

**FESTIVAL OF SAGITTARIUS**  
**New York, NY November 27, 2012**

Allison First

As we gather our thoughts in approach to our meditation work tonight, it might be useful to take a moment to consider how we came to be here tonight? Did we arrive at this meeting as though we travelled here, seated upon a white horse—so to speak? Of course, in this day and age, the image of arriving on a white horse is certainly ridiculous and archaic. And yet, the white horse is a symbol of divinity and consciousness. Did we arrive here tonight seated upon the white horse of our innate divinity—riding quietly and with dignity as we approached this full moon gathering and our sacred charge to invoke the light of hierarchy on behalf of humanity?

Or, did we arrive here at the full moon meeting tonight amidst a whirl and swirl of cell phones, ipods, emails, twitters, rapid transit, and a dizzying array of sights and sounds, and life lived on demand? Arriving at this meeting, it is likely that many of us found ourselves enmeshed in a furious little tornado of activity, wherein we resembled more the Tasmanian devil than the dignified disciple riding upon his white horse. The Tasmanian devil is a cartoon character that whizzes about, wild eyed and crazed, propelled upon a little whirlwind of perpetual motion—and, rather than trailing clouds of glory, the Tasmanian devil leaves behind him in his wake, disconcerting little bits of debris.

The question is, how do we approach our lives and our service in the world? Do we go about our work as though we were riding upon the white horse, seated in Christ consciousness and thus carried forward? Or, do we approach our work in the world in a dizzying whirlwind of force and commotion? This is the challenge that we all face in the modern world—to find that point of peace and stillness at the centre of our little whirlwind of self-chosen activity. Make no mistake about it, we should be active and engaged in the world, and yet, as aspirants our goal is to find the Way to work and serve from the centre of stillness—ideally unaffected by the turmoil and chaos of the world.

At this juncture in the meeting, let us take a moment to gather ourselves in silence. In this moment of silence, let us find the point of quiet stillness within ourselves, our divine center of wholeness and completion. From this centre of inner stillness, let us link subjectively with our group brothers around the world who, with us, also undertake this work of invocation and evocation at the full moon. Let us link with all those who join our meeting subjectively and with all those who join this meeting via the BlogTalk radio broadcast.

If you would, please, take out the small yellow card you find on your chairs. Together, sounding the *Affirmation of the Disciple*:

*I am a point of light within a greater light.*  
*I am a strand of loving energy within the stream of Love divine.*  
*I am a point of sacrificial Fire, focussed within the fiery Will of God. And thus I stand*  
*I am a way by which men may achieve.*  
*I am a source of strength, enabling them to stand.*  
*I am a beam of light, shining upon their way. And thus I stand.*  
*And standing thus, revolve and tread this way, the ways of men and know the ways of God.*  
*And thus I stand.*

OM

When the aspirant re-orientes to the life of the soul, an important aspect of his work is the cultivation of inner calm and stillness. Inner poise has a significant relationship to the intuitive self, the soul—or, the voice of the silence, as it is sometimes called. Intuition reveals the hidden spiritual meaning behind life's events. Intuition shows us that despite all outward appearances, the material world is not divorced from the spiritual world. Nor is spirit separate from matter. Spirit and matter are two halves of the same whole.

The faculty of the intuition is part and parcel of man's equipment and divine nature. Those who are awakening and sensitive to the inner life of the soul have usually experienced moments of intuitive knowing, deep and resonant. Flashes of intuition are moments where end meets beginning, where matter meets source, and where individuality finds consummation in totality—synthetic and complete.

On these insights the aspirant can rely. Intuition provides direction and shows us the Way. Intuition and direction are two ideas that are often associated with Sagittarius. Also associated with Sagittarius is the image of the archer seated upon his white horse. A focussed intellect is suggested by the image of the archer, with his sharp arrows, and the unceasing busy-ness of the lower mind must eventually give way to the archer's focused intellect.

