

REFLECTIONS ON SCORPIO AND THE PATH OF DISCIPLESHIP

New York, November 5, 2014

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Welcome to the Festival of Scorpio. Can we please take a moment of silence to link up with our group here and with all the other individuals and groups who are also working together with us.

Ancient Mantram

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

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As most of you know, the Wesak Festival that occurs at the Taurus full moon is considered the high point of the spiritual year. It takes place at the time of the higher interlude. That's the time of the year when humanity is most able to connect with the abstract realms and the higher energies that are pouring in. It's the time of greatest inspiration within the annual cycle. But from another perspective this sign of Scorpio which stands as the opposite polarity to Taurus is equally important within the annual cycle and yet perhaps a more difficult energy with which to work. But we know that difficult things are worth working for and so the challenges that the outer forces might present to our ability to capture and work with the energies of this lower interlude period are worth the effort. This lower interlude period is related to service, to bringing through and concretizing the energies in a way that will make practical in service to humanity the energies that were contacted at Wesak. So this is an important time to concretize. And we're told in the teachings that it is difficult to do this work. It's easier to work in the higher interlude period because we as spiritual seekers are accustomed to abstracting our consciousness, to going within, and reaching above. That's our strength as we've probably all had many lives as mystics and it is an ability we have developed in the past. The task during the lower interlude period is to bring the energies down from our lower minds to our brains. The task is to somehow capture and formulate into a practical form the impressions that illumine the mind during this period.

Mistakes can be made in this concretization period of the lower interlude. Mistakes are made in one instance because of the influence of the lower mind that comes into play during the lower interlude. The lower mind can be a tricky instrument to work with for all spiritual seekers and all members of humanity. That's where mistakes can come into play. The lower mind has a tendency to divide and separate whereas in the higher realms we are all one but when it comes to the lower planes that's where differences occur, quite often petty differences. And so as we work in the lower interlude period, we have to be aware of the presented obstacles. And of course the lower interlude is not simply related to this time of the year but also to the whole

period of the new moon time and also to work done in consciousness, in meditation, wherein contacted ideas must be worked out and made manifest.

We are, however, working at a time when the influence of the seventh ray is coming into manifestation in our planetary Life. This energy aids us in our work of materialization of concretization. We work within an incoming wave of impressions that are flowing into our planetary life aiding us in our ability to manifest new forms, better suited to the new life and consciousness permeating our world. This is the work of the white magicians and since this is new to most of us it's not always easy to know how best to do the work.

Scorpio is a sign of the depths. It's a sign that goes deep. The three signs of Scorpio, Sagittarius and Capricorn have a beautiful symbolism to them—Scorpio is a sign of depth and darkness, of going deep within. We can see this symbolized in the outer world at this time in the dramatic decrease of light that is occurring on a daily basis. This darkness is a symbol of what we are asked to do at this period—to go deep within to capture this transformative, alchemical energy of Scorpio. And then the Sagittarian experience is known as that of the plains, a time when we can make rapid progress after we've come out of the depths of Scorpio. In Scorpio we go deep, but we also triumph. When we emerge from the depths of Scorpio we travel quickly as we have been liberated and we travel fast across the plains. The third sign of Capricorn is the sign of the mountain top, when we are ready and strong enough to take initiation.

Scorpio, again, is a sign of transformation and in traditional astrology it rules some transformative areas of life such as psychology. Sex is also ruled by this sign. The Tibetan tells us that sex is really a symbol and that sometimes we get too focused on that symbol at the expense of what it stands for. Sex is related to the transformation that takes place between the higher and lower selves and the changes that occur within the individual as a result of that union. Inner transformations is the possibility held out to us as we pass through the different levels of the various hydra experiences that take place under Scorpio. Scorpio also rules the path of occultism. It therefore conditions those of us who are searching beneath the surface of outer events for the hidden inner meaning. And finally, Scorpio is the sign of initiation. We usually think of Capricorn as the preeminent sign of initiation and surely this is correct but we are told that Scorpio in fact rules the first three initiations. This is a momentous statement. Therefore, the symbolism hidden within this sign gives us the key to our journey through the initiatory process in its initial phases.

Initiation is a result of a series of precursors known as the burning ground experiences. The burning ground can result from the sense that all things that previously seemed to give meaning to our lives are being stripped away and we feel as if we are being purified by something that is not necessarily easy to handle because it is related to the will aspect. As we stand in the center of the burning ground we eventually become ready to pass through an initiation.

Scorpio is the preeminent sign of the disciple and perhaps it would be helpful to share a few thoughts as to what this word means. We often associate this term with the disciples of Christ

and certainly they were disciples. But the word itself does not refer to any particular religion or path it actually comes from the Latin word meaning pupil or student, a “learning boy.” It’s a phrase that covers many stages on the path. We’re told that from one angle we are all disciples, from those who are taking their first steps on the path of return all the way up to the great Teachers Themselves. We are all learning. We should never reach a place in consciousness wherein we think we truly know. That was the lesson the great philosopher Socrates learned from his life experience. Near the end of his life he said to one of his pupils, “The only thing that I know is that I know nothing.” This is an interesting statement coming from someone who spent a big chunk of his life thinking. There were stories about Socrates that were quite interesting. One night it was said he was on his way to a party with some friends. On the way he stopped on one of his friends’ porches and was unable to proceed. Instead, he just stood there. His friends tried to get him to move but he wouldn’t. He didn’t say anything, he didn’t move, he just stood there. He stood for over 24 hours and he was said to do this quite frequently. And so if someone who regularly spent 24 hours thinking could say he knew nothing then you and I might have to question how much we really know about anything. Back in the day in Athens many people came to debate Socrates, thinking they knew many things about subjects such as courage, justice, and truth. Socrates’ method of teaching as you know consisted primarily of asking questions. It’s said each so-called learned man was completely disarmed by Socrates and left completely shaken and understanding that indeed he knew nothing.

