

Climate Change
Humanity, Planetary Purpose and the Emergence of the World Disciple

by Steve Nation

A talk given at the SRI/USR Annual International Conference, May 2008, in Mesa Arizona.
Shamballa: Love Eternal, Light Supernal, Peaceful Silent Will

The fires of the Peaceful Silent Will are said to be touching humanity directly. Up until this time, the power of Shamballa was mediated and softened by the ashram—by the Great Ones on the inner side of life. In our transition times the pace of evolution is speeding up. With all of our incompleteness, our inadequacies, our endless processes of sensing patterns of wholeness, while finding it apparently beyond us to give them incarnation—now, at this time in history, we human beings, as a species, are receiving the touch of Power.

As the title of this gathering reminds us—the touch of power comes from a center qualified by Love Eternal, Light Supernal, and a Peaceful Silent Will. Our training as esotericists is to recognise the negative, observe the shadow—without denial or repression—and deal with it, while directing the focus of our minds and hearts towards signs of positive future possibilities.

I want to look at human response to the climate change issue in this light—as evidence that peoples, nations and the world community as a whole are forging a sense of planetary purpose that resonates with the high energies of Shamballa.

The Bailey teachings, along with many approaches to the Ageless Wisdom, suggest that climate change may have as much to do with the tilting of the earth's axis and with macrocosmic events, as with human activity. Yet this does not alter the fact that climate change is producing a dramatic wake up call in humanity—a realisation that our relations with the earth and the plant, animal and mineral kingdoms have been wrong, and based on illusion, abusive and unhealthy. These attitudes have been wrong primarily because of the total absence of any sense of inter-dependence and love.

It seems to me that something very inspiring is happening right now—beginning perhaps one or two years ago—and continuing on to the forthcoming negotiations for a new climate change treaty to replace Kyoto. This situation can be likened to a maturing of a heart-centred will—reaching deep down into the consciousness of human beings, nations, and peoples and changing the way we think about such fundamental themes as economics, trade, politics, international relations, science, Mother Earth and the natural World. These changes are coming from humanity – that's what makes them so exciting. They reveal a new level of encounter with the law of synthesis and they are conditioning goodwill in the world.

In *The Rays and Initiations* DK notes:

“ The human being is influenced upon the path of evolution from above downwards; the initiate is directed from within upwards. It is this which formulates the underlying significance of the energy of free will and is something only truly possible through self-direction; this can be seen struggling for expression today in that great world disciple, Humanity.” (1)

“The initiate is directed from within upwards...”. This, I believe, holds a key to the understanding of our times—looking both at the individual initiation process, and more specifically at the emerging world disciple, humanity. As a species we are beginning to take responsibility for the direction and architecture of world affairs—in other words, taking initiation.

This is where we see humanity arising as the world disciple and the issue of climate change is the clearest sign of the mobilising of the energy of free will—charting a course towards a future of new possibilities that are emerging out of a mixed cauldron of thought forms and behaviours.

We human beings are rather messy creatures with left-brain and right-brain, soul and personality, chakras above and below the diaphragm.

So tracing the process of humanity's emergence as a world disciple, directed from within upwards, requires discernment and analysis--there are no black and white measurements. We have to look at social and cultural change in terms of dominant conflicts and highly politicised debates alongside well-expressed visions of the future and energetic initiatives to foster cooperation and dialogue.

"The initiate is directed from within upwards...".

Looking at world affairs with a broad perspective shows us the way in which people and nations are energetically engaged in a process of learning to cooperate for the common good. If we want the process to speed up, this is simply a sign that we ourselves need to be more energetically and deeply involved, using the sense of urgency to fuel a deepening of our own response to the crisis in human affairs.

In climate change, the thing that is new and different is that during the past two years the conversation has shifted dramatically. Across the globe there is a growing awareness of the seriousness of the problem producing a consensus that appropriate action must be taken at a local, national and international level--although there is not so much clarity about what action to take. There are remnants of resistance to change and reluctance to be fully engaged in the global negotiations--such as in the current US administration--but it is as if this reluctance is now seen to belong to an era that is disappearing.

