

**WESAK FESTIVAL**  
**New York, April 27, 2010**

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Good evening, friends, and welcome to the Wesak Festival. The full moon of Taurus occurs tomorrow morning at 8:20 am, so we are working well within the building tide of spiritual energies which reach their zenith each year at Wesak. Ever since the Buddha lived on Earth, he has sustained his dedication to humanity's liberation—a commitment touched on in the keynote for our meditation tonight: Let sustained effort be the seed of synthesis, the force which binds together that which has been separated.

There are really two approaches to Wesak—one, the traditional Buddhist festival celebrated each year in every Buddhist society; another, the inner, esoteric dimension which is documented in the Ageless Wisdom. The focus of the esoteric view of Wesak is on the return of the Buddha each year, as he has for many centuries, bringing the force of Shamballa, the centre where the will of God is known, to the assembled Hierarchy of Masters, adepts, initiates and disciples who gather in a remote valley in Tibe. This annual festival is deeply anchored in Tibetan culture, but increasingly in the past century, it has also gained recognition in the West as the inner, esoteric significance of Wesak has become better known. Two relationships are highlighted at Wesak: its link with the following full moon of Gemini, which is the Festival of Goodwill, and the supreme act of cooperation of the two World Teachers, the Buddha and his brother, as Alice Bailey calls him, the Christ, over the period of these two full moons.

At this moment each year, she says, “Two great streams of energy—one focussed through the Buddha and the other focussed through the Christ—are to be fused and blended and it is the task of the world disciples, the initiates and the accepted disciples to precipitate this combined energy on to the waiting world where its effective use will be largely dependent upon the sensitive response of the world aspirants. These are to be found in every country and their task is to react to the stream of directed energy”. The success or failure lies largely in the hands of the new group of world servers, Alice Bailey says.

Her description of the festival in the Tibetan valley says that as the exact moment of the full moon approaches, the Buddha appears in his energy body above a great rock in the northeastern end of the Tibetan valley, “bathed in light and color, with his hand extended in blessing”. Then the Christ sounds a Great Invocation as “the entire group of people in the valley fall upon their faces. It marks the supreme moment of intensive spiritual effort throughout the entire year, and the spiritual vitalisation of humanity and the spiritual effects last throughout the succeeding months. The effect of this Great Invocation is universal or cosmic, and serves to link up with that cosmic centre of spiritual force from which all created beings have come. The blessing is poured forth, and the Christ—as the Representative of humanity—receives it in trust, for distribution at the Festival of Gemini.”

This description is published in a booklet written by Alice Bailey; if you don't have it, please take a copy with you or read it on our website. Her experience of this festival was in a dream state, but every aspirant and disciple throughout the world can participate in meditation, using the imagination, as part of a great channel of energy flow. So let us take a moment to silently centre ourselves as a group in this building stream of spiritual energy and then say together the Great Invocation.

From the point of Light within the Mind of God  
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.  
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God  
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.

May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known  
Let purpose guide the little wills of men --  
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men  
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out  
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and power restore the Plan on Earth.

Wesak is a festival of light, for the Buddha's very title means "the enlightened one". After the Buddha achieved his enlightenment, he was thought by some to be a god or a sorcerer, but he defined himself simply as one who woke up. "I am awake", he said, but what caused him to wake up?

The Buddha was very much a product of his time, an age in many ways similar to the one we live in now. The period in history which ran from approximately 900 to 200 BC or BCE is known as the Axial Age—a period well documented by the religious scholar Karen Armstrong. "Axial" is a good word to describe this pivotal period in the spiritual evolution of humanity, which affected societies in four particular regions of the world: China, India, Greece and the Middle East region around Israel and Palestine. The Axial Age was a period of upheaval and questioning, perhaps best exemplified by the supreme questioner, Socrates. It was a period when human minds were beginning to think more freely and felt increasingly constrained by traditional religions and magical rites and ceremonies, and these the Buddha rebelled against. He particularly wanted to discover a method of liberation which would draw upon the powers innate in the human psyche, rather than depending on the rites and rituals of the traditional religion of his time. For this caused men to believe that the power to salvage their lives lay outside themselves, in gods and spirits and forces which were mysterious and had to be placated through various rites of sacrifice.

