

## THE FESTIVAL OF SCORPIO

November 17, 2013

Kathy Newburn

Welcome everyone to this meeting on this day of safeguarding, the full moon day. The full moon occurred less than five hours ago, so we are within the full tide of the outpouring energies of the great sign Scorpio, the sign which is very close to all of our hearts because it governs the path of all who are seeking to find their way through this world of maya, glamour and illusion. Scorpio helps us in that process. The purpose of our work is to help widen the channel between the inner and outer worlds so the energies of the spiritual Hierarchy, the planetary heart center, can flow and aid us during this difficult transition period. So let's now take a moment of silence followed by the sounding of the Ancient Mantram:

Lead us O Lord from darkness to light,  
From the unreal to the Real.  
From death to immortality.

This sign holds a particularly potent energy because it rules the path of discipleship. The masses of humanity, however, are governed by Libra, the preceding sign to Scorpio. They stand in the balance, weighing and measuring what's happening in the world. And if the present situation is difficult for us to understand how much more difficult must it be for the masses of humanity. Since the masses are in the balance it is up to the disciples of the world and the new group of world servers to help shift that balance towards the light. Our task is to provide a counter-balance to that of the forces of materialism who are seeking to hold humanity enslaved to a narrow and limited world view.

Scorpio aids us in that process. This sign is related to the battle between the warring forces, both within ourselves but also within the planet as a whole. The experience in Scorpio is said to be the greatest experience upon the path for it governs the first three initiations. The birth, the first initiation, related to the physical plane disciplines, is governed by Scorpio. The second initiation of the Baptism, which is related to the difficult control of the astral body, is also related to Scorpio and then the third initiation of the transfiguration, which deals with the mental body, is also governed by Scorpio. You can see what a potent sign this is and why the Tibetan calls it the greatest experience on the path. But for all of us it is a controlling energy because at one level or another we are all working upon this path of initiation and hence under the influence of Scorpio.

It's also helpful to look at the signs not so much as individual experiences but rather as part of a continuum. The indecision and the subsequent decision achieved in Libra, leads to what is called the reversal of the wheel. That's a term from esoteric astrology that relates to a particular series of lives wherein the individual is placing him or herself in alignment with the soul and as that soul begins to govern the personality a symbolic "turning" takes place. Then the individual no longer travels up and down the land but rather learns to stand steady. This standing, which is a mental process, is governed by the growing influence of the planet Saturn but the reversal itself takes place and the decision is made under the signs of Libra and Leo. And then the battle begins wherein the ramifications of that decision are worked out in all three personality vehicles under

the influence of Scorpio. Libra is a sign of interlude, as Allison spoke to last month--it is a pause between two activities. It's a time when we are gathering our strength in preparation for the Scorpio experience. So now, symbolically speaking, we are in the sign of battle. Scorpio is not a sign of pausing, it's not a sign of resting--it's a sign of entering into the battle. The Tibetan calls it a sign of the depths--going deep beneath the surface. And if you know any people who are born in this sign that is one of their qualities, they go deep; in fact this sign is related to the field of psychology--it governs those who use the mind to penetrate beneath the surface fragmentation and interpret the symbols. They are spiritual readers. The true psychologist will often be found with the influence of Scorpio prominent within the horoscope as was the case with Freud. The sign of Sagittarius, the succeeding sign to Scorpio, is known as the sign of the plains. Scorpio is the sign of the depths and then at the end of the experience in Scorpio there is the ultimate experience of triumph. Triumph is related to Sagittarius.

A teaching in esoteric astrology states that Scorpio is a triple sign and perhaps an aspect of that triplicity comes from the fact that Sagittarius has conferred some of itself to Scorpio. Sagittarius is a single sign, while most of the signs are dual in nature. Sagittarius is a sign of tremendous forward movement across the plains by the archer on his white horse. The battleground in Scorpio ends in triumph and the garnering of strength. So we have the depths of Scorpio, the plains of Sagittarius and in the following sign of Capricorn we have the heights, the sign of the mountain top. So while Scorpio is a sign of initiation, so is Capricorn. The influence of Sagittarius mediates between the two signs of initiation and some might say between the soul and the Triad with Sagittarius standing for the symbol of the antahkarana.

