

THE THOUGHT IN THE BALANCED SOUL

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When I was a little boy I read in a third reader, one day, the following rhyme. At least this is the way it comes back to me:

"If with fear you grasp a nettle,
It will sting you for your pains;
Seize it like a man of mettle,
And it soft as silk remains."

Later I read such statements as "Turn the other cheek," "The meek shall inherit the earth," and "Do not overcome evil with evil, but overcome evil with good."

While these general statements may be somewhat contradictory in nature, they are, nevertheless, the same in this respect: They indicate that the way to overcome evil is not to run away from it, but to go out manfully to meet it.

Go out to meet the thing you are afraid of — not with fear, but with love, and it will become your ally and not your foe. And now, with this much of an introduction, I am going to take one great seven league boot stride ahead and tell you how to overcome any evil that may ever confront you.

You love that which belongs to you, is a part of you, is identical with you. To love a thing means to take it unto yourself, assimilate it into yourself, in spirit, and make it a part of your self. What you love you become like. What you love you actually become. Love Light and you become like Light, a spreader of Light. Continue to love Light and you become Light yourself. Love Love and you become like Love, you spread Love. Continue to love Love and you finally become Love itself. God is Love. To love Love in yourself or in others — is the highest thing you can do.

To love a thing means to realize your unity with the thing you love. Now the sense of Love and the sense of unity can never come on a low or materialistic plane. Love and unity are in essence spiritual terms. Realize your unity with anything and it simply means you are lifted to the realm of spirit, and the spirit of the thing meets your spirit. Now the spirit of everything is good. For instance, even the spirit of debt is good. The spirit behind the debt, which makes the debt possible, is man's trust in man. Thus when you go forth to meet a debt which has heretofore been a nightmare to you, and when you no longer fear it, but realize your unity with it, it simply means that you and Trust become one. The moment you and Trust become one, your debt ceases to be a debt, no matter if it is something another owes you or you owe another.

A wildly barking dog rushes forth to attack you. Silently realizing unity with the dog you command it to cease barking and it wags its tail. The idea behind the dog is Fidelity. A barking dog is merely Fidelity gone to seed. A long overdue debt is merely Trust gone to seed. Realize your unity with Trust and Fidelity and you have the power to command debts and barking dogs. Realize unity with anything and you can command it. For anything that is part of you you can command.

Let me illustrate. I cannot move your arm or your hand, and if I see your hand holding some ashes which I wish you would drop, I cannot turn your hand over and open the fingers and let the dust and ashes fall from them. But if your hand becomes my hand, I can easily command my hand to turn over and let go of the debris that pains it. However, if you realize unity with another and command him to do that which hurts him, you are hurting your own hand and

your own arm. Whenever you use another so as to injure him or any other living soul merely to gratify your own personal self, you have used a spiritual power in an unspiritual way and reaction always sets in, bringing cleansing to you through suffering.

I have referred to Trust and Fidelity as being spiritual ideas behind the externalized, objectified manifestation of debts and barking dogs. This may raise the question, does one have to know what the spiritual idea is behind an evil or supposed evil before he can realize his unity with it? No, by no means. Merely to realize Unity, merely to LOVE brings into play in our unconscious nature a transmuting process which lifts everything into the realm of spirit. This filters out the dross and distills those who unite together or love one another into spiritual beings, and their real union is made through spiritual channels, not through material or physical channels. Thus, if the doctor says you have tuberculosis, merely to realize your unity with the tuberculosis germ without troubling to discover what good thing is behind the germ will begin a cure.

As a matter of fact, all of our troubles are cleansing processes, not punishing processes, a mere reaction following in the wake of our misconception of the goodness of the universe. The idea behind most of our illnesses and most of our troubles is the same idea which is behind soap. Everyone knows that soap is the scourge of every small boy. When the boy grows to manhood he may say that he loves soap, but he does not really love soap. He means that he loves the idea of CLEANLINESS which the soap represents. Thus to realize your unity with tuberculosis or heart trouble or cancer or pneumonia is merely to love the cleanliness which these strong "soaps" represent. From that realization of unity comes a great diminution of the distress which the soaps cause and finally the soap, having accomplished its purpose of uniting us with the cleanliness and making us love cleanliness, departs. We all like to be clean, but we hate the cleaning process. Love the cleaning process and it will take less time, as every mother who has washed her son's ears can testify. "Don't wriggle so hard and don't shout so loud and this will not take so long," we seem to hear God say when trouble comes to us. How many sons have heard their mothers say these identical words?

