

FESTIVAL IN LIBRA
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Good evening friends. Welcome to this celebration of the first full moon in Libra. Two full moons occur in Libra this year. Having two full moons occur in one sign happens occasionally when the moon is full at both the beginning and the end of the lunar cycle. It may not have any significance other than an extended opportunity for the group to work with more intensity during the full moon cycle. And the balancing influence of Libra is likely just the spiritual impact humanity needs today, given the schisms and divisions that are creating so much stress and pain in the world. Pain, we are told, is the effect produced when the astral or emotional body is wrongly polarised. Pain is the outcome of failure to balance correctly the pairs of opposites. It indicates lack of equilibrium. Many of the painful schisms need to be healed very soon if humanity is to move forward in preparation for the coming new age. The Tibetan reminds us that "we are the conditioners of our own destiny. Neither the Christ nor the Hierarchy may, at this stage in human evolution, take any step vitally affecting humanity unless released into this activity by humanity itself" (EXH. 352). So before the Christ can return it is incumbent upon humanity to show Him that we are ready to move forward in consciousness; that we have the will to work together to heal the separateness that exists in human consciousness; that we are sensitive to the need to let love prevail; to let all men love. That will provide the invocative note which the Hierarchy is waiting for.

So let us work together to sound that note of unifying love that is so beautifully sounded in the Mantram of Unification. Let us see our group standing within the subjective heart center of the new group of world servers and sound the note of love that gives humanity the power to transcend the extremes now existing in human consciousness. Love is the foundation for the path to liberation.

The sons of men are one and I am one with them.
I seek to love, not hate
I seek to serve and not exact due service;
I seek to heal, not hurt.

Let pain bring due reward of light and love.
Let the soul control the outer form,
And life, and all events,
And bring to light the Love
That underlies the happenings of the time.

Let vision come and insight.
Let the future stand revealed.
Let inner union demonstrate and outer cleavages be gone.
Let love prevail.
Let all men love.

We have a double opportunity this year to reflect and ponder on the unique and necessary qualities of Libra. In the annual cycle of the twelve spiritual festivals, Libra comes at the midway point; at a time when there is a need to pause and reflect on what has developed in the previous six signs and what can be accomplished in the remaining signs of the cycle. This is a pause that the soul builds into its plans for a whole series of lives. And it is also a time when meditation

groups like this one can pause and reflect more deeply on the particular quality or the need for balance between opposite forces that are playing out in the world today.

As we know, today there are many deeply felt expressions and opinions of human thinking and feeling from the left and the right and from the center. They are all very vocal, all seeking more political power to exercise their point of view, usually not willing to compromise and thus all adding to the stress and tension of daily life. Not many of these groups seem willing to seek that unique Libra quality of finding a middle path which usually lies between all pairs of opposites. This is the path that "requires the development of a sense of values and the power to utilize rightly the balancing, analytical faculty of the mind". This right balancing use of the mind seems to be lacking today; more favoured is the glamoured and illusory expressions emerging from the uncontrolled astral nature. In that group there is a willingness to believe in and accept as being true, statements that are loudly voiced repeatedly, but have no basis in truth. If said loudly enough and often enough, it soon becomes accepted as truth by those who want it to be true. They have given up or are unable to use the higher, analytical quality of the mind. Thinking is held captive by low desire. So there is a great need today for what Libra can contribute to human progress.

An individual life in Libra provides a necessary interlude in the great zodiacal cycle—a stage where one stepping on the path can pause and reflect. It is a time full of opportunity, but also a time of difficulty. It is a stage that "provides the curious see-saw experience which proves so distressingly bewildering first to the man who seeks to be entirely human but finds within himself impediments and urges which drive him on to something which is higher than the human and, secondly, to the aspirant or the disciple. His focus of interest and his aim is soul life, yet he finds within himself that which seeks ever to draw him back to the old ways, the old habits and the old desires" (EA 229). The Libra influence brings about the tests and trials between the soul and the personality, where the personality fights with power and determination to preserve its way of life, the only way of life it knows. But the soul also has its plans for expressing a new quality of light and love through its outer forms and applies a sustained effort to create a new man in the world. But as the soul's voice grows stronger, the tension between the two increases.

