

FESTIVAL OF AQUARIUS

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Good evening, friends, and welcome to the Festival of Aquarius. The actual moment of the full moon occurs late tonight, or rather, early tomorrow morning at 1:19 a.m. Religion in the new age, we're told, will be built around the periods of the full moon, when certain great Approaches can be made to the world of reality. Sometimes we receive inquiries from people asking why we refer to the full moon of Aquarius, when—astrologically speaking—the moon is in the opposite sign of Leo. These monthly festivals, although they are called “full moon festivals”, aren't about the moon at all. Esoterically speaking, the moon is considered a dead orb. The Ageless Wisdom says the moon is nothing more than a dead form. It has no emanation and no radiation of any kind and, therefore, has no effect of any kind. Eons ago, life incarnated on the Moon, we're told, but evacuated that planet and the humanity of the time was transferred to this planet, due to a “great disruption” in a previous solar system.

Obviously, this is a mystery too deep for our minds to penetrate, but the essential point is that, at these monthly so-called “full moon festivals”, it is the influence of the sun, symbolic of the soul, that we seek to contact and help distribute in group meditation. The reference to the full moon is that at that moment each month, the moon stands out of the way, so to speak, and the Sun, symbolic of the soul, and the Earth, which symbolises humanity, stand in direct and unimpeded alignment with each other. This is a moment of approach and of contact through meditation, offering the spiritual opportunity to strengthen the spirit of invocation and to create a channel for the evoked energies to pour through into human consciousness. At that moment each month, the spiritual Hierarchy turns its attention to humanity, directing powerful spiritual energies of Love and Light which then can be distributed, through group meditation, to all humanity.

This kind of meditation is a group service given with no thought of receiving something for ourselves, only the creation of a channel for the inpouring Light and Love of Hierarchy to reach human minds and hearts. So let us begin by silently visualising this channel, being created by groups large and small, meeting throughout the world at this time. Then let's say together the affirmation:

*We know, O Lord of Life and Love, about the need;
Touch our hearts anew with love, that we too may love and give.*

In these few words is summed up the essence of service: to register need on any level it exists, and to respond to it selflessly and abundantly. This is the purpose which seeks to work out through the energies of Aquarius, the sign of service symbolised by the Water-bearer, holding his waterpot—water being symbolic of both life-sustaining energy and of the quality this energy needs to flow freely, without restriction. The keynote of Aquarius sums this up very well: “Water of life am I, poured forth for thirsty men.”

We hear so much about the “Age of Aquarius”. Those of us who remember the musical “Hair” may recall one of the songs: “This is the dawning of the Age of Aquarius” when all the stars will align and peace will break out on Earth. That was the fervent, heartfelt hope of the 60's when the war in Vietnam seemed eternal and the struggle to throw off old values and standards seemed worthy of every bit of one's energy and commitment. Here we are now, some 40 or 45 years later, and what has humanity achieved? What's changed? A tremendous amount, really, though there is still a long way to go before we enter the true Aquarian age. The last-ditch struggle of the old-age reactionary forces continues and would hold back the transformation that's needed by engendering fear and separatism, but powerful counter-influences are also available to humanity, and these we seek to contact and wield in our group meditation.

As the flyer for our meeting says, quoting Alice Bailey: “The dominant influence of the Festival of Aquarius stimulates the spiritual capacity of man to love and to serve his fellowmen, to become inclusive and compassionate, and to share his own resources freely and fully...Such an influence is greatly needed in a world where humanity has crystallised into a condition of selfishness and separateness. In the long run nothing can withstand the potent energies pouring through the constellation Aquarius.”

What exactly are these “potent energies” of Aquarius? Aquarius, we’re told, is largely responsible for the changes now being made in our planetary life in all kingdoms. And, because it’s an air sign, its influence is all-pervasive and interpenetrating. On the one hand, that implies that its effects are intangible, but on the other hand, it means they are far more powerful and more widespread than more concrete, and seemingly more “spectacular”, effects would be.

Saturn is said to be the ruler of the first cycle of the Aquarian age. One doesn’t have to understand esoteric astrology to appreciate that, only realize that, to esotericists, that means opportunity, for Saturn is the planet of opportunity—for growth and change, which is perceived sometimes as karma. What is humanity’s opportunity in the coming cycle, we might wonder. Saturn offers opportunity and choice, but it’s up to us to decide what changes are needed and what conditions and preconceived notions need to be destroyed. The karmic aspect of this opportunity can be seen in the purging effect of the world war, which upended civilisation in a multitude of ways. “The Lord of the World is releasing new energies into the world today as a result of the World War. This transmutation will bring about a new power of sacrifice, inclusive surrender, a clearer vision of the Whole, and a cooperative spirit hitherto unknown”, she said. “This will be the first expression of that great *principle of sharing* so sorely needed today.”

We might look at the developments of the past year and the global financial crisis, and wonder where the sharing is. If anything, it could be said, the crisis has demonstrated how little humanity is willing to share. But sharing can be viewed in a number of different ways. It doesn’t just mean the sharing of goods and resources, but of suffering, of thought and ideas, of energy and force—all for good or for ill, depending on the state of consciousness. And these can be seen in the spread of mass communications, in the increasing globalisation of the marketplace, in the trade of armaments, money laundering, the transmission of AIDS, pandemics such as influenza, and cultural preferences such as popular music and the general glamour of “celebrityhood”. Whether we like it or not, we are sharing more and more of everything these days, so closely interwoven is the fabric of our planetary life becoming.

