

Angels of Life

John Gray: Welcome! It is July 4, 2021, close to the midpoint of the calendar year. Most of us who knew Tessa Maskell are aware she passed away last week. James Maskell posted on Instagram, “My mother, Tessa Elizabeth Maskell, has taken the next step in her journey! So grateful to have spent four profound days together at the end of this week. The greatest compliment I can give [her] is that [she] inspired my curiosity and then life’s work and [she was] way ahead of [her] time.”

James’ father, Rupert Maskell, wrote in an email, “Tessa passed away [June 30th], painlessly and in the company of our beloved son James, at Heathrow Airport. Her heart simply wasn’t in continuing life as an invalid, either in English or South African nursing homes. Her spirit was too fiercely independent for that. Her heart simply stopped beating and she was gone. So many emails and calls have since come in. I never fully appreciated how great an impact she’d had on so many lives.”

People who knew Tessa would find it humorous and apropos (as she was wont to say) that she made her exit in an airport departure lounge—how very Tessa!

Joyce Krantz, one of Tessa’s many close friends, has some insights to share with us:

Joyce Krantz: Just a few minutes ago, outside my window, about fifteen golf carts decorated in red, white and blue streamers paraded down the street honking their horns in celebration of Independence Day. Again, how “apropos,” for this moment of our celebrating and honoring Tessa’s independent spirit and her life. My reflections will be mostly centered on the latter decade of her time on earth.

I have known Tessa for many years, although our lives did not intersect in a personal and intimate way until the last chapter of her life of 82 years. Many of us could share stories of Tessa. If she crossed your path, you would remember Tessa! She was a large spirit. People described her as indomitable and fierce. To me, she was like a lioness which, having been born in South Africa, seems a very appropriate image for her. She was determined, directed and comfortable living on the leading edge of change. If we were to put her in a category, Tessa was a mover and shaker and a force of nature. But most outstanding of what I know of Tessa is that her heart was centered in passion for the truth. That's what she loved. Her radar was always on. If someone spoke the truth it was like all the wires in her nervous system lit up and it was a “life changing moment” in her consciousness, perhaps a “breakthrough.” “That was “brilliant!” Those moments of revelation never stopped.

Tessa led a purpose-driven life. She wanted to make all her time count and to play her part in awakening people to the truth of who they are and why they are here. I have a story: Tessa's final residence was at Santler Court in the little town of Malvern, England. It was a residence for active adults 55 and older. She had a lovely condo that opened onto a beautiful garden courtyard. Across the way was a wing of the building with a comfortable gathering room where the residents could socialize over tea at certain times of the month. Tessa was looking forward to meeting her neighbors. So, after she attended her first tea, I asked her, "How did it go?" and her comment was, "Hmmm..." (When Tessa said "Hmmm," it usually meant she thought there was room for improvement.) "I think I can do better," she responded. Tessa did not like a lot of small talk. She wanted to get to the core of things, to talk meaningfully about how she saw life. So, she went to the person who organized the teas and asked if she could plan the next one. They were delighted. When the tea time came, Tessa arranged for everyone to sit in a circle with their refreshments. She introduced herself and explained that she was really looking forward to getting to know everyone. She then invited anyone who wished to speak, to share their world in the context of, "What are you thankful for?" and if one didn't feel like talking that was absolutely fine. By the end, people were coming up to Tessa thanking her for such a marvelous, uplifting experience of seeing each other in new ways! Tessa loved to collaborate. She understood that when you brought people together in a circle, if there was a solid foundation and starting point in what was clear and true, hearts opened up. What more solid way to begin, than a consideration of what we are thankful for?

Tessa was a core participant of the work that we consciously do through the Tone of Life teleconferences to deepen understanding of the truth of eternal being and our shared purpose and destiny. She offered her insights often; we have transcripts of her contributions. In one of those talks, on August 30, 2015 and entitled, "Simple Gifts," Tessa described her work for many years with the Wrekin Institute (one of many organizations she touched into along the way). Wrekin's mission was concerned with "the spiritual principles that operate through individuals to bring personal and planetary transformation." And planetary transformation was right up Tessa's alley! Here is a little of Tessa's talk in her own words: *"During the Wrekin Trust Round Table at Hawkwood College in October, I am going to be running a workshop with a friend and it's going to be called 'Getting Beyond Social Chatter: Creating Small Pods and Circles.' It will include some definite instruction, developing deep listening skills, but mostly friends and colleagues having an experience of getting beyond social chatter and doing something completely different."*

