

Good afternoon, and welcome to our meeting to celebrate the great festival of Wesak. This meeting is being broadcast over the Internet, so there are people around the world participating with us. If any of you are attending or listening for the first time, you may be wondering what to expect.

We always begin with a talk of around twenty five minutes, and then we have a group meditation. As for the content of the talk, it usually involves some discussion of ideas found in the Ageless Wisdom or the Perennial Philosophy, which has many sources – classic mystical texts, theosophy, anthroposophy, the Agni Yoga teachings, and so on; and of course, the twenty four books written by the founder of the Lucis Trust, Alice Bailey, in collaboration with a Tibetan teacher, whom you will hear me referring to simply as “the Tibetan”.

Since I will be quoting some material from the Alice Bailey writings, there may be terms that are unfamiliar, or familiar terms used in unfamiliar ways. Don't worry too much about following every last word. The main purpose of the introductory talk is not to inform, but rather to give the group present here, and also our online listeners, a point in consciousness where our thoughts can converge, so that we can move together into the phase of group meditation. It's this phase of group meditation, as an act of service to humanity, which is our main purpose here today.

We are gathered here today, in the same way as hundreds, perhaps thousands of groups of esotericists are gathered around the world, to participate in the most important spiritual Festival of the year, Wesak. And we are joined in this by millions of Buddhists, for whom it is also a moment of supreme spiritual contact. Like the other spiritual Festivals, it is a Festival of Light. It is marked by the brilliant light of the Sun, reflected from the Moon's surface. And we know that this outer manifestation of light is a symbol of the inner contact with high spiritual energies.

As readers of the World Goodwill newsletter will know, 2015 is being celebrated by the UN as the International Year of Light and Light-based technologies. The last two issues of the newsletter, and also the World Goodwill Seminar for 2014, explored the breadth and depth of humanity's ongoing relationship to light in a number of different ways. For example, when considering the laser, the question was posed, what gives the laser its peculiar potency? Most people are familiar with the idea that the light from a laser is of only one colour, and that this light can be projected as a very narrow beam. What is probably less understood is that these two qualities are different aspects of the key characteristic, namely *coherence*. In simple terms, this means that each individual waveform of light, each photon, is 'in step' with all others, like soldiers marching in close formation. This gives the light its extraordinary purity, intensity, and power of focused projection. An interesting analogy could be made with the mind of a trained meditator, which can penetrate into previously unknown realms of consciousness. Another analogy which is particularly instructive, as we move into an age where group consciousness is increasingly the norm, is between coherence and two of the principles identified by Alice Bailey as essential to our times, namely, the principles of unanimity and of essential divinity.

How do these principles operate in a group? In the case of unanimity, we could say that it is where a group is consciously striving to find the highest common point of agreement on a specific course of action. This distinguishes it from the much-maligned 'groupthink', where people agree with whatever others think in order to minimise conflict. Instead, those striving for unanimity intend to seek the harmony that lies beyond conflict, by critically assessing all ideas, without attaching any importance to their source. It is only by removing the strictly personal dimension that the underlying quality of ideas can be properly weighed and the resonance of the highest common point of agreement can begin to emerge, subtly building in strength as the group senses it with increasing clarity.

The principle of essential divinity works in a similar way, as people from different spiritual traditions gradually recognise the essential qualities of Spirit common to their specific faiths, allowing them to participate in a shared approach to the source of all Light and Love, however it is labelled. This thought is especially relevant to our work today, as we merge our efforts with the Buddhist community. And we are also striving to recognise our active cooperation with the spiritual Hierarchy, as They engage in the great ceremony which is said to take place in the Himalayas at Wesak. We can visualise a great invocative call rising up through the various levels of participating

groups, becoming clearer and louder, and finally being given potent focus by the assembled Masters, directed through the Christ and the Buddha, towards the Lord of the World in Shamballa, the centre where the Will of God is known. This coherent invocative effort inevitably produces an evocative response, which, in the case of Wesak, proceeds unimpeded from the heart and mind of the Planetary Logos. Our participation in this annual rhythm of supreme spiritual contact is the most important group service we can offer to humanity.

