

Memory and Anticipation

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Our reflections this evening will be based around memory and anticipation – memory being strongly activated in a new and conscious manner in Scorpio. In this sign the residue of past desires and unredeemed thinking processes are brought to the forefront of consciousness to be raised into the purifying light of the soul. The battle in Scorpio could be interpreted in terms of the tension produced between memory and its counterpart – anticipation. While memory brings the conditioning energies of the past into the present, anticipation projects them into an imagined future experience; in fact we probably wouldn't be too wide of the mark in considering anticipation as the memory running forwards. The word 'anticipation' comes from the Latin 'anticipare' – *anti* meaning 'before' and *capere* meaning 'to take' – and so we have the meaning 'to take before hand'.

This is a very apt description of what happens when the memory and imagination work together to produce images of pleasure or pain, of what we desire or what we fear. The images become saturated with potencies as the mind focuses on them to the point that they can precipitate into our lives, in a very tangible way, the tests and temptations that we associate with Scorpio. Human beings are therefore both conscious and unwitting agents of invocation – while we naturally wish to attract to ourselves conditions that cause pleasure, we unwittingly evoke that which causes pain too, for the two are but opposite sides of the same coin. As the old adage goes – don't wish for something too hard – you might get it!

Before proceeding can we pause here and say together the Mantram of Unification:

*The souls 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.*

Until now science has long held that memory is stored by locked-in neural connections in the brain and that mature brains are static in the sense that no new cells are born and this neural stability is necessary for long-term memory. However, this has recently changed and neurogenesis, as it has been termed, has been discovered in the hippocampus, an area important to memory, and most strikingly, in the neo-cortex, which is part of the brain involved in higher thinking. It has been discovered that the growth of neural cells takes place in animals that are put in complex environments where they learn tasks – whereas without any interesting cognitive experiences, they wither away. This is very much in line with esoteric

understanding. While the millions of neural ganglia in the brain and body are formed by the third month of ante-natal life, they are capable of growth as their substance changes into fibres. This is produced later on in life by our thought processes which cause chemical activity in turn causing the matter of the cell to shoot out making connections and cross-connections in every direction; truly, as a man thinketh, so is he!

By the act of thought, the brain and central nervous system grow in complexity and the personality becomes more sensitive to the subtle impacts coming from the surrounding environment and the inner prompting of the soul. As the physical eye developed in response to the impact of light, so too do the spiritual organs in the human organism develop in response to the sequential impacts of truth. This is one reason why it takes time and effort to understand some of the deeper truths of faith and religion, of spiritual philosophy and ethics, why the concepts are difficult to hold in the mind, and why, to some, they make no sense at all. Where the neural pathways that link the soul and the subtler vehicles to the physical brain are not yet formed, the physical brain cannot assimilate them. The light that radiates from the constant exposure to truth has its effects however, and like all other life forms, the human soul will grow steadily towards the light by developing the necessary organs to assimilate and process it. In this way the light bearer is born, and truth contacted is anchored and expressed on the physical plane. As more and more light bearers steadily weave light into physical substance, a chain reaction can eventually take place that will carry humanity forward into an era of lighted peace and security.

To understand the way in which memory and anticipation work, we have to change our perception of time and think of the past, present and future all existing simultaneously as vibratory patterns in the universal consciousness. To explore the idea further, there is an illuminating analogy by Bhagavan Das in *The Science of Peace*: “If a spectator wandered unrestingly through the halls of a vast museum, a great art-gallery, at the dead of night with a single small lamp in one hand, each of the natural objects, the pictured scenes, the statues, the portraits, would be illumined by that lamp, in succession, for a single moment, while all the rest were in darkness, and after that single moment, would itself fall into darkness again. Let there now be not one but countless such spectators, as many in endless number as the objects of sight within the place, each spectator meandering in and out incessantly through the great crowd of all the others, each lamp bringing momentarily into light one object and for only that spectator who holds that lamp. This immense and unmoving building is the rock-bound ideation of the changeless Absolute. Each lamp-carrying spectator out of the countless crowd is one line of consciousness out of the pseudo-infinite lines of such, that make up the totality of the one universal consciousness. Each coming into light of each object is its potency, is an experience of the jiva [the spectator]; each falling into darkness is its lapse into the latent. From the standpoint of the objects themselves, or of the universal consciousness, there is no latency, nor potency. From that of the lines of consciousness, there is.”¹ From this analogy we see that as the light shed in the gallery increases, greater areas of it will become illumined until all the artifacts within it can be seen at the same time. In the same manner, as light pours into the individual consciousness, greater areas of the universal mind are lit up and individual perception gives way to group perception as it becomes steadily more inclusive and vibrates more in tune with the whole.

