

Honey: A Mystery Of The Resurrection

by

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Some time ago a small paragraph appeared in a Sunday newspaper stating that observations had been carried out on the possible dangers of extinction to the domestic bee. Large numbers were dying from poisoning and hunger, due to spraying of fruit trees and the killing of weeds by roadsides and railway banks, while many others were killed against the windscreens of cars. One organization had even gone so far as to carry out a count of casualties on a stretch of road during a Sunday. Those concerned were obviously alarmed for the safety of the bee population.

In earlier times bees were treated with great reverence, men had natural feeling for the forces at work in their activity. But nowadays through the lack of insight into the cosmic forces working in nature, pest attack the orchards and farmland, and to defeat their devastations they, in turn, are drenched with sprays, so that just at the time between Easter and Whitsun, when the blossoms open eagerly to the newly risen sun, the bees, on who, the very harvest depends, find the food they need covered with a blanket of death.

In his lectures on Bees to the Workmen of the Goetheanum, Dr. Steiner gives a wealth of practical and cosmic observations on his subject.

The bee colony is in direct connection with the sun-forces. The times for incubation of the queen and worker bees lie under the influence of one revolution of the sun on its own axis, only the drones being touched by earthly forces. In the hive the individual sexual life is suppressed and given over to the queen bee; this suppression allows the force of love, which is present in sexual life, to be freed to work for the regulation of the whole hive. In this way the planetary forces of Venus join with those of the Sun.

“When Venus with the Sun is conjoined

It augurs something rare to my mind.”

So speaks the Red King in the Oberufer Play. Further, not only does the harmony of Love organize the hive, but the worker bees seek out for their food just that part of the

plan which has been worked upon by the sun and represents the expression of love in the plan kingdom.

Then comes a magical transformation of forces through the body of the bee. From the nectar and pollen of the plan which is its food, the bee produces wax which is formed into hexagonal cells, and into these its “spits” the honey; honey is the spittle of the bee which produces this wonderful form.

How does the plant acquire such formative forces! The plant receives it from the earth, for the earth, too, builds hexagonal forms in quartz crystals; the silicic acid which forms them works from the cosmos into the earth and the crystals which we have to-day. This silicic acid is absorbed by the plant and enters the bee through the nectar and so is again present as a formative force in the bee’s body.

Man, too, must have the formative force of silicic acid in his body if he is to maintain the strength of his life forces. From the head downwards this quartz fluid flows; it would like to take its own form, but the body arrests the process, holds it back and only allows the will element in the substance to work as a force. Hence man’s life-forces are strengthened when he eats a little honey (Dr. Steiner says that as a boy he ate a lot!). It is also used as a medicament; for man needs the power of the hexagonal form working in the blood, without which the iron corpuscles become weak.

So we see how the mineral substance of the earth is first worked upon by the watery, airy processes of the plan, and is then taken into the sun sphere by the blossom, where the bee finds it and then from its body produces substance bearing a formative power which can enter the human organism, working as Will-strength in the blood and bringing a right connection between the watery and airy processes in man’s organism and enabling him to work in the right way with his soul onto his physical organs.

Time and again Dr. Steiner emphasizes that the human being needs the forces of the hexagonal form working in him, without it he can never be healthy, for this form is not only that of the nerve cells of the bones and muscles, to which the blood carries the hexagonal forces.

Geometrical forms have their own secrets. A hexagon formed in the centre of two triangles when one is inverted over the other to form six-pointed Star of David. The penetration of one triangle by the other has, since ancient times, represented the

penetration of man's lower bodies by the higher triad. This can only come about by the central activity of the ego. From this aspect the hexagon represents the transforming forces of the Ego. Through the activity of the bee. We can see in the honey-filled hexagonal cell, a picture of the Ego filled with the sun-warm forces of Love from the cosmos.

St. Luke records that on Easter Sunday evening after the two from Emmaus had rejoined the disciples and were telling them what had happened, the Christ suddenly appeared among them. They thought at first that He was a "ghost". To overcome their uncertainty He showed them the marks on His Body; but they still were unconvinced, and so He asked for something to eat.

"And they gave Him a piece of baked fish and some honey comb, and he took it and ate it in front of them" (Luke 24, v. 42-43)

St. Luke and St John are the only two writers who speak of the Risen Christ's connection with food. In St John's Gospel, fish and bread are given to the disciples; He gives but does not take. The same gestures of His giving the substance is in St. Luke's description of Emmaus; this immediately precedes and is in contrast to, the account that the new resurrection body of the Christ was able to assimilate physical substance.

