis put upon the presentation of the door lying ahead of the aspirant has been made familiar, but that has been working with the lower aspects of the symbolism, even if aspirants did not realize it; they have been taught the fact of the light in the head, which is the personality correspondence to the clear cold light to which I refer. At the very center of that light, as many aspirants know theoretically or factually by inconstant

experience, is a center or point of dark indigo blue – midnight blue. Note the significance of this in view of what I have been saying about the “dark night,” the midnight hour, the zero hour in the life of the Soul. That center is in reality an opening, a door leading somewhere, a way of escape, a place through which the Soul imprisoned in the body can emerge and pass into higher states of consciousness, untrammelled by form limitations; it has also been called “the funnel or the channel for the sound”; it has been named the “trumpet through which the escaping A.U.M. can pass.” The ability to use this door or channel is brought about by *the practice of alignment*; hence the emphasis laid upon this exercise in the attempt to train aspirants and disciples.

Once alignment has been achieved, it will be realized (remembering the symbolism of the head, the light and the central opening) that many occasions arise in meditation when “behind the group there stands the door; before them opens out the Way.” This is the lower correspondence of the higher initiate-experience with which our rule is dealing.

AAB: It interests me that so often, years after we have instituted a teaching, its significance is later disclosed in the Tibetan’s instructions. We instituted a teaching on alignment in the School, and now the Tibetan comes out and shows us that we have done better than we knew. It is very interesting because we did it so blindly. I had an idea that a process of alignment might link mind and emotions and physical body, and then it might link them with the Soul, but what the Tibetan is putting here wasn’t in my wildest dreams. [Reading further on pp. 43-44]:

Again, this time in relation to the Soul, comes the repetition of the discovery of the Door, its use and its appearance, finally, behind the initiate. This time the door must be found upon the mental plane, and not as earlier upon the etheric level; this is brought about by the aid of the Soul and of the lower mind and through the revealing power of the clear cold light of the reason. When discovered, the “revelation of a terrible though beautiful experiment” faces the initiate. He finds that this time alignment is not his need, but the definite undertaking of a creative work – the building of a bridge between the door that lies behind and the door that lies ahead. This involves the construction of what is technically the Antahkarana, the rainbow bridge. This is built by the disciple-in-training upon the basis of his past experience; it is anchored in the past and firmly grounded in the highest, rightly oriented aspect of the personality. As the disciple then creatively works, he finds that there is a reciprocal action on the part of the Presence, the Monad – the unity that stands behind the Door. He discovers that one span of the bridge (if I might so call it) is being built or pushed forward from the other side of the gulf separating him from experience in the life of the Spiritual Triad. This Spiritual Triad is essentially, to the initiate, what the threefold personality is to the man in physical incarnation.

I wonder if I have succeeded in giving you at least a general idea of the possibilities lying ahead of the disciple, and incited you to definite conscious response to those possibilities. I cannot do other than speak in terms of consciousness, even though the life of the Triad – leading in its turn to identification with the Monad, as the personality life leads eventually to Soul control and expression – has naught to do with consciousness or sensitivity as those terms are commonly understood. Yet remember how, in all my teachings upon occult unfoldment, I have used the word IDENTIFICATION. This is the only word I have found that can in any way convey the complete unity that is finally achieved by those who develop a sense of unity, and who refuse to accept isolation; separateness then fades out entirely. The isolated unity achieved is unity with the Whole, with Being in its totality (and this cannot as yet convey much to you).

M: The papers on the building of the Antahkarana are very much like that.

AAB: Because they were written by the Tibetan.

RK: That is all true about the individual. But here we are a group.

AAB: In a group like this we are building an Antahkarana that is a group Antahkarana; that is a new thing. The fact of doing that decentralizes us.

RK: We can't decentralize unless we recognize that it is the greater being in whom we have become integrated. He or it or that is doing it.

JL: Does he say from a door to a door?