Are you afraid of water, fire, a thunder storm, or some animal? Make unity with it, and no harm will come from it. Your realization of unity with anything raises your mind from the mere thing to the spirit of the thing. Thus your mind is pushed above it. To rise mentally above a thing is to overcome the general effect of that thing as conceived by the average race-mind.

To rise above a thing is to come up over it — or in other words to overcome it. LOVE and UNITY are the two paths that lift a man above things to ideas, above personalities to being — in short takes him from the carnal to the spiritual realm. Through Love we can thus overcome the world, as through love we can sense our unity with things and come up over things.

In days of old the Greeks personified the spirit of things by giving to everything a god. Before starting on a journey by water a Greek would salute the spirit of the water and the boat. By thus doing, he realized in his crude childlike way his unity with the boat and the river. The things which he had feared he no longer feared. This faith often sustained men of simple belief through many dangers. Now we know there is no God but Love, no God but the Father. But we find unity with the Father and with Love every time we find or realize our unity with mankind or with the forces of nature.

In Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner*, the moment the suffering mariner realized his unity with the loathsome creeping things of the deep, and spontaneous love gushed from his heart for the very things which before he had hated, that moment the curse was lifted. Up to that time the ancient mariner might have voiced Job's words, "The thing which I feared has come upon me." But the moment he ceased to fear it and loved it, the moment he ceased to feel his separation from it and began to realize his unity with it — that moment the dread thing disappeared and good things came in its stead, or rather the evil thing became a good thing.

Let us turn to another scene. That of a boat upon a sea. The tempest is raging, making of the water a terrible, fearful thing. The men in their fear awaken the One who is sleeping in the stern of the boat. "Wake, Master, or we perish." And the Master, turning to the raging elements, recognized in them brothers of His spirit, partners of His soul, and recognizing His unity with the waves, turns and commands. And because they are united with Him, because they belong to Him, the waves obey His voice.

And so, when terrible misfortune seems to be coming upon you, merely turn toward it without fear and realize your unity with it and command, "Peace, be still."

If wild animals are attacking you, turn toward them with love in your heart and command, "Peace, be still."

You will find miracles will happen when you cease to grasp with fear the nettle which stings you for your pains, but with realization of your unity with it and with love in your heart you seize it like a man of mettle, and it will in your hand soft as silk remain.

According to your faith it will be done unto you. Faith in what? Faith in the power of love, faith in the power of unity. Faith in the realization that what is part of you as an arm is a part of you can always be commanded as easily as you can command your own self, and only good will come of it, provided, of course, you always command with love, so as to hurt no other being, and do not use the power for your personal aggrandizement. Even the bad things are a part of you, and are only bad because you do not know they are a part of you, and you think they are separate from you. The only hell, the only suffering in the world comes from a sense of separation. Heaven is harmony, hell is separation. Heaven is a place of harmonious souls who know they belong to each other. Hell is a place of separate souls, on the other hand, who don't know that they belong to each other.

There you have it. To keep out of hell recognize nothing and no one as existing apart from you. You can then command all things for good. To keep in heaven realize your unity with all persons and all things and recognize that these things all work together in harmony. "All things work together for good to those who love the Lord." Love is the power that brings all persons and things into perfectly adjusted and harmonious activity.

Thus Christ gave a mighty law, a secret of many miracles, when He said, "Resist not evil, but overcome evil with good." And the good with which you overcome an evil always takes its rise in your realization of your union with the thing — or the spirit of the thing you would overcome. For when you realize your unity with a thing, the very unity will lift you up over it. Thus you come up over it and overcome it. For unity and love operate on a high plane — a plane where there is no suffering, no want, no evil of any kind — for they operate in the kingdom which is within — and this kingdom is the kingdom of heaven.