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## THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW

By **Eloise Franco**

“That we see manifested in the material plane  
is but a shadow of that in the spiritual plane” 364-2

Philosophers and mystics from the earliest times have tried to make it plain to us just how the things of the earth which appear so very solid are in actuality only shadows or illusions, and that it is the intangible inner nature of a thing which constitutes its reality.

Plato, the great Greek philosopher, attempted to explain the relationship on noumena to phenomena by means of an elaborate allegory. “Imagine” he says in his book THE REPUBLIC, “a number of men living in an underground cave, with an entrance open to the light extending along the entire length of the cavern.” The reader is to think of these men as having been confined from childhood with their legs and necks so bound that they are obliged to sit absolutely still, looking straight before them. In other words, they are chained in such a way that it is impossible for them to turn their heads around.

Then the reader is to imagine a bright fire burning on a height behind them toward the entrance to the cave. Between the prisoners and the fire is an elevated roadway with a low wall running along its length, a continuous stream of persons passes along the roadway behind the wall, each carrying a statue balanced upon a platform atop his head, just at the height where the

light from the fire can throw its shadow over the wall onto the back of the cave in front of the prisoners. These statues are of men and women and animals and objects of every description.

“Let me ask you,” continues Plato, “whether persons so confined could have seen anything of themselves or of each other beyond the shadows thrown by the fire upon the part of the cavern facing them.” What he is trying to bring out is that all their knowledge of things in existence would necessarily be obtained from the passing shadows. As there was no way of their ever learning about the statues, they would consider the shadows as the only realities.

“Now consider what would happen if one of them is released and compelled suddenly to stand up and turn his neck round and walk with open eyes towards the light. Let us suppose that he goes through all these actions with pain, and that the dazzling splendour renders him incapable of discerning those objects of which he used formerly to see the shadows. What answer should you expect him to make if someone were to tell him that in those days he was watching foolish phantoms, but that now he is somewhat nearer to reality, and is turned towards things more real, and sees more correctly? Should you expect him to be puzzled and

regard his old visions as truer than the objects now forced upon his notice ? "

If the man then went on out of the cave into the sunlight, Plato says he would first of all discern only the shadows of things and afterward the objects which caused them. Finally if he had to return to the cave and attempted to describe what he had seen - the true objects of which they saw only the shadows - would he not become the laughing-stock of all the other prisoners? They would declare his eyesight was wrong and insist that it was they who saw realities when in fact they perceived but the shadows.

Perhaps no clearer description than this of Plato's could be given of one who has "seen the Light" and attempt to explain its truth to those who are still concerned only with its shadows. However the time is approaching when it will be vital to Man to understand this difference between actuality and reality, between the shadows of Earth and the realities of the Spiritual Plane.

Already science has given us a practical basis upon which we may place our reasoning in attempting to understand this relationship between the Planes in terms of our present-day understanding. For after reducing the molecule to the atom and the atom to electrical particles, they have further arrived at the conclusion that the mass which appears as matter is simply "congealed energy," while energy is simply "attenuated mass." Thus all natural forces are electrical, although we see them expressed in the various forms of energy. As the Cayce readings said, "Know then that the force in nature that is called electrical, or electricity, is that same force you worship as Creative or God in action." (1299-P)

For this Energy is but the Consciousness of God, or Spirit. Mind

and Consciousness are as positive and negative aspects of the Creator. Thoughts become ideas in Mind and through the union of Mind with Consciousness produce Mind Patterns, which draw to them the Spirit Energy necessary to express in manifestation a reflection of the original thought. The Universe, therefore, is mental!

It is here that we find our clue to the designation shadows to describe the things of Earth. For these Mind Patterns which are the true reality—can only be perceived by means of the substance of Spirit Energy which they gather about them. As all the Universe expresses the principle of duality, we find that there are two principal modes or Planes upon which this substance is made manifest.

The first is the Cosmic Plane. Here the proportions of Spirit Energy are predominately positive. This means that the substance of this plane is diffusive, ethereal, shaped entirely by thought and will. For it is the planes of the fourth dimension. Dimension means measurement. The measurement here is that of rate of vibration. The Mind Pattern of an entity dwelling on that plane gathers to itself that which the thought and will of the entity decree. For existence here may be said to be as "vibrational ideation."

"In this condition (the fourth dimension) the individual reaches his abilities of development in the planes which have been experienced in the advances from the earth's plane; he comes into that position of being able to have height, breadth, depth, thickness, and all of these without space." (8337-18) In other words, on the **Cosmic Plane** the entity creates his own environment by his own thoughts; the ideas of those things which are known to him in their dimensional aspects through experience upon the Earth

Plane are duplicated in ethereal substance through attunement with their vibrational reality only, or without space.