AAB: You keep bringing this down to a material level. Do you think the technicalities matter? It is just symbolism; there is no door. There is no door in my head, but there is a way.

M: "The clear cold light" seems to me such a wonderful expression.

AAB: The Tibetan calls death the entering into the clear cold light because by death the lower passes away and we enter into clear cold light. It is explained how at the moment of death when the incarnated mind is released from the many modifications of the lower thinking principle it becomes a wholeness in itself without any modifications. The person is *in* the clear cold light and *is* the clear cold light, and if disciples can hold on to unmodified consciousness, they are forever released from form control. If they cannot, they come back into form and begin again the building of the power that will release them. Take the number eight. They begin at the upper point where two spheres meet and they deal with that sphere until it comes back again. What the Tibetan is giving us now happens in the higher sphere. Eventually the two spheres merge and there is only one – the clear cold light all the way through.

H: The clear cold light is mentioned in Tibetan Yoga and *The Secret Doctrine*. It is called the Doctrine of the Clear Light.

AAB: Do you know what I think we are really doing in this group work, if we do it the right way? The Tibetan has done one or two somewhat new things – for instance, giving out the teaching about the New Group of World Servers, the intermediate group between the Hierarchy and humanity. What he is trying to do through this group is to anchor on Earth the somewhat new teaching about the Spiritual Triad as it expresses itself through the higher mind. That has never been done before in the sense in which the Tibetan is attempting to do it, and if we can keep all our thinking on a higher level (an intermediate form of thinking can interfere with the result and break the rhythm of thinking that is coming down) we will get somewhere. When you break current on the mental level it spoils things. I want to see us bring through abstract ideas and not have the analytical mind interfere. I think we may be able to do something definite, which we have to do in group formation or otherwise it can't be done at all.

C: The beautifully comforting thing is that, if we push forward, on the other side there is reciprocal activity that bridges the channel.

AAB: You have to remember that it is we that are doing it. It can only be done if we react to the real, which is ourselves.

B: Would you elaborate on the idea of isolation in relation to the group? As we proceed we have to consider the idea of being apart and separate.

AAB: It is an inevitable experience until we overcome it. As I see it working, it comes in two or three different ways. You isolate yourself. I can isolate myself from you by lack of something, or you have the isolation that comes from a fuller experience than the groups in your environment. In this book that the Tibetan is getting out to us now, the anonymity of the individuals mentioned is preserved for two reasons. Some are so very far ahead of the average student that it should not be given out. Then there is the isolation that comes because you are so identified with the whole that your isolation is an isolation in time and space. It isn't real isolation from the standpoint of the Monad, but rather the "isolated unity" of Patanjali, which is achieved by mind after mind being left behind.

N: We are not meant to be exclusive. We can infuse inspiration into other groups and the seeds, in time, will produce results. We will be isolated from the activity of such groups, yet what we pour into those groups will produce fruit.

RK: Your expression last week helped me: An automobile is no more the person than the integrated personality is the Soul. It is only a vehicle.

AAB: Some of the most evil people in the world are integrated personalities.

P: The atom is a part of the whole; at the same time it must be an "isolated unity" for the whole.

AAB: It is a difference in the level of consciousness. It is not the consciousness of the atom but of the whole.

P: Like the sum total of consciousness of the cells in the body.

AAB: That is material. Your analogies carry all the way up.

N: I read somewhere that some of the dictators are rejected disciples.

AAB: A rejected disciple would have to be very bad. There is a legend about the Devil. A great Son of God walked the Earth, and when God wanted to help humanity he gathered the Sons of God together and asked what would help humanity. The Devil came up and said he loved God so much that he would be willing to be sent into the outermost darkness and fight his way back, if by so doing he could help humanity. So God sent him out to make more light. Hitler is of discipleship material. He has probably lost his chance to be a disciple for this whole manvantara. In some far distant period he may again receive his opportunity and start at a higher level than we are today. I don't know.