The Buddha believed it was essential to question everything and to test every spiritual teaching against one's inner sense of truth. There is Blavatsky's famous statement, given to us in the Secret Doctrine, which beautifully sums up the Buddha's recognition of the innate wisdom that lies within every sincere spiritual aspirant:

"THE LORD BUDDHA HAS SAID that we must not believe in a thing said merely because it is said; nor traditions because they have been handed down from antiquity; nor rumours, as such; nor writings by sages, because sages wrote them; nor fancies that we may suspect to have been inspired in us by a Deva...; nor from inferences drawn from some haphazard assumption we may have made;...nor on the mere authority of our teachers or masters. But we are to believe when the writing, doctrine, or saying is corroborated by our own reason and consciousness. 'For this', says he in concluding, 'I taught you not to believe merely because you have heard, but when you believed of your consciousness, then to act accordingly and abundantly.'"

This may all sound well and good, but if you really think about its implications, what the Buddha recommended is the long and hard route to liberation—far more difficult than the path of ceremonial rites faithfully performed, for it required one to think deeply and clearly about one's beliefs and values. But he knew human potential was up to it. As it was said of his brother, the Christ, "he knew what was in man". The Buddha's final words to his beloved disciple were: "Those who, either now or after I am dead, shall be lamps unto themselves, relying upon themselves only and not relying upon any external help, but holding fast to the truth as their lamp, and seeking their salvation in the truth alone, and shall not look for

assistance to any one besides themselves, it is they, Ananda, who shall reach the very topmost height! But they must be anxious to learn.”

Together, the message of the Buddha and the Christ affirmed the dignity of the human spirit, and thus the supreme challenge they laid down to man. “Be a lamp unto yourselves; work out your salvation with diligence”, the Buddha commanded. He prepared the way for the Christ, who assured men that they were all Sons of God in the same sense that Christ was, and that love and service were the way to liberation. The difficulty of their messages is seen in the fact that we still don’t seem to understand how to achieve right human relations and we still look everywhere outside ourselves for rescue—to wealth and material achievements, to personal acclaim and recognition, to dominance of the self above all others, to avenging all offenses and endlessly seeking to redress some imaginary imbalance so that somehow, someday, we will come out on top. That’s the path of experience of one who clings to a separate individuality.

The Buddha knew this was a complete glamour, a distortion of reality. As Helena Roerich put it in Foundations of Buddhism, “Buddha taught that in the whole Universe only correlatives exist; that nothing exists without cooperation.” Thus it’s not only wrong, but it makes no sense to live for selfish purposes if one wants to be happy. Self-affirmation is the cause of all sorrow, the Buddha said, for all is interrelated, correlative, a part of a great Wholeness. “Nothing exists without cooperation”, Roerich said: “In the whole universe only correlatives exist; the selfish and conceited one could not build the future because, by cosmic law, he would be outside the current of life which carries all that exists toward perfection.” This is the source of the Buddha’s teaching on the Middle Way—the need to chart a course which cleaves to neither of the pairs of opposites but instead points to a path of reconciliation. The cause of glamour is mainly based in the sense of duality, the pairs of opposites. The perception of the dual nature of manifestation lies at the very root of humanity’s troubles. But the source of the problem lies in perception, in consciousness—not in matter itself. Light, in reality, is the spark of divinity which exists within every atom of matter.

Thus, it’s fitting that the Buddha is said to have been born on the full moon of Taurus, achieved his enlightenment in Taurus, and died on the full moon of Taurus. Taurus is what astrologers call an Earth sign, and the Buddha, when he achieved his enlightenment, his liberating insight into the nature and purpose of life on Earth, touched his right hand to the Earth in a sign of validation. The power to use the light, to wield it as a beam of energy directed or channeled towards a path of future unfoldment, is a powerful tool of liberation. But the light, which exists within all substance and therefore within every human being, must be focused, one-pointed. The disciple has to become the bull, the symbol of Taurus, “rushing forward upon a straight line with its one eye fixed upon the goal and beaming light”—not for self-illumination but to bring the vision to humanity.

That’s why the new group of world servers is ruled by Taurus. “The onward rush of the Bull of God, his one eye streaming light, reveals steadily and without cessation the stupendous and sublime plan of Deity. This is the subject which light reveals”, Alice Bailey wrote. Where this Plan is leading isn’t clear, but it’s in process of revealing the light which exists at the heart of every atom of substance. And this is what the Buddha woke up to, that night long ago in ancient India. He experienced it as a light that liberates and that rescues from pain. And because he knew first hand that the same light exists within every human being, he spent the rest of his life teaching everyone who would listen about the need to rely upon this light to make their way.

Self-reliance in sustained effort is the essence of the Buddha’s message, but at the same time, because everything is correlative, part of a larger wholeness, “self-affirmation is the cause of all sorrow,” the Buddha said. As an indication of the point humanity has presently reached in evolution, it’s increasingly affirmed that, as the telephone company says, “we’re all connected”, yet the cult of celebrity and

materialism continue to be powerful motivating factors of human desire. We've clearly reached a new "Axial Age"—a point of division regarding future goals and values.