As you all know there are nine primary tests in Scorpio—three relating to the physical plane--sex, physical comfort and money; three relating to the emotional body—fear, hatred and ambition; and finally three tests relating to the mental body--pride, separateness and cruelty. It's important to not draw hard and fast dividing lines between the tests and the initiations. It's not as if at the taking of the first initiation we master all the tests related to the physical body. That's not really the way it goes. The path is a spiral and we're all revisiting the many different tests at different stages in the path of evolutionary development. So we should never become overly proud and think we've overcome some of the hydras because just when we wouldn't expect it that hydra might come around and bite us again. So we should be observant of all nine tests and never become too sure of ourselves.

The one test I'd like to speak about a little tonight is pride because it is very alive and well in our world not only within the exoteric world and its reflection, the media, but also within the esoteric community and, therefore, within ourselves. The Tibetan describes pride as "intellectual satisfaction making the mind the barrier to soul control." This is one of the most difficult hydras to overcome, particularly because we live in a world in which the mind is very strong and, as Blavatsky said, can become "the slayer of the Real." All of us have quite potent minds or we wouldn't be interested in these esoteric teachings and so we have to be wary of pride. Pride is often associated with a serpent. Why is that? A serpent can move very slowly and sit very quietly, so much so that we don't even know that it's there. But suddenly it can strike with a force and venom that is deadly; so, too, with pride.

Pride is a controlling factor up until the time of the taking of the fourth initiation. So if any of us think we've overcome this one, we may have to think again. Pride is related to the famous parable from the New Testament of the rich young man. It states that it would be easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. The Tibetan clarifies the interpretation of this parable for it was often thought to be referring to the impossibility of a wealthy person entering into the higher realms. A rich young man, however, is a term used for an initiate of the third degree, someone who has many "jewels" and much going for him. And while this individual has obviously transformed many things within his nature, he has also accumulated much power and is holding onto the "jewels" and they weigh him down and make him too big. This "rich young man" has to let go of these many gifts in order to take the fourth initiation which must be preceded by the destruction of the causal body. The causal body is the repository of all the jewels that one has accumulated through many incarnations. And all of them, everything, have to be given up. We're told that every sacrifice we make in our lives is preparing us for the great fourth initiation. All of the hard knocks we must undergo—and the life of the disciple is full of hard knocks—all of the bitterness we must pass through, these lesser incidents in our lives prepare us for that eventual stage upon the Path. So if we think we are going through a difficult period, and we know many people are in one way or another, it's good to know we are passing through a training ground for the eventual greater sacrifices that will be demanded of us later on.

One of the sutras of Patanjali which I find particularly interesting to ponder is number 37 from Book II on "Steps to Union." It says, "When abstention from theft is perfected the yogi can have whatever he desires." As the commentary states, "all jewels are his" --all the many jewels from all the many existences become available to the yogi. He is a master of these many gifts and talents to the extent that he no longer wants or needs them for anything related to the separated self. He can summon them up at will if he needs them in his service work. In the commentary it states that theft is not just related to physical plane issues but also to the emotional states such as the desire to be loved and other forms of emotional comfort to which we can easily fall prey. Theft can also appear within the mental realm and the coveting of that which others display and demonstrate. Instead, this teaching asks us to focus upon our own dharma and leave other people to theirs. And while it might appear that this sutra contradicts the teaching on the rich young man it is really a matter of the level of consciousness. The yogi can have whatever he desires because he no longer desires anything, "seeking nothing, asking nothing, hoping nothing" for the separated self, the riches of the universe can pour in upon him.

The most famous teaching from the New Testament, the Sermon on the Mount, begins with the well-known phrase, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for they shall inherit the Kingdom of Heaven." Again, we see Christ's emphasis upon the need to free ourselves from our "riches" by letting go of the shackle of pride. You cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven overburdened by all the many things that have been garnered throughout the many lives—we have to let them go. But, as Mohammed Ali said, "It's hard to be humble when you're as great as I am."