What is the Christ trying to awaken in the consciousness of the disciples by this act? The secrets of nourishment belong to the metabolic system. Dr. Steiner describes it as being the most material part of man yet containing the highest wisdom as the spirit is still free within it. The other material parts of the body, the brain and rhythmic system have absorbed the spiritual, it is not present. It is present in the crude material substances of the metabolic system, and it is here that we find hidden the actual immortal part of the human soul. But the time of the Mystery of Golgotha, human beings no longer had contact with the wisdom lying in the metabolic system, and so had gradually lost the consciousness of their immortal being; it was through the development of ego consciousness that the spirit was absorbed into the brain and rhythmic system and so became more and more the prisoner of Ahriman; consequently the soul and spirit of a man was in danger of becoming so bound to material substance that it would have to share on death, the date of the disintegrating processes of the physical body.

When Christ gave the bread to the disciples at Emmaus, He showed them the completion of His victory over the Tempter in the wilderness. After entering the sheaths of Jesus of Nazareth, Christ fasted for forty days. At the end of this time—"The devil tempted Him saying, "Turn these stones into bread'."

Christ was being tempted by Lucifer to use the magical forces of the Spirit within man's metabolism in that sphere into which Ahriman has already encroached in the outer world; Lucifer is saying, 'Unite the Father forces working in your Will with those working in matter'. Lucifer had by the expulsion of man from Paradise involved him in not taking food to sustain his physical body, now he tries to give Ahriman the opportunity to wrest him from the Divine Hierarchies.

For the earth to become physical matter as we experience it to-day, the Hierarchies had to allow Ahriman to enter into their activity, to mingle his forces with their creative Will. Had Christ succumbed to his temptation, man's spirit, with its magical forces of transubstantiation, would have come into the grasp of Ahriman; the soul and spirit would have been completely fettered to the physical organism and suffered spiritual death.

St Luke also indicates to us the victory of Christ over Ahriman's hold on man's life forces when he adds the statement to the description of Christ's agony in the Garden of Gethsemane: "The sweat upon Him was like drops of blood streaming to the ground." (Luke 22, Rieu's Trans.)

With the consummation of the Mystery of Golgotha, Christ could give the bread filled with His forces to the human being so that in the process of digestion the consciousness could arise in his spirit that he was in immortal being. The renewed knowledge of the magical forces of the metabolism was given by the Risen Christ to the disciples and early Christians in the teaching of the Sacrament.

The magnitude of His victory over death can be glimpsed in St. Luke's description of the three steps in recognition by the disciples. First they thought that He was a "ghost" . . . the leaders of mankind had taught man before in spirit bodies in the ancient mysteries . . . so he showed them His hands and His feet" . . . this spirit body was different, it bore the marks of its physical existence . . . now they could not believe for astonishment! So He took the fish and honey and ate it in front of them.

The fish is an “imagination” of the Etheric World, it is also the symbol for the time when the sun was united with the earth.

In eating the honey, Christ showed to the disciples in an “imagination” that He had united His Ego, through the quartz of the mountains, to the World Will working in earthly substance which by the watery, airy processes of the plan and by the sun forces in the blossom, had been brought to such a condition by the bee, that it could be taken into the Spirit Body. Through the power of Love indwelling in His Ego. He had been able to overcome Ahriman and bring back out of his clutches the creative Will forces of the Hierarchies.

The secrets of transubstantiation by Love, which the bees show prophetically in their wonderful organization and connection with the cosmos and earth belong to the Christ. His promise to the disciples at the time of the cursing of the fig-tree was fulfilled...

“Have faith in God, I tell you in all truth that if any man orders this mountain to be removed and cast into the sea, and does not waver in his heart, but believes what he says is done, it will be done for him...” (Mark II Rieu’s Trans.)

For the future conditions of the earth when it again becomes “plastic”, those who have united them selves with the Christ will be able to share His Cosmic Will in refashioning the earth substances into new conditions.

When Christ combined the fish and honey He showed that the “gap” in creation was closed; that indeed the Mysteries of the Future were given over into His hands.

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Books: --

The Dancing Bees

Von Frisch

The Life of the Bee

Maurice Maeterlinck

SophiaPages.com