

## OUR DIVINE HEREDITY

By

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One of the most interesting of the Arabian Nights stories is entitled "Ali of Cairo." On the death of his father, which occurs while he is yet a youth, Ali inherits an enormous fortune, so large that no one is able to reckon its extent. But Ali seems to have a genius for spending money, for it does not take him long to waste every dollar of it in dissipation. Then seeking aid from his erstwhile boon-companions of pleasure, he finds friendship a broken reed; now that his money is gone they suddenly lose all interest in him. He then wanders, living the hand-to-mouth existence of what we would term a tramp to-day, until finally he arrives at Bagdad, where he gives out that he is a merchant, in temporary need, but about to receive valuable consignments of goods by caravan, and all of the Bagdad merchants vie with each other to do him honor. He leases a house, which is magnificently furnished, but which had been unoccupied for years, as it has the reputation of being haunted. That night he prepares to retire, when suddenly a genie appears, and says "O Ali, shall I send down the gold?" "And where," said Ali, "is the gold that thou wilt send down?" Immediately there poured down gold upon him until the entire salon was filled. The genie then says "This gold was preserved for thee by a talisman from ancient times. We used to come to every one who entered this house and say to him 'O Ali, O son of Hassan, shall I send down the gold?' And he would fear at our words and cry out, whereupon we would descend to him, break his neck and depart. But when thou earnest and we called thee by thy name and the name of thy father and said to thee 'Shall we send down the gold?' and thou saidst to us 'And where is the gold,' so we knew that thou wast its owner, and we sent it down."

This tale resembles in some respects the parable of the prodigal. Like Ali we inherit a treasure—the physical body with its wealth of beauty and possible power. This treasure is obvious, and we proceed to dissipate it by riotous or unwise living. We look only to the material side of life and to the senses for satisfaction, reaping bitterness and loss because we shut ourselves away from God. We turn to friends—to the personality—and would fain lean upon them, but they disappoint us with their crudity, ingratitude and general imperfection. We have many bitter experiences. All goes wrong until we learn like Ali that there is a greater treasure waiting for us—God himself—omnipotence, omnipresence—all that we can conceive of goodness and power when we come into oneness with Him. But we must realize that the treasure is ours, and by holding this conviction in mind firmly, and backing up our faith with acts, compel the genie (God's law—the means through which we receive the treasure) to bring it to us. In the tale

those who were surprised at the coming of the genie, and made outcry through excessive fear, were strangled. In like manner if through doubt or fear we resist the law, whether consciously or unwittingly, it strangles us, as nothing can stand in the way of omnipotent law. If we do not realize our oneness with God and His law, not only do we not get any of its benefits, but are crushed to atoms by it.

But Ali recognizes at once that he owns the treasure, and when he does not perceive it, asks where it is, and demands it be brought to him. He doesn't seem to doubt that the gold is his, once the fact of his possible ownership of it is suggested by the genie. The latter, perceiving his master, says that he knows him to be the owner of the treasure from his confident expectation of getting it. So we, if we desire any good thing, must believe it already ours. Then we will obtain it.

We should never doubt our oneness with God—never doubt that the universe is ours. And if we live in conscious oneness with God, knowing that through His aiding power all things are possible, and that we are masters of all conditions, all circumstances will hasten to obey us.

Like Ali, let us demand our treasure. Our oneness with God gives us the right, it is ours and has been ours through all eternity. Let us claim it then, and claiming it confidently and wisely, get it. All things are potentially ours; it remains for us to make them manifestly so.

But it may be asked, what shall one do to gain a realization of his identity with the source of all, and by such identification obtain dominion over all circumstances? There are two things to be done; the first is to obey the scriptural injunction— "And when thou prayest, enter into thy chamber and shut the door;" enter into the silence—the innermost place of the Most High—and, shutting the door of the senses, listen to God's voice as it speaks to your own soul. You may not at first hear the voice, but persist, and eventually you will become conscious of its guiding influence every step of the way. Then after listening to and hearing God's message, *act*.

Silent affirmation of our God-given power over all things is absolutely essential. In order to be, we must first know—be conscious—that we *are*. In order to have, we must know that we *already* possess. To make health, wisdom, happiness manifest then, we should repeat until we know their truth, statements such as these:

I *am* health, *now*.  
I *am* wisdom, *now*.  
I *am* happiness, *now*.  
I *have* opulence, *now*.

Not some time in the future have I health, wisdom and happiness, but *now*. Since our higher self—the real of *us*—is perfect spirit, *God in us*, we have *never* lacked, we are eternal perfection.

Then we should back up our affirmations with our daily acts. Never speak of lack or weakness—never admit it verbally to others or mentally to ourselves. If we affirm " I have opulence " that does not mean that we should simply lie back and wait for prosperity to come to us. No, we must do our part. God will do His if we cooperate with Him by confident, trustful *action*—for nothing ever has come without effort and never will. While the universe is ours, we must prove our title to it by spiritual prowess and mettle—by eternal vigilance and industry, first recognizing our title and then bravely and steadfastly acting in accordance with that recognition.