The second mode of manifestation is the **Earth Plane**. Here the proportions of Spirit Energy are predominately negative. This means that the substance of this plane is infusive and dense, shaped according to the three dimensions. What we have to remember is that these dimensions of breadth and height and depth are inextricably related to the fourth dimension of vibration. This means that the energized forms which comprise the Earth Plane are built upon the inner Mind Patterns of the Cosmic Plane. Thus the two Planes are interpenetrating. Manifestation upon the Cosmic Plane perpetually permeates the manifestations of the Earth Plane. Interdependence is the keynote of both; the Earth is the counter-balance of the Cosmic Plane. The forms of the negative earth, being acting energy only, are but the reflections or shadows of the Mind Patterns of the positive Cosmic world.

So we see that Space is to us but our recognition of the relationships between expressions in manifestation, while Time, in its essence, is the fulfilling of the law regarding those expressions. Although we call the Cosmic Plane "up" this derived from its infinite nature and higher rates of vibratory substance, while the Earth Plane is "down" because of its finite nature and lower material vibratory rates. The early Egyptians understood this when they called the "pillar of earth" the "Tat of Amenta." For Amenta is the underworld, and the underworld is the earth. The solar god in Amenta is addressed, "thou who gives light to the earth." The lower paradise is the mount of earth, the funeral mount of Amenta.

The fact that lies behind the conception of the Earth Plane as the place of death is that in this realm of generation there is no true life. That which appears to us as life is only cyclic becoming. The very vitality which animates us brings about our own destruction when the body has reached its peak of usefulness. For in the great Plan of Evolution only that which is perfect may be preserved; generation presents the opportunity for this perfection to be reached through Nature's successive trials and failures.

However when that which is the ideal of the original Mind Pattern has been expressed, a new state arises which is a condition of balanced forces. This is a third Plane which is produced at the meeting point of the other two. For by Cosmic Law when opposite polarities are brought into union a third condition capable of expressing the qualities of both is brought forth. It is this Plane which is the true Heaven, not the Cosmic Plane to which we go after our physical death. For both the Earth and Cosmic planes, deriving their very nature from the unequal proportions of energy within them, represent a state of imbalance. Only the plane of balance is the Land of Immortality.

Man was originally brought forth with the intention that he would rule the world from this Third Plane or the Garden of Eden. It is solely a state of consciousness, the Land of Realization where the true nature of the other Planes is distinctly seen in its relativity. However when Man succumbed to the temptations of the pleasures of the fleshly forms, he sacrificed his original Christ-perfect thought-form body - in which no disintegration was possible - and fell into generation. He fell from life into the cyclic becoming of birth and death.

Until we have learned to so regenerate our bodies that we again bring all the Creative Forces into balance within our expression, we must remain chained to this Wheel of Rebirth. We must learn to recognize the inner Mind Patterns existent within every form of manifestation. We must realize that we ourselves consist of just such a structure - a bodily form built upon the inner divine pattern. We must be prepared for the fact that when our physical body reaches the point where its dissolution is necessary, we are left right where we were as far as our individual consciousness is concerned. Only we must then learn to manipulate the ethereal substance of the Cosmic Plane by our thought and will as our previous animal body subconsciously manipulated the physical body for us, in accordance with our psychic and mental attitudes.

As the readings stressed: "Passing from the material consciousness to a spiritual or cosmic or outer consciousness, often does an entity or being not become conscious of that about it, much in the same manner as an entity born into the material plane only become conscious gradually of that designated as time and space for the material or third dimensional plane. In the passage the entity becomes conscious, or the recognition of being in a fourth or higher dimensional plane takes place, much in the same way as the consciousness is gained in the material." (364-2)

These are the facts to which we must reconcile ourselves: We are existing now in the Valley of the Shadow of Death; only as we lift our consciousness - attune the energy of our being so that it is brought into balance - do we enter into the realization which manifests for us the Kingdom of Heaven

upon the Earth - or upon the Cosmic Plane - wherever we may happen to be when we achieve this goal. Then, and then only, shall we truly begin once more to live.

#### FROM THE RECORDS

(This reading was given before those assembled for the final meeting of the Fourth Annual Congress of the Association for Research and Enlightenment on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1935.)  
254-145.

Mrs. C... You will give for those assembled here ... such counsel and guidance as may be helpful in understanding and carrying forward the work for the coming year.

Mr. C. Yes, we have the ideals, the purposes . . . First, we would give a message to those of the Directorate of the Association at this time:

As has been intimated and given, in the combinations of efforts by individuals in a given direction, there is first the creation - in the universal forces - of the body- mind such an organization; no matter of what nature, be it physical, material or for spiritual purposes. It grows to, be - with the activities of such a group, association, combination, body mind; and the purposes that you term soul - which is in the stellar forces rather its association or combination with such.