Before we continue, let's pause for a brief period of silence, and then we will say together the Great Invocation. The text of this is the final phase of the meditation on your sheets. We will finish with one sounding of the sacred word, the OM.

From the point of Light within the Mind of God
Let light stream forth into the minds of men.
Let Light descend on Earth.

From the point of Love within the Heart of God
Let love stream forth into the hearts of men.
May Christ return to Earth.

From the centre where the Will of God is known
Let purpose guide the little wills of men –
The purpose which the Masters know and serve.

From the centre which we call the race of men
Let the Plan of Love and Light work out
And may it seal the door where evil dwells.

Let Light and Love and Power restore the Plan on Earth.

OM

Returning to our reflection on the laser, another area where it reveals its deep connection to the emerging Age of Light is in the technique of photolithography, which is central to the production of microprocessor chips for computers, phones and tablets. After the circuit pattern for a chip has been written, a mask is made of it – the equivalent of a photographic negative. An ultraviolet laser beam is then directed through the mask onto a silicon wafer. Through this technique, the potential to process information is inscribed directly into matter. This complex pattern of circuits can then bring the electrical elements into coherent, organised motion, by combining with the organising light of the mind, which provides the instructions through computer code. This ordered electronic motion may then be re-translated into the patterns of light on a computer display; or, with the growth of 3D printing, it can be woven directly into physical forms - again, in some instances, using lasers.

A dedication to the expressive possibilities of light is found in the cinema. For example, when filming “Barry Lyndon”, set in the 18th century, director Stanley Kubrick went so far as to obtain three special lenses made by NASA to allow him to faithfully capture indoor scenes lit only by candlelight. And now computers can also be used, through computer graphics, to create movie scenes entirely from the imagination. In a sense, the actors are shown within a space woven purely of light. We are only at the beginning of this revolution in humanity's expressive power, and it is not surprising that it has so far been used mainly in the service of commercial interests, as it is still expensive. However, we may well wonder what new artistic and communicative possibilities will open up when such technology is within the grasp of all. New vistas of beauty may be revealed as the imagination of humanity can increasingly be expressed in visible form. Virtual reality headsets are also at the tipping point of becoming readily available, which will allow people to enter into and change each other's creations - this could be regarded as the materialising of telepathy in the emotional and lower mental realms. But if we extend this picture, can we conceive of creating symbolic expressions of abstract thinking which others can enter into and manipulate? Tellingly, video gaming, which is one of the primitive seeds of this possibility, is a process in which the actual creation of the game is

almost always done in groups. Group thought-form building is one of the key skills which the Aquarian disciple is tasked with developing. The combination of groups of disciples creating lighted thought-forms in line with the Plan, and the ability to materialise these thought-forms through information technology, will no doubt be one of the glories of the Aquarian Age, *if* humanity can consecrate its imaginative powers to the task. The illuminating impact of the Wesak festival can surely aid in this process of consecration.

Illumination is one of the great themes of the Wesak festival, because it occurs in the sign of Taurus. The outer ruler of Taurus is the planet Venus, the ‘morning star’, the third brightest object in the sky, and the planet with the closest connection to Earth, spoken of as the Earth’s ‘alter ego’. Perhaps surprisingly, given the mythological identification of Venus as the goddess of love, the Tibetan tells us that it is governed by the fifth ray of concrete science. Certainly, it is not difficult to associate science and illumination, through the light of knowledge, although links with the imagination and the energy of love might seem, at first glance, more obscure.

As it happens, one of the great champions of the imagination was the physicist Albert Einstein. An attempt to understand the nature of light lies at the heart of two of Einstein’s many significant achievements - the creation of special relativity theory, and the recognition that light can be conceived of as particles - photons. Einstein attained insight into special relativity through a famous thought experiment, when he imagined himself chasing after a light beam and catching it as his speed reached that of light.

