

**THE WESAK FESTIVAL**  
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**THE BRIDGE OF SOULS AND SERVERS – CREATING AN ALIGNMENT AT WESAK**

Welcome to those of you who have just joined us, and welcome to all who are listening via BlogTalk Radio. We are pausing, in the midst of the first phase of the annual Arcane School conference, which begins here in New York this weekend, to observe the high point of the spiritual year – the Festival of Wesak. This ancient annual festival, which is increasingly universally celebrated, is not a commemoration of a long-ago event but a living spiritual experience with energy. Each year at the full moon of Taurus, the Buddha leaves his high place and returns to the world, bringing the “touch of Shamballa” to humanity, renewing, quickening the Shamballa force which is the pure, potent energy of the will-to-good. Through our meditation we will endeavour to create a channel for this inpouring energy of the spiritual will to reach all responsive human minds – all intelligent, thinking people of goodwill.

The keynote for our meditation will be “Let the ‘bridge of souls and servers’ link the subjective and objective worlds, thus aiding the Christ in his work”. Perhaps it comes as a surprise to some that we should focus on the Christ’s work at this Festival of the Buddha, the great Eastern festival of Wesak. But in all the beautiful and inspiring literature of Buddhism, the Alice Bailey writings stand out for their unique depiction of the special relationship of the Christ and the Buddha - the “two brothers”, as Alice Bailey called them: two brothers and two partners in a shared effort to prepare humanity to fulfil its destined part in the divine Plan. The flow of the Plan is such that no one World Teacher’s efforts stand in isolation. In a similar way, we shouldn’t think of Wesak as an isolated event but as the high point of a period called the three spiritual Festivals. The first of these, the Easter festival, occurred last month and is called the great Western festival; the third festival, the Festival of Goodwill, the Christ’s own festival, will occur next month, and the whole cycle of the major festivals involves the partnership of the Buddha with the Christ and the spiritual Hierarchy.

All evolutionary unfoldment is cyclic and interlinked, creating stepping stones for humanity’s path, offering guidance, vision and direction. The role of the World Saviours is to point the way, and this the Buddha and the Christ, who followed him, did. But it is humanity which must respond by taking the next step. We’re asked to take part in the Wesak festival with “released minds” and with the creative imagination. So let us take a moment to visualise the bridge of souls and servers which extends to the very highest levels of existence on our planet, and even beyond. Let us imagine the alignment which must be created at Wesak for the inpouring Shamballa force, and see the subjective network which serves at the heart of the centre Humanity as a key link in this bridge. Then let us say together the Mantram of the New Group of World Servers.

May the Power of the one Life pour through the group of all true servers.

May the Love of the One Soul characterize the lives of all who seek to aid the Great Ones.

May I fulfil my part in the One work through self-forgetfulness, harmlessness and right speech."

The new group of world servers is ruled by Taurus, the divine energy that brings "illumination and the attainment of the vision." Its keynote is “I see and when the Eye is opened, all is light.” The Buddha himself was governed by Taurus, the bull, which helps us understand the tenacity that led him to undertake his ground-breaking mission some 500 years before Christ – a time which in some significant ways parallels the present times. He emerged during the period of about 700 years, from 900 to 200 BCE, called the Axial age, a period considered by religious scholars such as Karen Armstrong as pivotal to humanity’s spiritual development. Some of the greatest philosophers, such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, also came out of this period. Ancient religious rituals were being questioned, old myths were

proving hollow, and a spiritual vacuum was appearing just at a time when shifting conditions, political and economic, were creating a profound anxiety in human beings. Much like today, a new world with new paradigms was looming on the horizon, but no one understood what it portended. Clearly, a future much different than the past was dawning, but it looked confusing and, for many, frightening.

Into this confusing era the Buddha brought a wholly new way of looking at life. He offered no theories about God or the creation of the world; he refused to teach spiritual doctrines. Why? Because “I have nothing to teach but karma”, he said. Nothing else would help relieve the pain and suffering of life. Rather than offer a new dogma or ritual to appease powerful spiritual forces, he wanted people to look within themselves, for there and only there would they find both the cause and the cure of their suffering. “I teach nothing but karma” – using the reasoning mind to recognise cause and effect.