To start at the beginning of the evolutionary trail however, all of life’s experiences can be viewed as a series of force patterns that impact on the five senses and cause the brain cells to vibrate in a certain way. Wave patterns of nervous energy are thereby transmitted through to the astral vesture, where emotional energy is added, then on through to the mental vesture where a part of it is thrown into a state of flux. An image or force pattern is thereby reproduced in the mental vesture in a similar way that grains of sand spread over the surface of a sound plate form varying geometrical patterns when the plate vibrates at different frequencies. This force pattern is accompanied by a change in consciousness and the indwelling life relates cause and effect to one another. Each image and its impact is related to a pleasing or displeasing change in consciousness. Slowly, the incarnated soul learns how to imitate and reproduce the

¹ The Science of Peace. Bhagavan Das

same image in the mental body from within rather than just receiving from without, and this is the beginnings of memory. The images produced from within do not have the same intensity, but they serve more to galvanise the personality into action to attain that outer experience again, and so anticipation develops. So are conjured up images of what was found to be pleasing, prompting a search for their repetition in the outer world. As repetition of stimuli eventually leads to a dulling of the senses, the search is ever on to increase their intensity and finally to move on to a new area of experience, and so does the consciousness steadily unfold.

As evolution proceeds the ability of the soul to create thoughtforms in the mental vesture becomes more powerful and refined until the world of thought begins to have more reality and life about it than do external impacts. The latter have brought experiences of pleasure and pain and thus developed discriminatory powers – the power to select, to organise and to plan in order to attain the desirable. These attributes will now be used to build thoughtforms of a much more subtle nature as the consciousness starts to become responsive to contacts coming from the fifth kingdom of nature – the kingdom of souls. The great Plan of love and light is contacted and now the human consciousness is able to work with it as it has developed the skills of planning, by using memory and anticipation to link the inner and outer worlds together. In anticipation, we "take beforehand" the energies of the divine Plan concerned with humanity's immediate future. They are then modified by the spiritual memory, the wisdom accrued through countless incarnations, and specific thoughtforms of light and love are carefully built to help form solutions to world problems.

This shift from the search for pleasure in the world of form to contacting and precipitating the Plan from within is not a smooth process however, but one of galvanic upheaval as the human soul literally changes the orientation of the axis around which the outer life revolves. The crystallised forces of desire that remain in the lower bodies are disturbed and erupt into the consciousness bringing much suffering and turmoil. On a global level, this corresponds to the current upheaval being caused by the changing orientation of the Earth's axis due to the pull of a great cosmic centre. This is responsible for the volcanic eruptions and the many earthquakes that have occurred over the past two hundred years. It is also one of the major factors that is responsible for the present world crisis and difficult world situation. "Great shifts in consciousness are followed inevitably by upheaval in the outer forms. This is true in the life of the solar Deity, of a planetary Logos, of humanity as a whole and of a man. A major event such as a change in the axis of the Earth is related to an initiation of the planetary Logos. It can be noted therefore, the relation to the individual life as it shifts its consciousness steadily in the vital unfolding process of the Path of Discipleship and Initiation."

We are told that humanity as a whole is currently shifting its orientation towards the Hierarchy and great crystallised forces formed by wrong thinking and desire are consequently erupting into the foreground of consciousness and producing world crisis. With this in mind, it seems reasonable to conclude midst the present world situation that a gigantic shift in consciousness has and is taking place in the human kingdom. It is one of breathtaking magnitude and heralds far reaching and accelerated development on the planet. Scorpio plays its part here as it is the great constellation which influences the turning point both in the life of humanity and in the life of the individual human being....The test of Scorpio concerns the readiness of the threefold personality to reorient itself to the life of the soul and later for initiation. Scorpio carries all tests right down into the physical plane life and there they accumulate to form the Lernaean hydra, the dweller on the threshold which stands between the disciple and the light.