Hence we speak of the Spirit of America, of Germany of the Nordic people, of the Mayan, of the Celtic or what not. These are influences that have given shape in the realms beyond matter, yet influence same, with as much of a body as the mind (the builder) has built.

So with your Association, you are taking body soul. With the incoming of present members you are forming policies, you are forming purposes. Do

not deviate from your ideal!

In the formation of same there are others that need to be and will become members of the directing group, of your trustees – that form policies.

Many of you as individuals often feel that those who have not presented themselves bodily are not really interested or have not contributed to the welfare, the building up. This is not always true. For what is the builder? MIND !

In that giving in of self to same, then, you have gathered nearer to the correct group than heretofore.

Then, as the directing force, ask the more often of all their intents, their prayers, their thoughts, as to the ways, the manners of presenting that which may be of a helpful, hopeful nature. through the information that may be presented through your channel Edgar Cayce; and you will find that the Work, the Association, will take on new life.

These as we find are worthy of consideration by all who would direct, who would counsel, who would form policies, who would make for ideas and the adherence to the ideals - and the courage then to carry on!

As for those present in their seeking: First, as has so often been given, determine within your own mind as to the reliability of the sources of information and of the information itself.

Hold fast to that which you experience in your own relationships with your body, your mind, your fellow man; and present to others what you have found to be good. Not as one attempting to sway by proof, by verification, those that seek only for the gratifying of such. But if that being presented has a mind, has a soul, it is then indeed of divine origin.

These are determined by what you

have seen the information from such a source produce in the life of individuals, in your own self, in your neighbor, in those with whom you have come in contact in one manner or another; and not through that of any nature that is to startle any group. The startling thing to every soul is to awaken to the realization that it is indeed a child of God! That is startling enough for any man, any woman, any being, in this sin-sick world!

And yet it is the heritage of every soul to awake to that consciousness that God indeed is mindful of the children of men, and calls ever, "If you will be my children, I will be your God."

This is the message, then, that you shall carry; for there is a loving Father that cares. That is your message!

There IS for you have experienced it, you can and you may experience it in your own life!

Can anything, any experience, any condition be more worth while? That though there are those things that makes men afraid, there are turmoils in this or that direction in the relationships of human experience that may terrify you for the moment, there is HE who cares! And He may walk and talk with YOU!

THAT you may experience in your own life! Do that.

Then you know, then you find as to whether the messages that may be presented through such a channel as this are worthy of consideration—and by that standard you shall judge.

For what was the judgment, what is judgment, what will ever be the judgment? They that deny that He has come in the flesh are not worthy of acceptance, They that give you that which is not helpful, hopeful, and patient and humble and not condemning any, are not worthy! This is

your judgment! What, then, will you do with Jesus? For He is the Way, He is the Light, He is the Hope, He is ready.

Will you let Him into your heart? Or will you keep Him afar or apart? Will you not eat of His body, of the bread of life? Drink from that fountain that He builds in the minds, the hearts, the souls of those that seek to know Him and His purposes with men, with the world!

For having overcome the world, He indeed has it - as it were - in the palm of His hand; and has entrusted to you this world, because of His faith, His love for you.

What will you do about Jesus and His trust in you?

As these, then, are the things that you have often heard in one manner or another, they have become to some pass'; they have become to others as "How can it be?"; they are to others still just a question. But "Try ye the Spirits." Know those that know Him are in accord with that which is His purpose, His desire, with men.

Then, how may you as individuals in your various spheres of activity, in your walks of life among men that think not of Him, carry on? By just showing forth what He has given. Though others may be unjust, rail not; for it indeed must be that these things come, but woe to them by whom they come!

Rather know that the meek, the patient, those that are of one mind in Him, shall - SHALL - inherit the earth, the possessions thereof!

Learn what to do with them. For if you say, "Had I much, I would give to the poor; had I plenty I would be kind to the unfortunate," and you do not the same with your mite, you would not do it if you had much! What said He? "She that cast in the penny gave more than them all." So you are only fooling yourselves if you are not giving, doing,

being, even the little!

For as He has given, it is the leaven that leavens the whole lump. Be gentle, be kind, be patient; for the earth is your Lord's. Do you claim Him as your brother, as your friend, as your neighbor? Do that—for your own sake, for His sake! So much He has given! What have you done!

For as you do it unto the least of your brethren, you do it unto Him. That is the law!

Ready for questions.

Q-1. First, the general questions by Dr.... No. 1210): Is the source of this information a group source, an individual source, or a recorded source?

A-1. As has so often been given, this is rather of the universal. That which is recorded may be read. That which is written may be interpreted. That which is individual may be had. But it is also a constructive source, so only gives that which is helpful if it will be applied.

When an individual seeks for personal or bodily aid, it is part and parcel of that individual and is read by and through the real desire of the seeker.