Two things have brought about the recent changes in the world: science and the crisis related to climate change. The UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has been an extraordinary phenomenon. Science has really come into its Aquarian role.

Think about it: a co-operative scientific endeavour involving experts from all parts of the world, synthesising research from national and regional bodies; applying rigorous scientific standards in assembling and interpreting data so it can be understood by governments, politicians, economists and the people of the world. I truly believe the IPCC, such a well-deserved recipient of the Nobel Peace prize, is one of the clearest signs of a Shamballa impact in world affairs.

The second thing is a massive change in awareness of the seriousness of the climate change issue. Suddenly it is on our minds as human beings in a new way.

The evidence is of course before our eyes--and some parts of the world have woken up to the issue before others--but now it is clear we are alert to the crisis. This is the result of education from environmental groups, the media, international agencies and certain governments that have, for some time, been putting significant resources into awareness of the issue. Al Gore's powerful work communicating the issue acted as a spark to "fire up" this popular awareness.

Understanding this awakening of planetary purpose as a positive response to the Shamballa impact changes the way we view the climate change crisis. It is as if Mother Earth is waking us up, shocking us out of a malaise of reckless consumerism so that the wholeness vision, now so well articulated in all fields of life, can begin to mould a real human sense of our being part of One World and One Humanity.

The climate change issue has mobilized what was an ideal into a guiding force in the politics of the real world. This is what carries the Shamballa touch--we all know how easy it is to hold opinions, views, and arguments that we readily discuss with our friends, colleagues and neighbours, it is quite another thing to begin to shape our lives around these ideas and opinions and to see that our local and national governments design a future with global warming in mind. This requires heart-centred will-Shamballa energy.

Climate change is one of the challenges with which evolution has presented us. Another is poverty and the call for a greater sharing of the world's resources. There is growing awareness that in a globalised world the divide between the masses of people living in poverty and the few living in affluence creates a dangerous situation. It is a shocking fact that 80% of the world's entire per capita income goes to the richest 20%.

The more we move deeper into the sense of the Oneness of humanity and all life, the more repugnant this statistic seems. Awareness of the need to build a more equitable world order has led to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) agenda with its aims of reducing the numbers of people living in extreme poverty by 50%, expanding access to education and other goals--all by 2015. Certain

governments in the North and the South (UK included) have given high priority to the MDGs, both in terms of diplomatic initiatives and budgetary/policy actions.

It is the combination of these two themes--climate change and bridging the divide between rich and poor--that is creating a new force in global thinking and action. The scientific consensus on climate change is that the world needs to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions during the next 10 to 15 years and cut them by half by the year 2050. Much of the discussion to date has revolved around the idea that the industrialized as well as the developing countries of the world have to achieve these targets together.

But in the context of the MDG's and the imperative to bridge the divide between rich and poor, something far more serious is required. If global emissions are to be cut by 50% by 2050 this means that northern countries will need to reduce their emissions by a far greater figure. The carbon neutral goal of the small countries of Costa Rica, New Zealand, Iceland and Norway together with four cities and five companies in the UN Environment Programmes Climate Neutral Network, may well be closer to the mark of what is needed. The push to development in the large populations of the South means that even with efficient and appropriate technologies, global emissions will have to increase relative to the North. Overall carbon emissions will need to be cut at a time when a massive economic development process has to get underway in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

If all this seems beyond the human capacity to move past selfish national interests and the power that material desires hold over the psyche, think again. Already there are signs that businesses, communities and whole societies are being challenged by the need to drastically reduce carbon emissions. Already there are signs of lifestyle changes adapting to the new environment.

The simple truth is that through the challenges of climate change and global poverty humankind has been given an opportunity to bring the wholeness vision into that place in the psyche where the heart-centred will lives and breathes. This is no abstract, philosophical fantasy. It is what is taking place. How else will we as individuals and nations be able to take the plunge into an uncertain future unless we draw collectively on these magical potencies of the heart in the head of purpose and direction?