And so here we are, the world facing what can only be considered as a dweller experience even if not of the advanced kind that confronts the initiate of the third degree. And if we look at the way in which Hercules tackled this labour in Scorpio, we can see some striking resemblances with the events that followed 9/11 and the hunt for Osama Bin Laden in the caves of Afghanistan's mountains. Hercules tracked down the hydra to a 'cavern of perpetual night' in which it lay hiding, and by day and night he

waited for it to make an appearance, but to no avail. So Hercules dipped his arrows in burning pitch, and rained them straight into the yawning cavern where the hideous beast dwelt. When the monster finally emerged, Hercules dealt it a crushing blow and one of its nine heads was severed. However, no sooner had the head fallen than two grew in its place. Again and again Hercules attacked the raging monster, but it grew stronger, not weaker, with each assault. Then Hercules remembered the words of his Teacher, “we rise by kneeling, we conquer by surrendering; we gain by giving up,” and so he knelt down and grasped the hydra with his bare hands, and held it aloft where the purifying air and light drained it of its power and life. The nine heads of the hydra slowly drooped to reveal another mystic head that was immortal, and this Hercules buried beneath a rock.

There is much to be learned from the labour of Hercules in Scorpio in connection with the “war on terrorism” that the world has been fighting since the evil that was unleashed on 9/11. Much as the unredeemed aspects of the aspirant's lower nature rise to the surface to be dealt with in one go at a certain stage on the path, on that date an evil beast arose in the midst of modern society and dealt it a powerful blow. Invisible and yet all pervading, a physical apparition of it in the form of Osama Bin Laden was hunted from that time onwards until his recent execution in Pakistan. However, if the act of kneeling down to find the roots of the beast and then raising it into the light does not accompany physical action, the end result will be that the real monster only grows stronger taking on new guises. The enemy that the hydra represents is the darker aspect of ourselves and not some other, outer force, for humanity is One. Therefore, the hydra can only be defeated by the world coming together and facing its collective shadow side – the factors that created the monster in the first place.

This does not imply a pacifist attitude for Hercules was a warrior, and indeed, rained his burning arrows into the hydra's cave. However, the underlying significance is of the fiery arrows of aspiration penetrating the subconscious to provoke into the light all that holds the aspirant back. Eleven years ago, a world hydra emerged from the depths of human evil in what was considered a relatively safe place – safe because far removed from the familiar trouble spots of the world. And ever since that time, the freedom loving west has been deprived of one of the most treasured of the four freedoms – the freedom from fear. The challenge remains for the world community to kneel down as one and lift the vices that plague it into the light of the radiant presence. They are represented by the nine heads of the hydra in the form of: sex, comfort, money, fear, hatred, desire for power, pride, separateness and cruelty; all of which are entangled in the drama of the current world situation, even if we have to trace back some way to see them as the underlying causes. They can only be lifted into the light by a united endeavour and the raising of the United Nations to its rightful prominence in the world. Enlightened foreign policy, international law and psychological rehabilitation are needed to offset the lower keynote of Scorpio: *Let maya flourish and let deception rule*, which is an unavoidable consequence of the misuse of force on the physical plane.

Humanity lives in a matrix of co-existing forces of the past, present and future – both good and evil – and the memory and anticipation of good and evil generate many tensions therein. The task before humanity is to key its consciousness into the spiritual potential inherent in the future and to collectively gather and transmute the evil in the world to form the mystic and immortal head of the hydra and to bury it beneath the rock of memory. There it will lie as the depository of all knowledge gained through adventure and misadventure throughout planetary history to be drawn upon as and when needed. Then the light of reason can predominate and humanity's joyful task will be to live in the exquisite tension of spiritual anticipation, crystallising the Plan of truth, beauty and goodness around the points of light that are presently shining in the planetary bleakness. The memory of our divine ancestry must rise high into the mind along with our destiny to become lightbearers – not only to the other kingdoms of nature, but eventually to other fledgling worlds and planetary systems. Much depends at this time on the presence of mind and the absence of retribution. The reasoning mind brought victory to Hercules in his eighth labour before the gate of Scorpio. And for humanity it can similarly herald the rise from the ashes of mortality to say as one with this great son of God: *Warrior I am and from the battle I emerge triumphant.* ■