The Buddha knew first-hand how difficult the search for spiritual liberation is, and he spent a number of years going down first one path, then another, in furious pursuit of truth, but his efforts brought no satisfaction. Finally, after years of searching and experimenting with one method after another, without success, he determined to sit under the bodhi tree until he achieved the enlightenment he sought. Here we see the Taurus quality of the Buddha nature – the image of the “bull, rushing forward upon a straight line with its one eye fixed upon the goal and beaming light” – the “eye of the Bull” which is the eye of revelation. And finally, legend has it, after 40 days, on the full moon of Taurus, sitting under that tree and refusing to budge, he made his breakthrough. He achieved the enlightenment he had sought with sheer, dogged tenacity, and he distilled that enlightened understanding into a teaching that he spent the rest of his life sharing, travelling throughout India from one town and village to another, with his disciples, speaking to whoever would listen. His message was, essentially, that the cause of suffering is the craving for earthly existence, which keeps one locked into an endless cycle of birth and death driven by the craving for existence, and that release from this suffering comes when one stops craving a separated, independent existence. “Self-affirmation is the cause of all sorrow”, he said. The belief that we can maintain an isolated independent identity keeps us wedded to the compulsion to affirm self-interest at any cost. Give up that craving and you will attain release from suffering, he said.. You will embark upon the “endless Way of which Nirvana is but the beginning”.

The erroneous belief that an independent self can be maintained indefinitely is the cause of our suffering. One of the names by which the Buddha was known – Tathagata – means “thus gone”. Such a one has moved on from a state of individuality – of “I am” – to a state of identity with the whole. Nirvana means literally “blowing out” - not in the sense of extinction but, rather, of extinguishing the fires of greed, selfishness, and hatred – all the forces that are mobilised to maintain the delusion of a separated self. When this fire is blown out, the Buddha discovered, there is nothing left to protect or defend. Imagine such a state of being, or shall we call it awareness: There is no one to take offense or feel disrespected, no reason to feel resentful or jealous, misunderstood or unappreciated, for these are all the cravings of the separated self.

It’s said of his followers, when they caught on to his message, that the teaching “rose up” within them. The truth of existence had lain within them all along, and when they finally gained release from the grip of the separated self, they were left not empty but joyous. The Buddha and his followers were reknowned for their joy, which may be the best testimonial of all to the value of his message. Imagine such a state of liberation which is not in the least nihilistic, but unified – one with the whole. Every human being contains this potential within, and that’s why the Buddha taught self-reliance to all spiritual seekers.

This is confirmed by the Ageless Wisdom. The Secret Doctrine says “absolute intelligence thrills through every atom”; that “Deity is within every atom of substance”. Intelligence governs all matter, for every atom has the elements of selectivity, of discrimination, of mind. It was this recognition that led the Buddha to teach his followers that the way of release lay within them, within their very substance. In his

final sermon he reaffirmed this truth, commanding his disciples to “Be a lamp unto your own feet. Work out your salvation with diligence.”

The Christ is said to repeat this final sermon of the Buddha each year at the full moon of June, the Gemini festival, the known as the Festival of Humanity. Their contributions to human evolution cannot be fully appreciated without an appreciation of their partnership. The ignorance which the Buddha sought to dispel is caused by the glamour of selfish desire, and the lack of love which the Christ sought to overcome is caused by illusion. The two problems most central to the human experience, glamour and illusion, are primarily based on duality: on the concept of a separated self as the central reference point, expressing itself through craving and hatred - “I want that” but “I refuse this”. The Buddha taught detachment as a way to gain release from the senses, which are focused on the outer objective realm of things, where the sense of separation is anchored. Selfish desire, he taught, is at the root of human craving. The Christ taught that the most profound illusion of all is the sense of separateness, for “no man liveth unto himself”, and no nation can either.

The Buddha’s emphasis on the individual’s capacity for liberation was carried forward by the Christ who taught the value, the spiritual worth, of every individual human being, no matter what his or her station in life. No one was too degraded, too powerless to progress, so the Christ sought out the poor and the destitute, the “sinners” and what he called “the least of these my brethren”. Right human relations and loving understanding are the highest goal of humanity, Christ taught. We see in the combined work of the Buddha and the Christ the enormous validation they gave to the human experience, and the sense of dignity and worth that they affirmed in every human being – a worth that we call the soul.