The global response to catastrophes such as September 11th, the South-East Asian tsunami, and now the earthquake in Haiti, all demonstrate humanity’s growing realisation of our oneness. This is extraordinarily hopeful, but it doesn’t mean we don’t still have much room for growth. And as Alice Bailey pointed out, “The ‘principle of sharing’ will become a recognised motivating concept of the new civilisation, but this will not involve beautiful, sweet and humanitarian attitudes. The world will still be full of selfish and self-seeking people, but public opinion will be such that certain fundamental ideas will motivate business, being forced upon business by public opinion.”

The power of public opinion is very visible today and still growing. It isn’t always as wise as it should be, though, and one of the great glammers of democracy—one of the “false ideals”—is the belief that the will of the majority is sufficient to govern the whole and the best we can do. The democratic system seems to be a sort of way station on the road to true sharing, but only a way station, for the majority isn’t inevitably right. This points up the service we seek to render through these monthly full moon meditations. Month after month, year after year, in groups like this one, people throughout the world gather each month to create a channel in consciousness for the inpouring spiritual energies of Light, Active Intelligence, and of Love-Wisdom, which are released by the spiritual Hierarchy to make impact on receptive human minds. Light and love illumine the network of interrelationship which binds all

living things as one; intelligence and wisdom enable us to express that oneness in right relationships on outer levels.

On the inner levels, sharing is the law. Only on the outer physical level is it possible to sustain the illusion that one is separate and independent from all others. This is the illusion, the distortion, of the idea of freedom. “The basis of Non-Separateness is the foundation of sharing”, Alice Bailey said. “The reality is there is no possible separateness in our manifested planetary life.”

Perhaps doubt about this fundamental truth creeps in when we look at the financial crisis created by the banks and the huge financial institutions that control the distribution of money. The media tell us of the unbelievable bonuses some of the people in the financial sector receive, in addition to their high salaries. We hear of the increasing disparity between the rich and the poor and we might wonder, where is the sharing? But sometimes developments have to progress to a certain stage before the tide can shift. We’re told that the present period is one in which human selfishness has come to its climax and must either destroy humanity or be brought intelligently to an end. That’s the opportunity of the present crisis, and the choice facing humanity. And surely, if we believe in the power of meditation to transform human thought and unite human hearts, we can contribute—through these monthly meditation meetings, through the weekly meditation on Sundays for the Redirection of Money for Hierarchical Purposes, and its counterpart, the Thursday meditation on Preparation for the Reappearance of the Christ. For these two meditations work together.

“Christ will come unfailingly when a measure of peace has been restored and when the principle of sharing is at least in process of controlling economic affairs”, Alice Bailey said. Our willingness to live in peace, to settle differences with reason rather than force, and to share our resources, both personal and planetary, will be the sign the Christ awaits that we are ready for still more instruction—for a new embodiment of divinity on Earth. For that is the Christ’s task: not to save us from ourselves and solve our problems for us, but to show us a higher, better way to live, so that we may work out the solutions to our problems ourselves.

“Water of Life am I, poured forth for thirsty men” is the promise of the Aquarian Water-bearer. In the New Testament Christ foretold the coming of the age of the water-bearer, an age when communion and human relationships will be established among all peoples, enabling people everywhere to sit down together in the Presence of the Christ and share the bread and wine (symbols of nourishment). “Preparations for that shared feast (symbolically speaking) are on their way”, Alice Bailey said, “and those preparations are being made by the masses of men themselves, as they fight and struggle and legislate for the economic sustenance of their nations”.

Sharing is about distribution, and thus it has to do with energy, essentially—something that we still know very little about, even though we have an excellent template of sharing in the human physical mechanism, where the blood and the circulatory system are the embodiment, so to speak, of sharing. The heart is the seat of the life aspect, but it depends upon the bloodstream to share, to distribute that life to all parts of the body. Without this free sharing, coagulation sets in and illness develops. That’s why the present economic imbalance in the world is so serious. It’s not only unjust and inhumane, it’s deadly to every part of the system when a part of the body or system is cut off from the supply. The keynote to good health, esoterically speaking, is sharing or distribution, and the economic ills of mankind closely resemble disease in an individual. There is a lack of free flow of the necessities of life to the points of distribution. Only by right distribution of energy will the illness be cured. This is a fundamental of healing on all levels.

Earlier I mentioned the illusion of freedom being the sense of independence and separation, and American society has it bad. The freedom of the individual is a worthy ideal, but only when it’s interpreted in terms

of self-responsibility and the innate rights which every human being is endowed with by virtue of his innate divinity. The idea that freedom means “everyone for himself, let everyone do what he wants without interference” is a distortion of a deeply spiritual principle. Esoterically, freedom is quite different from license. It’s an achievement that must be earned through spiritual evolution—not granted at the start. Freedom is the result of the willingness to share. For, only when we are willing to let absolutely everything within our possession go, slip through our fingers as water poured forth from the water-bearer’s pitcher, do we attain perfect freedom.

“The vision in men’s minds today is that of the Aquarian age. The future will see right relationships, true communion, a sharing of all things, and goodwill”, Alice Bailey said. We aspire to a world where all nations are united in complete understanding and where the diversity of languages is no barrier to right human relations. At the centre of this image is the Christ, the embodiment of the potential that lies within every human soul. If that vision speaks to us, it means something of its reality has registered in our consciousness and awaits realisation. So it’s not just “an idle dream” but a vision we must live for and direct our focus to, until every person of goodwill can share it.