This is affirmed by the Ageless Wisdom, for the writings of Alice Bailey say that "Great decisions have to be made all over the world, as to whether humanity moves forward into a New Age of cooperation and of right human relations or whether the materialistic groups will reassert their control and succeed in winning the day. This great cleavage is now in process of settlement," she said. The importance of this decisive moment affects not just humanity, but extends even up to the planetary Logos, the Lord of the World. "The judgment referred to has relation to a mysterious process which is going on in the thinking of the planetary Logos", Alice Bailey wrote.

One question this great Being must address is how much increased spiritual potency humanity can take, for the build-up of spiritual energies leading to the externalisation of the Hierarchy and the return of the Christ to active presence on Earth are mobilising forces of terrific potency. Is humanity strong enough, aligned enough, to bear it? Is the planet's energy field, its etheric body, resilient enough? These are questions we can't answer, but we can help to establish the conditions that will strengthen humanity's receptivity.

Group meditation can help to sustain the work of all servers who work for enlightenment, who place truth above all else, for, as Blavatsky said, "There is no religion higher than truth." As we remember, the Buddha realised that the cause of human suffering and glamour lies mainly in perception, wrong desire and incorrect thinking. At Wesak powerful energies are released called the Forces of Enlightenment, which emanate from the heart of God and which affect the great educational movements, the international forums and conferences, the mass communications media—all the fields that deal with the upliftment of consciousness and which have brought Humanity to a stage in its development where it can participate with more awareness in the decisions which will determine the coming age. The rightness of these choices depends on the awakening of receptive human minds everywhere, and we can see the competing forces at work today in the battle for the public mind, so to speak. This may be why the mass media are so powerful and why they are so feared by some, for technology allows the media now to have access to human minds and solar plexuses everywhere, giving valuable information but also sowing fear and division.

"Focussed, determined, enlightened public opinion is the most potent force in the world", Alice Bailey said. "It has no equal but has been little used." The necessary decisions humanity must make cannot be imposed; they must be chosen by the willing consent of informed human minds, generating the power of public opinion. And this is why the sustained effort of those committed to human liberation is the seed of synthesis. All efforts to think in terms of the good of the whole, the common welfare and not the clan, the tribe, or the separated self, help to bind up the separated fragments of our world. We are entering an age when world salvage will be the responsibility of humanity as a whole, rather than dependent on the intervention of a few advanced beings. This makes it absolutely essential that the mass consciousness be uplifted, inspired by a vision of the vast network of inter-relationships that bind all together. And it validates the Buddha's conviction that every spiritual seeker holds the key to his own liberation, for no one dwells outside the stream of life-sustaining energy. Everyone and everything is an intrinsic part of that great stream, could they but know it.

In our group meditation we can help to generate a focused group appeal which will prepare human consciousness for the inflow of these potent spiritual energies. We can be part of a group endeavour of such moment that, Alice Bailey said, "it will reach those Lives Who Brood over humanity and our civilisation, and Who work through the Masters of the Wisdom and the assembled Hierarchy. This group endeavour will call forth from Them a responsive magnetic impulse which will bring together the overshadowing beneficent Forces. Through the concentrated effort of these groups in the world today

(who constitute subjectively One group) light and inspiration and spiritual revelation can be released in such a flood of power that it will work definite changes in the human consciousness and ameliorate conditions in this needy world. It will open men's eyes to the basic realities, which are as yet only dimly sensed by the thinking public. Then humanity itself will apply the necessary correctives, believing it can do so in the strength of its own sensed wisdom and strength; yet all the time, behind the scenes, stand the grouped world aspirants, working silently, in unison with each other and the Hierarchy, and thus keeping the channel open through which the needed wisdom, strength and love can flow.”

This can seem a daunting challenge—indeed, it should—if approached from an individual perspective. But that would only place us outside of the stream of energy-flow that is released at this high point each year. Year after year, century after century, the Buddha has returned to Humanity at Wesak, bringing the touch of Shamballa, the pure energy of the spiritual will, which is the will-to-good of the whole. His sustained effort on behalf of Humanity, and the Christ’s sustaining love for Humanity, say everything about their faith in humanity’s capacity to liberate itself from glamour—IF we are willing to make the effort, IF we are anxious to learn.

Let us ponder now on the sustained effort which is the seed of synthesis, the force which binds together that which has been separated.