Ali spoke to the reality of our time. It isn't so easy to be humble and it isn't even natural at a certain stage in our evolutionary development but we often get cocky and think we know. But we shouldn't denigrate ourselves, that's not what we are being asked to do either. But compared to those in whose footsteps we follow on this path, we are like grains of sand. A belief in the

Hierarchy should help us to be humble. We cannot even begin to fathom the level of consciousness of a Master of the Wisdom, let alone embody it. We don't have the tools to understand how vast is their mindset.

Alice Bailey, as we know, worked through a process of mental telepathy with the Tibetan to bring through a dispensation of that body of work known as the Ageless Wisdom teachings. In order to do this she had to make an inner alignment within consciousness wherein she could enter into the Tibetan's consciousness and at times she said she was able to catch a glimpse of vast vistas of truth that were awe inspiring. The Tibetan was an exceedingly humble teacher, as are all the Masters of the Wisdom. In all humility he said the teachings he brought forward with Alice Bailey's help are the mere abc's of his understanding. And if you have ever read any of those abc's you might be able to imagine the depth of his understanding. The Tibetan describes a Master as "the rare efflorescence of a generation of enquirers." I think sometimes people have this notion that it's easy to become a Master of the Wisdom, whereas that quote indicates how difficult it is.

There's an interesting story about Benjamin Franklin. He was 27 years old and quite disillusioned with his accomplishments in life and with his many shortcomings of character so he decided to make a list of 12 character flaws that he wanted to do away with in his life in order to become a better person. And so as to make sure his list was correct, he showed it to his best friend to get his opinion. He wanted his friend to tell him if he was leaving anything out. The friend quickly perused the list and said, "You forgot pride. Put it on the top of the list!" That must have been quite humbling! Abraham Lincoln said, "All men can stand adversity. But if you want to test his character, give him power." Obviously, he was someone who spoke from his own life lessons in relationship to humility and the challenges of maintaining it within one of the most powerful positions in the world, at one of the most difficult period's in our nation's history. And curiously enough today is the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, which many people described as the greatest speech ever given by perhaps our greatest president—a man whom the Tibetan says was a "racial avatar," who came forth at the founding of this nation to set the tone and quality for future generations. The qualities that Lincoln demonstrated are key American qualities and number one among them is humility. Even though United States' citizens are not generally known for their humility when they travel abroad, perhaps on some fundamental level to which we have yet aspired, humility is a quality of the American nature.

The word humility comes from the word *humilis* which means humble; it also means from the earth, grounded, low. So it's interesting that the word humility is related to the Earth, "from the Earth." Not every planet is called Earth. We are. So I think the name of the planet and its relationship to this quality of humility, which is a second ray quality, says something about all of us on this planet and our ability to manifest humility. Perhaps the most well-known quote from the Tibetan about humility is that it is "an adjusted sense of right proportion." And that's why on this spiritual path we are asked to try and understand where we stand because that recognition can help us assume the responsibilities of that position. We shouldn't assume the responsibilities of some place that is higher than our own. That's not humility, but neither should we assume the responsibilities of a place on the path that is no longer ours. We have to stand in that middle ground, on the place where we are. That is true humility. There is a lot of false humility in the world. A lot of us want to assume the mantle of humility because we want to follow in the

footsteps of the great Teachers who all manifested a true humility. Perhaps we need to ponder what this true humility really is. The Tibetan says that many of us practice a humility of the head that is largely theoretical and it is imposed upon our lower nature. Whereas, he said, true humility is practiced within the heart and is inherently spontaneous. And he asked one of his disciples, “I would ask you to ponder on the distinction and you will learn much thereby.” So we must distinguish between a heart based humility which is spontaneous and a head based humility which is largely theoretical.

One of the mantrams used in the early lessons of the Arcane School is “Let humility and strength be your gift to others.” But why is humility a gift? From one perspective we might say this is so because humility affords a simplicity of being, allowing us to be present to another human being, dropping our pretense and despite the cacophony and too much information of our world, meeting another person and being genuine. Our world leaves little time for such exchanges but the humble person has established within him or herself that freedom that allows them to become a conduit for the love energy of the universe to flow. They have, we might say, learned to get out of the way and ride the current of the divine circulatory flow.

\*\*\*\*\*