In order to move forward on the Path, man must move from instinct, to intellect, and then to intuition. Instinct is the lower mind, or the monkey mind that jumps from thought to thought, from stimulus to stimulus. The archer's arrows represent directed thought, which the archer aims. On the Path, the aspirant thinks and plans before acting, and wisely sends out his thought in advance of his actions—perhaps not unlike the spider sending out its web in advance of his approach.

The intellect should be focussed and directed, much like an arrow. But where are the clear arrows of thought to be aimed? They should be aimed towards the intuitive life of the soul, which is the white horse that carries the aspirant forward. Moving from instinct, to intellect, to intuition, the intuition is, as the ancient teaching puts it, "the flame that gleams beyond the mind [and] reveals direction sure".

In the ancient tale of Hercules we find a symbolic story that provides instruction as to the nature of the intuition. The story of Hercules is, as we know, the story of the aspirant on the Path. The labour that Hercules performs in Sagittarius is the task of ridding the marsh at Stymphalus of a great and terrible flock of predatory birds. The multitude of birds at Stymphalus were wreaking havoc; their great and raucous cawing made a deafening racket; their numbers shut out the light of day and polluted the marsh.

Hercules tried various means and methods of ridding the marsh of these birds. But, he only succeeded when he employed the two cymbals that had been given to him by Athena, goddess of wisdom. Bringing Athena's two cymbals together, a tremendous unearthly and brazen sound rang out—loud and harsh—so that the birds were at last silenced and flew away. Thus, was the labour of Hercules successfully completed.

The birds in this story represent the endless chatter of the lower mind and the constant thought-forms so generated. Left unchecked, the lower mind can, like a flock of noisy birds, blot out the light of day—i.e., the light of the soul—making it impossible for the aspirant to hear the voice of the silence from which to derive direction.

The aspirant, like Hercules in this labour, must overcome the incessant chatter of the lower mind. And, amidst the fast and furious pace of modern life, what a special test and trial it is to find and hold the point of quiet stillness within the eye of the hurricane.

To overcome the clatter of the lower mind, the aspirant employs the intuition. As stated, the image of the archer and his arrows suggests focused intellect. And when intellect has reasoned-through an idea to its

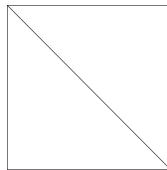
logical conclusion, using clear, sharp and directed thought, then intellect has done all it can. But, in order to move beyond the dead-end of any limited, earthbound perspective—thought must be turned over to the next highest turn of the spiral—the intuition. Like an arrow, released to fly free in the time and space, thought must be released into the deep stillness of the intuition, where it can be informed and penetrated by the light of the soul. Instinct, intellect, then intuition.

The Tibetan writes that the "energy of the intuition [is] the energy of pure reason". Using reason to think things through, the thinker reaches first the materialistic conclusion, but contemplating a little further—in the light of the soul, soul values, and soul principles—a flashing forth of deeper understanding might be experienced.

When reasoning is extended to include the unseen intent of the soul that is seeking expression in the world, then we often find that our thought becomes illuminated by intuitive insight and understanding. The depth of understanding provided by the intuition might be considered piercing, even penetrating, like an arrow meeting its mark. Intuition, or completely reasoned thought, reveals the relationship of spirit to matter. In such a wholeness of understanding, the Way forward becomes clear and we know with certainty how to proceed. As stated, intuition is "the flame that gleams beyond the mind [and] reveals direction sure".

In this manner, the aspirant moves from point to point of inner realisation, and from point to point of wholeness. Detached from outcome, the aspirant seeks not so much the outer points of destination as the successive points of inner connection with the soul, and with the soul of all beings. Moving from point to point of wholeness, the Path unfolds, often in unexpected ways as we learn how to bring together whatever resources we have at hand, with whatever opportunities may come along; both large and small.

Switching gears a little, let us consider for a moment the symbol of the square. To the occultist, matter is symbolised as a square. Any matter related to our earthly existence can be thought of as a square. Yet, when the square is divided in half, we discover two identical triangles; each triangle the mirror image of the other. One triangle points up, one points down, just like the occult idea of 'as above, so below'.