The increase of tension, arising because of the conflict between the opposites, seems to describe the general condition existing in the world today. It is a conflict between the soul of humanity and the strong power of material existence. The soul is speaking out more loudly and shining its light more brilliantly and illuminating the corruptive nature of the material forces. This is the struggle that often occurs in major transition periods like we are experiencing now between the ages of Pisces and Aquarius. The opposites of the material and spiritual paths are becoming more prominent and visible. And this to a great extent has been brought into the light by the growing influence of Libra which, we are told, would come into pronounced control and into a position of power at the end of the twentieth century. So its power is increasing each year. It is a power that is forcing us to make hard choices between continuing to follow a strictly material way of life, or to choose a path tempered by the spiritual values of the soul like service, sharing sacrifice and goodwill.

The experience of the extremes calls in the judicial mind—the mind that seeks a balanced position between extreme opposites. The ideal position is that point of balance between the pairs of opposites. The difficulty is to find that midway point and learn to stand in the "light" between the opposite paths, and through that "light" achieve freedom. One will never achieve true freedom as long as there are attachments of any kind. Even on the so-called spiritual path one has attachments. A religious devotee may be attached to a life of constant prayer and fasting for purification and will willingly undergo physical deprivations. A spiritual seeker may be still

attached to certain religious rituals and find comfort in the material opulence of a church. It isn't the material things that matter. What holds one back from achieving freedom is the controlling power of attachments and the need to cling to these illusions and glamors. It is the light of the detached soul that provides the path to freedom. It is the magnetic power of that light that enables one to resolve all attachments into a point of unity and synthesis.

Humanity as a whole is today facing this great struggle with the opposites. The judicial impact of Libra, along with the magnetic and destructive touch of the Shamballa force is bringing many of these opposites into the light, bringing the extremes up for resolution. A few decades ago the Tibetan wrote of a previous period of world tension, but his words are still applicable today. "World tension today", he said, "consists in the fact that physical force and etheric energy are at grips. (The physical and the etheric are the first basic pairs of opposites that one has to deal with). Etheric force is closely related to the Monad or the highest spiritual aspect. It is life itself on the verge of externalization. Hence the emphasis today upon the spirit of humanity, upon the spirit of a nation, and the spirit of a group. This is all the result of the battle going on between this pair of opposites in the field of human affairs and in the field of individual average human living. It is, however, this conflict—fought out to the point of synthesis and of at-one-ment—which produces the re-orientation of the race and of the individual to the truer values and to the world of reality. It is this conflict—successfully waged—which lands the man, as an individual, and the mass, as a whole, upon the Path of Purification. When there is unification of these energies upon the physical plane, you then have one-pointed activity and a determination to travel in a specific direction. There follows the resolution...of the duality into a unity."

The impact of Libra and Shamballa, working together, is forcing individuals, groups and nations to make hard choices, particularly in the fields of politics, religion and in the world economy. The imprisoning attachments we have in all these fields are more and more evident, which is all to the good. We hang on to our old religious beliefs, thinking that they are the chosen way of God. We hang on to our political beliefs because we desire the illusions of power they seem to bring. And we become blinded by the economic power of "having" while not seeing the poverty of those who "have not."

Finding and merging with a balanced middle way between opposites is not easy, especially for those who are bound by extreme positions. It is hard for them to bend and give way to another line of thinking. The middle path is not a separate way unrelated to the two opposites. It must necessarily be a blend, borrowing from the left and from the right, forming a solution that all can accept. There is then a liberation from the back and forth argument going nowhere, enabling a forward movement. So finding the middle, balanced way requires tough choices.

These tough choices are being forced upon us today because of where we human beings stand on the Path, be it the Path of Purification or the Path of Discipleship. It is time, according to the timing of the Plan, to move the revelation forward, and to envision the greater things to come that lie just over the horizon—those greater things of the Kingdom of God. Somehow we have to find that light which will help us to "choose the way which leads between the two great lines of force", and find the center point of balance. In our meditative work this evening we can help to strengthen the vision of right, balanced relationships which will "bring to light the love that underlies the happenings of the time."