And so while you and I do not have the opportunity to speak with such a great man as Socrates, we do have the opportunity to respond to our soul when it comes knocking and perhaps disrupting all of the so-called knowledge and perhaps wisdom that we think we might have. Because that’s what the soul does, that’s what a great teacher does, it shakes us to the foundations, making us question. So if you find yourself going through an experience wherein you find yourself questioning everything you ever thought you knew or understood, maybe you are in a good place.

And perhaps it is helpful to think about such things in our world today. We have very few people standing and thinking for 24 hours. If they did, they would probably be locked in a sanatorium. Our world doesn’t really place much of a premium on taking the time to think without gadgets, without surfing the net. I’m not trying to pass judgment on our technological age because it has certainly brought us many gifts but we also lose much as a result of our endless preoccupation with taking in more and more knowledge. A few years ago a book came out called *The Shallows* that addressed this surface or shallow kind of knowledge that is the norm today. All of this information we gathering from the internet is not really sinking into us in any deep way so we cannot easily retain and use it. All our multi-tasking does not really serve us well. So perhaps we could take a moment in our daily lives and use the life of Socrates as an inspiration to go deep during this Scorpio interlude period.

For there are those among us, there are those in our world today who despite all the distractions and harshness have developed the ability to pierce through the veils of glamour and illusion and to tap into the patterns, the fundamental archetypes, that underlie all of this

outer world of seeming. These are the people who can bring about a re-patterning of our society. We're living in a time when the energies of the Plan are precipitating and we have to take heart that these new ideas are penetrating through the outer chaos, the outer darkness and confusion. There is hope.

In the Ageless Wisdom teachings we are told there are three different types, or halls, of learning. Obviously they are not schools that we go to but types of learning experiences that exist on another dimension of reality. And we're all passing through one of them that corresponds to our evolutionary stage of development. The first is called the Hall of Ignorance. That's the hall that we pass through for many aeons of time and it's not so much a hall we are passing through but rather one we are trapped in. It's the hall that is related to the materialistic aspect of our lives. It is the hall that controls the form nature. But as we grope through this hall eventually we tire of it and find our way into another hall called The Hall of Learning. Blavatsky wrote of this hall, "...in it thy soul will find the blossoms of life, but under every flower a serpent coiled." Blavatsky advises us to pass quickly through this hall. We shouldn't tarry long in the Hall of Learning but unfortunately it seems that most of our world today is more or less stuck in it. It's related to the more intellectual approach to living, It's the hall where pride in our accomplishments can develop when we feel content with how much we know.

The next hall is called the Hall of Wisdom. HPB wrote of this hall, "The name of the third hall is wisdom, beyond which stretch the shoreless waters of Akshara, the indestructible Fount of Omniscience. It is the Hall which lies beyond, wherein all shadows are unknown, and where the light of truth shines with unfading glory." It's a field of experience that perhaps we're entering and taking a few steps towards, but it's very, very vast. Disciples become Masters of the Wisdom within this hall. There's much to learn here and the wisdom is not quickly gathered but is rather a slow process. Socrates had a lot of time to ponder and he had surely travelled quite a distance into this hall. In our journey through these three halls we are transformed. Symbolically speaking we begin our evolutionary path as coiled serpents, then we eventually are transformed into serpents of wisdom and then we are transformed into dragons of living light. These are symbolic phrases but they hold meaning for us.

A key quality of the sign Scorpio is of course that of the warrior. Obviously since this is so, this tells us something about the quality we must embody if we are to pass our way through the tests of the initiatory experience. For each initiation we must embody a certain type of the warrior nature. But our world has distorted the concept of what it means to be a warrior into a type of seeming obsession with war. But the Scorpio experience is not really related so much to war per se but rather to defense, as becomes clear from a consideration of the scorpion. Scorpions rarely attack but they do embody the quality of protection. This tells us that in our journey through the valleys and the depths of this sign of transformation we need protection. We need to know how to handle the situations that may come upon us as we traverse the ways of life. Many must sacrifice their very lives in the pursuit of truth. The skilled warrior does not waste energy in battling and fighting except in those moments when it becomes truly necessary.

This ability to conserve energy relates to the Taoist idea of *Wu-wei*. This is the idea of “the action of non-action,” or we might say putting ourselves in the flow, learning how to walk through the challenging situations in life. The practice of *Wu-wei* puts us in tune with our surroundings, by remembering that we are part of an interconnected whole, by remaining still until action is called forth. In this state we can perform the valuable, necessary and long-lasting service in the world while cultivating the ability to be at one with the Tao.

Each sign of the zodiac is characterized by a certain type of light. The particular light that is released through Scorpio is that of “the Light of Day.” We might wonder why this would be the keynote of this darkest of signs? This keynote demonstrates the paramount importance of this sign of discipleship, the sign of the depths. This light of day is only liberated after a long period of testing and trial as the pilgrim passes through the various burning ground experiences that characterize this stage in the path. At the end of the Scorpio road, the seeker on the way rises from the depths, purified by the experience and equipped with the requisite strength to stand above the fogs and mists of glamour and illusion and enter into the light transcendent and mount another cross. It is helpful for us to hold within the recesses of our minds the beauty of this dawning light which the darkness before the dawn foreshadows this recognition can fuel our aspiration to tread the path of return. The light of day exists and all pilgrims inexorable find their way back to it. And the way of inner release comes through the path of outer service and Scorpio is found upon the horizontal axis of the fixed cross. The light from Scorpio brings new and unexpected colors, qualities and glories from the deep recesses of ourselves, from the storehouse accumulated through many incarnations .