Then it is, the Life source, it is recorded upon space and time - and is that which is to be kept against that day; for time and space are as the evolution upon which the forces of the divine make for that change that brings same into the experiences of those souls who seek to become one with the Creative Energies.

Hence all may be touched? All may be drawn upon. And, as has been given, if it were individualized by a guide, it would become limited; while if universal it is in the hands of Him that is the Maker, the Giver, the Creator. For has He not given, "Abide in me, as I in the Father, that I in the Father may be

glorified in you!" You that seek self-glory know its hardships. You that seek the glory of the Father know its beauties.

Q-2. Mr... (No. 1196): Please give me practical suggestions for taking part in group work of the Association in . . . Alabama, provided these sources feel I can be successful in such work.

A-2. Take the Study Group Manual, study same. Gather those one by one that are known to you to be interested in knowing more of your relationships to your Maker, to your brother; and here you have your group! Though it may be one, though it may be two—for years; it is not numbers that count, for it is the leaven that leavens the lump!

Q-3. Miss...(No. 1058): How can skepticism be met in relation to the Work?

A-3. Rather forget it! Live what you know! You be living examples, known of men! For did not they in high places deny Him? These are living experience, and are to be met with the smile and with the love as you would have your God show you. Honest skepticism is a seeker. That which is self-knowledge and its own glory forget.

A-4. Mrs...(No. 1100) What is the best approach to strangers in relation to the work.

A-4. Merely give "This I know by experience, You may have the same if you seek. No one may attain same for you." For your relationships to your Creator are personal not group, not relations. No wife would like for the husband to love many women. No man desires that many men love the wife in the close relationships; but all as to God. That! "If you feel you may know. For it is a personal experience." And, as has been given, if it does not answer to that divine within, it is not your time. For how gave He when there was the call for a

separation? The day is not yet fulfilled for the Hivites nor the Hittites, but their end is in sight. So as you approach those that know not give only your personal experience, and "Take it or leave it, as it is."

But join in the group that would direct the Association!

Q-5. Mrs...(No. 689) How is the best way to cooperate with other organizations who are in sympathy with or who have an understanding of this work?

A-5. As has so often been given let those that are sincere, that are honest with themselves, seek not the differences in the organizations but where they may cooperate. And as they do, you will find - as with these that are gathered here, they are of many faiths many creeds, yet they find one common purpose - GOOD to thy fellow man! So, as those that have found in this vision in this interpretation, or in that promotion or in that experience of this or that nature, seek rather the common interest where there is cooperation, rather than the differences. And then if any groups if any organization, if any association has not this, it has not the full soul.

Q-6. Specific individual question: In just what phase of the Association's activities can I be of the greatest assistance?

A. for Mrs. . . . (No. 602): Just living day by day that you have caught sight of. Speaking when prompted by the influence and forces from within, to those that are lost in suffering or in turmoil or in fear; that there is a way, there is a door - "You may enter or you may stay outside."

For Mr...(No. 333): Living, being, speaking; doing those things the hands find to do. Have the courage to DARE to do, not for self, for an individual, but rather for Him who IS THE maker, for

you know that without Him there was not anything made that was made. Then it is His. Just ACT LIKE IT!

For Miss...(N. 954) In your own purposes, find that which coordinates, cooperates with the purposes, with the policies, with the ideal of the Association. These are many, and these will grow. Prove first to yourself, and then to your own self be true, For as has been given, it is with you that He would deal direct, if you will walk, if you will talk with Him.

For Mrs....(No. 1000): Let those that have been purposes in your heart be kept; for though the trials often overshadow you, know the strength is not of yourself but as He has given, "I will not leave you." You turn only your conscience, your face from Him and feel He has gone, but His promises are sure and He is able to keep them! Turn to Him!

For Mrs... (No. 1391): The beauty of your life has encouraged many, as your understandings have confused some; but live in that way and manner as to be able ever to look everyone in the face and tell them where to go. But know

where you are bound. For you have much work to do that may be carried on through the very activities of such an Association, but first determine in your mind as to whether in its purposes, in its ideals, is in accord with the way you would go. Not that there are many ways, save as individual; but all roads lead to the understanding. Some take the high road, some take the low road, but we all arrive before the gates with some besmeared with the muds of despair, some with the heights of great expectations. But you that expect nothing receive nothing. Expect, and do and be what you would have your brother be; no more, no less.

For Mrs...., (No. 1226): Here again may be said that as has been given, study to show yourself approved to God, not to man. Let not worldly wisdom confound you or confuse you. For it is not in the storm, nor in the lightning, nor in the great noises, but the still small voice. For remember, He is the Prince of Peace and harmony and hope. You do not find this in discussion, confusion, turmoil or strife.

<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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