Tessa was a natural networker—perhaps her greatest gift—and she took advantage of the opportunities before her to bring people together, to see things anew, to shake things up, challenge beliefs and stuck thinking and open doorways in consciousness to the reality of our oneness. Wrekin was one of those avenues she played a role in. But in 2020 Wrekin came to the end of its natural cycle; Tessa, too, was winding down a bit physically and in what she could encompass. But needless to say, it did not stop her from looking for her next opening to connect with people. A friend of hers from her book club, who sings in the choir of the local Anglican Church, encouraged Tessa to attend. The Anglican Church goes back to Tessa's childhood roots in South Africa. In a talk entitled, “Celebrate What’s Right” on March 18, 2018 she shared her experience: *“I remember in my spiritual education we were encouraged to realize that we incarnated on this planet to do something: to lift up what we could lift up, to purify what wasn't all that clear, but above all, we came with an awareness and purpose. And still, I look around at all the people in the church on Sunday, so many people who love Jesus, love the Lord, all in a way lovely, but I want to say, “Who are you? What are you doing here on this planet?” Jesus allegedly said, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do...” (John 14:12) I look forward to getting a chance to do it.”*

Tessa felt she was beginning to find her voice anew in the Holy Trinity Church in Malvern and was excited about what she might be able to do with others. *“Maybe we've all had some sort of voice before but maybe there is more to come. I'm not just talking about words, I'm talking about the Presence, the Presence behind the words. That's what shines through. It's an exciting opportunity to do some work, to reveal the truth of myself and encourage others to find the truth of themselves—to find their voice—and not be frightened to speak up, to stick one's neck out and make a difference. I think it could be fun and I'm really thankful for this time and we'll see where it goes....”*

In 2017, Larry and I flew over to England to visit Tessa. We had a marvelous experience touring around the Cotswolds in the areas where Tessa had lived. In some of the places she took us to there were people who knew her and were thrilled to see her. I felt like I was accompanying royalty. She was greeted with deep respect and great appreciation and fondness. Tessa held herself with dignity and when she spoke in her beautifully distinct and clear British/South African accent she commanded attention. I used to joke with her that she could read the phone book and people would stop and listen because they heard the authority in her voice; that's the effect she had.

I don't know if Tessa had thought that her time was completely up yet on earth. She was actually waiting to board a flight to Cape Town to return to her familial roots where

family arrangements had been made for her new residence. She didn't take that flight. She took another route...

I thought, what poetic symbolism that Tessa took her last breath sitting in a chair in the hub of one of the largest international airports in the world. For Tessa was a world traveler, a global citizen. She flew far and wide throughout her life, touching thousands of lives, inspiring and uplifting them the best she could. This time her flight was not horizontal but vertical. Tessa was aligned vertically to what is true, and always looked for resonant substance in other people no matter their race, creed, culture, background or country. They were all part of her field. And in the wake of this divine networker, all those live connections, those meridian grids she established in the earth, are moving upwards in the updraft of her ascension process. "If I be lifted up shall draw all men unto me." Everything that is real and true endures.

So I am delighted to focus a bit of Tessa's heart and her deep passion for life, for truth, for the reason that she was here, clearly never sleeping on the job. And we continue on with the job of expressing that one beautiful Tone that she did so fully.

John Gray: Thank you, Joyce. Tessa embodied the saying, "Wonders never cease!"

Here is a short excerpt from Martin Exeter's "Being the Fire," August 15, 1982. In it he offered an angelic perspective on life in human form. Martin uses the word, "soul," here in the same sense as it appears in the story in the Book of Genesis of the original creation of humanity. *Soul* refers to the human body, mind and heart which the individual angel of life creates and sustains for his or her own expression on earth.

"We do not necessarily anticipate that this human soul is going to live forever. I think that it is inevitable that it would change. In fact I don't think that as an angel of life we'd want the human soul as it now is to hang around us forever. It is useful now, it may be useful tomorrow, it may even be useful next year, possibly ten years from hence—who knows? All that is of concern to us is that we should be in position to make right use of it. Making right use of it, we are present in mind and heart and body in order to make right use of the environment around us, and as long as this present soul can be usefully so employed, presumably we'll make arrangements for it to remain. If it isn't of any more use in this way, then what would be the purpose for its continued existence? We have a realistic viewpoint; and what human beings think of as death, which is the passing of the human soul, means very little. It means very little to the angel of life who is in command, in the sense that its value is based in right use for particular purposes in a specific aspect of the unfoldment of the creative cycle.

“If I am the way, the truth and the life, death means nothing; it doesn't exist! That the substance that composed the human soul may be reintroduced into the natural creative cycles on earth is quite satisfactory; that presumably is what should happen...

“We find, in the natural cycles of living, that we eat and drink day by day; we stay alive that way. Of course we breathe as well, and do other things, but we also excrete. That's as necessary, isn't it? There is something taken in; there is something left behind. This is all natural in the cycles of living. So, with the incarnate angel of life, there is a body and a mind and a heart, a human soul received; and various aspects of waste are left behind day by day from this human soul. Where is the mystery? Where is the mystery of so-called death? At that point just a little more is left behind, that's all. From the standpoint of the angel of life, that is all that is happening. It is human souls who bewail their passing, because they have this sense of separation and isolation and fear...”

Our human forms are temples of the living God, and we each are the gods that inhabit them.