I want to return to the quotation from *The Rays and the Initiations* that I used at the beginning of this talk: The human being is influenced upon the path of evolution from above downwards; the initiate is directed from within upwards. It is this which formulates the underlying significance of the energy of free will and is something only truly possible through self-direction; this can be seen struggling for expression today in that great world disciple, Humanity.

This idea is central to our understanding of personal identity in the context of climate change and global poverty.

As individuals, the themes of discipleship and initiation intersect with these questions of climate and poverty--just as they intersect with the human response to Love Eternal, Light Supernal, the Peaceful Silent Will. It is an incredible thing--the group crisis is also a personal crisis--reflecting a crisis in the intersection of the worlds: inner and outer, subjective and objective.

The initiatory process now for us as individuals requires that we see the transformation occurring in humanity--through response to climate change and poverty--in relation to the upwards vision: into the ashram, to universal Law and to the Plan. One of my most favourite insights from the teachings comes from *Discipleship in the New Age*, Vol. I:

"When [the] Plan is [intuitively] sensed, there comes the realisation of the unity of all beings, of the synthesis of world evolution and of the unity of the divine objective. All life and all forms are seen then in their true perspective; a right sense of values and of time then eventuates. When the Plan is truly intuited and at first hand, then constructive effort becomes inevitable and there is no lost motion." (2)

Constructive effort becomes inevitable when we intuit the Plan first hand. The plan is not some abstract idea--it is intimately connected with how we think about the future. By entering into an understanding of the Plan as an energetic and evolutionary dynamic, we automatically become agents through which the Plan begins to emerge. Our lives begin to be about constructive effort in line with the evolutionary thrust of life. Our learning concerns the development of skills of discrimination, impersonality and detachment so that we are better able to serve, free from self. That is where we find our joy, our fulfilment and our sense of meaning.

That means that our task as individuals is to see ourselves as examples, microcosms, of the human experiment in process of responding to the challenges of poverty and climate change in the light of our understanding of the Plan and of all that is upwards—Law, Principle, Synthesis.

In other words our task is to be thoroughly engaged in and immersed in the dynamic of the path leading to right relations.

This does not necessarily mean that we need to be political activists, after all there are ten major seed-groups in the service network. But it does mean that we need to care and to be concerned about our carbon footprint as individuals and communities—to be aware of it and quietly involved in lessening it. As responsible citizens this is how we all need to be directing our lives; equally, I believe, it means that we need to be concerned about the agenda of seeking and finding appropriate ways of helping to reduce poverty in the world.

Humanity is only emerging as the world disciple through the challenges of climate and poverty, as people bring the idea of resolving these conditions into their life purpose in a way that is initiatory. We miss the boat if we fail to see these challenges as a core part of our spiritual and esoteric lives. One of the reasons for attending conferences, sitting down to meditate, or entering a ritual is to contribute to the great awakening of human consciousness that is occurring—to be, within ourselves, a reservoir of energy able to be drawn on and used through all activities that are bringing right relations into the incarnated world of human affairs.

It has always seemed to me that the core of esoteric work in the light of DK's teachings is group service through radiation—pure and simple.

This is the thing: there is One Work—the transformation of the tiny world of our own being so it may become increasingly selfless, harmless and mindful. This transformation is occurring in the world through the myriad lives of human beings who are awake to the opportunities of the time and the great transformations occurring in the relations between Shamballa, Hierarchy and Humanity.

We are not isolated from the political and economic discussions about climate change and ending poverty just because we seek to tread an esoteric path.

In fact, it is the other way around—it is precisely because we seek to tread an esoteric path our vision of future possibilities and of the critical significance of the times has an edge, a clarity and perspective that brings with it added responsibility as well as the tools of mind and heart to live lightly with that responsibility.

Ultimately, discussions about the esoteric way are about how we, you and I, choose to respond to our sense of responsibility and about how we act out our sense of meaning and purpose. We are all human beings, in incarnation. Climate change and poverty reflect our crisis and our initiatory opportunity.

FOOTNOTES

1. Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations*, Lucis Publishing Company, p. 566
2. Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age*, Vol. I, p. 25