Another of the great scientific minds of the 20th century, who also made significant contributions to our understanding of light, was Richard Feynman. He had this to say on the subject of the scientific imagination:

“It is surprising that people do not believe that there is imagination in science. It is a very interesting kind of imagination, unlike that of the artist. The great difficulty is in trying to imagine something that you have never seen, that is consistent in every detail with what has already been seen, and that is different from what has been thought of; furthermore, it must be definite and not a vague proposition. That is indeed difficult.” This remark is a very good description of the process of visualisation that lies at the heart of meditation. And it connects with a beautiful passage concerning the Lord of the Fifth Ray:

“A beam of light illuminates the form; the hidden now appears. Knowledge of God and how He veils Himself finds consummation in the thoughts of man. The energies and forces receive their secret names, reveal their inner purpose, and all is seen as rhythm, a returning on itself. The great scroll can now be read. God's purpose and His plans are fixed, and man can read the form.

The plan takes form. The plan is form. Its purpose is the revelation of the mind of God. The past reveals the form, but the present indicates the flowing in of energy.” (*A Treatise on the Seven Rays* Vol.I p.75)

So the connection of Venus and the fifth ray with an enlightened imagination is clear. What about the connection of Venus with the energy of love? This is revealed in the following passage about the fifth ray from *The Rays and the Initiations*:

“What is the effect of [the fifth ray] upon humanity as a whole and at this time? The effect of these influences is very great and of supreme importance in this fifth root race,... in this second solar system. Again you can see the clarity of the correspondences which are emerging. I would have you note them again.

1. Ray II, the Ray of Love-Wisdom; and Ray V, the Ray of Concrete Knowledge or Science.
2. The second plane, the monadic plane; and the fifth plane, the mental plane.
3. The second solar system of love; and the fifth root race..., of active intelligence.

In all these basic relationships, that which is the fifth in order is destined to be the instrument, the vehicle or the implementing factor for the second. The Universal Mind, as it works through all the planes of our conscious planetary life, is the creative agent and the form-building factor which makes the revelation of love possible.” (*The Rays and the Initiations*, p.593) This explains why, elsewhere, the Tibetan calls the fifth ray the ray of *intelligent* love. And there is also the concluding part of the earlier passage quoted about the Lord of the Fifth Ray:

“That which is on its way comes as a cloud which veils the sun. But hid behind this cloud of immanence is love, and on the earth is love and in the heaven is love, and this,—the love which maketh all things new—must stand revealed. This is the purpose back of all the acts of this great Lord of Knowledge.” (*A Treatise on the Seven Rays* Vol.I p.75)
As Einstein remarked, “More and more I come to value charity and love of one's fellow being above everything else...”.

Having considered the lighted imagination and the love which intelligently motivates it, we come to the dynamic impact of the will which occurs at this festival. The presence of the Buddha as the representative of the Lord of the World already indicates that the energy of the first aspect is powerfully active during Wesak. In addition, the esoteric and hierarchical ruler of Taurus is Vulcan, which the Tibetan tells us is governed by the first ray of Will or Power. Vulcan is spoken of as the fashioner of metals, and there is a close connection between the first ray and the seventh ray of ceremonial order, rhythm and ritual, which is active on the seventh or physical plane. The Tibetan also reminds us that Taurus is an earth sign, which implies that the energies contacted must work out on the physical plane. Yet another factor to consider is that Vulcan is also spoken of as veiling the Sun, which once again brings in the second ray, and of course the factor of illumination. This combination of first and seventh rays, along with the combination of the second and fifth rays discussed earlier, underlines why this festival is so potent in the life and consciousness of humanity. Light, love and the will-to-good must be brought down to Earth - the core message of the Great Invocation, which was given to humanity seventy years ago during the three spiritual Festivals.

Let us now move into our meditation with the focused intention that the lighted, loving imagination can accept the divine impact of the will-to-good, from Taurus, via Vulcan and Venus, through Shamballa and the Hierarchy, via the sacred mediating agency of the Buddha and the Christ, into the life and consciousness of humanity and the three lower kingdoms. Our seed thought is, “I see and when the Eye is opened, all is light.”