When we consider a matter only from the perspective of material existence, we see only a square—a solid block of earth-bound matter; static and difficult to move. But, turning over our thought to the soul for guidance—like an arrow soaring free in time and space, our thought passes beyond the square of matter. In its release, the arrow of thought effectively rends the square block of matter in two. Examining any matter in the light of the soul—or the light of pure reason—we inevitably see that each square of matter consists of two halves—two halves of the same whole. Intuitive reasoning transforms the immovable block of matter into two mirror images of spirit and matter.



The two halves of the square, are two identical triangles (one pointing up, and one pointing down), and when integrated they become the Star of David. Insight, and understanding as to the relationship between the seen and unseen worlds, integrates the two triangles. Then, is the static square transformed into a

radiant, energetic star, suggesting movement and light. Joining the two triangles, light is created, and matter is redeemed. But in order for this transformation to take place, intellect must first be focused, aimed and then turned over to intuition, where two halves of the same whole can be examined, indicating the esoteric intent of the soul.

Intellect perceives duality, but the genius of the soul brings spirit and matter together again, creating the Star of David, or greater light and life more abundant. Through the creativity of the soul, the square of matter can no longer hold the prisoners of the planet.

Let us return for a moment to the story of Hercules and revisit the two crashing cymbals that Hercules used to rid the marsh of the great and menacing flock of birds. The cymbals were a gift from the goddess Athena, suggesting an innate 'gift' and a divine gift, as Athena is a goddess, and the goddess of wisdom at that. This hints that the cymbals have some special relation to the aspirant's innate capacity for wisdom, which is the insight of the soul.

The two cymbals are two identical circles of wholeness. Like the square divided, the two cymbals suggest duality. In the tale of Hercules, the two cymbals are crashed together, indicating duality being brought together, or resolved. Crashing the two cymbals together creates a sound so great that the chatter of the birds—the lower mind—ceases. And, only this sounding of the two cymbals has the power to dispel the chattering, noisy birds.

Perhaps the deafening sound that the cymbals make is symbolic of the resounding sound of silence; the voice of the silence. The resounding silence that occurs when the intuition flashes forth—profound and whole—inevitably stills the clatter of the lower mind. Similarly, when the voice of the silence issues forth, nothing can withstand its deafening resonance. In these moments of profound knowing, all else falls away. In these moments of wholeness, we know beyond all doubt the relationship of spirit to matter and perceive just how spirit is working out in matter. There is nothing so fulfilling as these moments of sonic knowing.

The spiritual aspirant has always to use the reason and wisdom of the soul, which will "bring to light, the Love that underlies the happenings of the time". He has always to be still and know. To "be still and know that I am God."

Ultimately, we have to keep aiming, again and again for the circle of wholeness that includes both spirit and matter within its circumference. From there we find our way on the Path and the way to work and serve in the world. It is said that the antahkarana is constructed by creating ever widening circles of inclusiveness. It is by creating ever widening circles of inclusiveness with others, and ever widening circles of relationship between spirit and matter in our consciousness that the Way opens up before us. On the Path we move from moment to moment of wholeness and inclusiveness.

Treading the Way, we might ask ourselves what are we willing to sacrifice? What are we willing to do to bring the forces of light into the world? To this, most of us would answer that we are willing to do quite a bit. And yet, forward movement along these lines often proves difficult. Just what is it that prevents us from doing all we can to see the forces of light prevail in our lives and in the world? Perhaps it is the many small things that plague us and prevent us from moving forward in service, as we know we should. Perhaps like the birds in the Styphallian marsh, nothing much is really possible until we rid our lives of the terrible menace of the chattering lower mind. Turning towards the soul, where the great and terrible voice of the silence resounds, perhaps that is where we will find the release we need in order to move forward. Again and again, we have to keep aiming higher. Again and again we have to remember our goal of wholeness and inclusiveness. Again and again, we: *See the goal, we reach the goal, and then we see another.*