It’s interesting that Buddhism is considered a soulless religion, and scholars go round and round on the question of the continuity of the self. It’s true that the Buddha taught that the nature of evolution, of the flow of life, cannot be static or unchanging. In all of nature there are only correlatives, he said, meaning that everything is interrelated and mutually dependent. Therefore, the idea of an eternal, changeless and separated, distinctive identity capable of maintaining its borders is impossible to reconcile with the Buddha’s teaching, for everything is in flux, including the nature of personal identity. The sense of an “I” can be likened to a fire or a river, which are constantly changing and renewing themselves. So the idea of a fixed, separated existence, even of a very high level like the soul, cannot endure forever. And this is corroborated by occult teaching which says that at the fourth initiation the soul is relinquished and there remains only the monadic life, or pure spirit.

This is also why the Buddha viewed the concept of God as “unhelpful”. The idea of a personalised deity was limiting, he said, because it could be used to prop up the ego. He constantly sought to direct his followers’ attention away from every concept that reflects back to or depends on the endorsement of a separated self to shore up its ramparts. But this is quite different than saying the Buddha said there is no God. Remember, he refused to teach the spiritual doctrine. That doesn’t mean he didn’t know it. One senses that he had come upon – opened himself to – the deepest truths of human existence, for whatever he encountered left him enlightened, liberated and filled with joy and love for his fellow beings. But he must have understood that certain levels of Reality must be entered by each individual on his own merits. No ladder to them can be passed on second-hand; because liberation must be self-won, not bestowed as a gift.

Alice Bailey presents a very interesting view of the concept of God as contrasted between Buddhist and Christian teaching “Both schools of thought are right and in no way contradict each other”, she says. “In their synthesis and in their blending, the truth as it really is can begin – dimly – to appear. There is a God Transcendent Who ‘having pervaded the whole universe with a fragment of Himself’ can still say: ‘I remain.’ There is a God Immanent Whose life is the source of the activity, intelligence, growth and attractiveness of every form in all the kingdoms in nature. In form and when in manifestation, the only

way in which the human mind and brain can express its recognition of the conditioning divine life is to speak in terms of Person, of Individuality – of ‘God’. Behind the manifested universe, however, stands the formless One, That which is not an individual, being free from the limitations of individualised existence...The interplay of soul and mind produces the manifested universe, with all that is therein. When that interplay is persisting...we use terms of human origin and therefore limiting, for how else can we speak with clarity?...When the interplay ceases and manifestation ends, such terms are no longer suitable; they have no meaning...There is but life, formless, freed from the individuality, unknown. In the teaching of the West, preserved for us by the Christ, the concept of God immanent is preserved – God in us and in all forms. In the synthesis of the Eastern and Western teachings, and in the merging of these two great schools of thought, something of the superlative Whole can be sensed – sensed merely – not known.”

Blavatsky seems to confirm this, for she defined Buddhism as “the wisdom religion...as perfect monotheism for it accepts one boundless, infinite, incomprehensible principle, which the human intellect does not understand”. But whether we call this boundless, infinite, incomprehensible principle God or Deity or simply Reality, it still lies beyond the capacity of most human beings to understand. But we can aspire to understand. We can use our minds to try to imagine this Reality and, more importantly, to identify its presence within the world. That’s the essence of the task of the bridge of souls and servers, and particularly of the esoteric group: to find a way to unite the inner and outer worlds as one, dispensing with the dualistic view of the world, the source of glamour and illusion. The Shamballa force which the Buddha brings at Wesak manifests as synthesis, the energy which fosters “cohesion, a drawing together and a tendency to fusion and union”.

We are asked to take part in Wesak with “released minds” and with the creative imagination. So we can begin by imagining what will be expelled as the synthesis of the world emerges in human consciousness: all that fosters separateness, all that affirms the delusion of a separated self, all that sees life in terms of opposing forces. At Wesak the bridge of souls and servers creates an alignment extending from the extraplanetary forces brought by the Buddha to our planet each year, through the assembled Hierarchy and the Christ, who receives the blessing of Shamballa brought by the Buddha and which the Christ then holds in custody until he releases it into Humanity at the full moon of June, through the new group of world servers, and down to the people of goodwill and international understanding. We’re told that, if these three groups – the assembled Hierarchy including the Buddha and the Christ, the new group of world servers, and the masses of people of goodwill – can be brought into alignment, *even momentarily*, “much can be accomplished; the gates of the new life can be opened, and the inflow of the new spiritual forces can take place. Such is the Group objective and idea.”

So let us work now in meditation.