Today is the fourth day of July—a fine day everywhere. In America, today is celebrated as Independence Day, commemorating the declaration 245 years ago of the United States as a nation independent of Great Britain. I am certain that far above and well beyond the external facts and factors involved at that time and since, the USA was founded to play a special part in the spiritual regeneration of humanity. A majority of Americans have pride in the social freedoms most citizens enjoy, and I am thankful for those too. Under a highly authoritarian government we might be restricted from assembling as we do, for example. But individual human freedom is not an end in itself, contrary to what many apparently believe. It has a greater purpose. Those of us who live in countries and societies where there is more openness and fewer arbitrarily imposed controls are indeed blessed. There's a real reason for this. It's certainly not to have license to be more self-serving and self-centered! We rightly count our blessings for external freedoms, but how very much more richly blessed are our body temples by the angels of life vibrantly present in our flesh and in our consciousness.

The real purpose of our bodies, minds and hearts begins to be known as they become independent of the control of external influences. If independence means anything, to me, it's this. Rising up and coming out of submission to externals, we accept, and come into the experience of, identity in angelic being. Knowing—being one with—our true eternal selves, everything makes sense. I don't mean to say by that statement that the insane world of human making makes sense—it doesn't—but we can see and understand *why* it is the way it is. We are thus free *in* the world, just as it is. Wise spiritual leaders and teachers of all flavors and

sorts correctly promote the premise that one must be free *within* one's circumstances before one can become free *from* them.

Let's not wait around for a restoration of an edenic state for everybody. The only way that can possibly come about for you and me is to be our divine selves in expression in the circumstances we find ourselves in, no matter what they are.

Of course, none of us are soloists; we are inexorably connected with fellow human beings whether, humanly speaking, we like it or not. The more we are our true angelic selves in experience and expression, the more obvious this truth becomes. In elevated spiritual perspective, we know the whole body of humankind is an entity, a single body, composed of innumerable subconsciously coordinated components. Every part, every person, has a true purpose, though not many may be conscious of it. But in angelic vision we see the interrelatedness and interconnectedness of what to most appear to be disparate factions.

This collective worldwide human body is a reflection of a collective angelic body composed of all the angels of life currently incarnate in human forms. Just as our personal physical bodies have intricate design, the collective reveals evidence of design to those who see. Our physical bodies have a single highest point, a vibrational apex we could say, in the pineal gland. Is there something analogous to a collective pineal gland in the body of humanity? Yes, necessarily so. Does that defy mental definition? Pretty much, so let's not try to define or explain it. We know it by personal participation; then no explanation is necessary anyway.

The apex of collective divinity in the inner sense is the primary archangelic being for this world. It is said the Great Pyramid in what is today Egypt was constructed long ago as a symbol of the design of archangelic being in form on earth. That structure hasn't had an apex, a capstone, for as long as human history goes back, but it originally did and is meant to. All the essences of the whole pyramid are contained in the apex point of the capstone. In fact, the pyramid itself may be seen as an expansion of its apex point. I have long appreciated an illustration which makes this clearly understandable: Picture the apex in place; now imagine raising the base of the pyramid up toward it. There are successively smaller and smaller pyramids as the base is raised, until finally the whole pyramid is but a single point.

Human minds might imagine that as one rises in the pyramid that everything becomes narrower and more exclusive as one approaches the capstone and the ultimate apex. But there's an apparent paradox here. The higher levels are not more restrictive and exclusive, but actually quite the opposite. The higher one goes in the design symbolized by the pyramid—the pyramid is just a geometric representation, we remember—the more of the whole design is visible all around. In other words, the closer to the apex one is, the more inclusive and all-

encompassing one's view and understanding become. This is the view from the mountaintop, as it is put in many spiritual teachings. The oneness of all is evident from this inner high point.

Living at the apex, we recognize others who also live in this finest of places. We know them and they know us, without explanation. I'm not talking about necessarily appreciating one another's hereditary humanness—that can be lovely, but it can and often does just get in the way. We all have outer foibles and petty weirdnesses. In angelic identity, residing at the apex point, we see and know and love that angelic presence in others, no matter all the human stuff. This is how oneness is known in actual experience.

Immediately as we are at home in this place where we truly live, knowing ourselves as angels of life, there appears a wonder in the heaven of our awareness: the very archangelic Lord of All in whom we live and move and have our being as individual angels of life. Among many other things, we know that His coming on earth is not a future event but a present experience in our own earths, now. In this ineffably glorious holiness, everything is made new.

So when someone we know slips their mortal coil and the individual Eternal One leaves a remnant body vehicle behind, we understand the creative process. "Where is the mystery?" Martin Exeter said. We are thankful for the life lived, as we are for our friend, Tessa, and we are thankful for its timely conclusion in form. All is just right. Many of us aren't spring chickens ourselves anymore, and our times will come too. In angelic identity it is but a changing of clothes. I suspect we'll be seeing a lot more of this in the world.

Our human forms are temples of the living God, and we each are the gods that inhabit them. Just so, the whole of humanity is meant to be and shall be the dwelling place on earth of the Lord Most High. We receive the fire of his loving presence by extending it into the world around us.

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Introductory Music

Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme, BWV 645

Composed by J.S. Bach and performed by Francesco Piemontesi

Concluding Music

Finlandia

Composed by Jean Sibelius & performed by Cantus