

FESTIVAL OF EASTER

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Good afternoon friends. Welcome to this Festival of Easter. It is a very significant Festival because it is the first of the Three Spiritual Festivals of Easter, Wesak and the Christ's Festival of Goodwill occurring during the next three signs of Aries, Taurus and Gemini.

As you know, these three festivals form the high point of the spiritual year. So because of the spiritual significance of these three Festivals it is important to consider why we are here. We are more than just a collection of individuals; we are essentially a center of lighted energy, and as such, it is our responsibility to radiate and distribute this lighted energy into human consciousness. So as we begin, let us take a few moments to carefully visualize horizontally with the many other group centers of light working this day around the world, and then visualize our vertical alignment with the higher group soul and the spiritual Hierarchy. Let us carefully build this network. And then let us realize that because we are a center of light we are also in contact with the spiritual Hierarchy of the planet. So let us bring this human center into alignment with the hierarchical center. If we visualize this vertical and horizontal alignment carefully, our work will be more effective and productive. Then while holding this alignment at a point of spiritual tension, let us sound together the powerful words of the *Mantram of Unification*; and as we do, let us realize the deep significance of the ideas behind the words as they pertain to the meaning of the Festival of Easter.

The sons of men are one and I am one with them.
I seek to love, not hate;
I seek to serve and not exact due service;
I seek to heal, not hurt.

Let pain bring due reward of light and love.
Let the soul control the outer form,
And life, and all events,
And bring to light the Love
That underlies the happenings of the time.

Let vision come and insight.
Let the future stand revealed.
Let inner union demonstrate and outer cleavages be gone.
Let love prevail.
Let all men love.

This mantram was chosen because it speaks to the very need of the world situation today. There is a crying need for love and understanding to overcome the demoralizing spirit of hatred and separateness. "The sons of men are one and I am one with them...I seek to heal not hurt...Let pain bring due reward of light and love...Let love prevail. Let all men love."

This Mantram of Unification is ideally suited for our work with this year's keynote: "Let the will-to-love fire the entire world with the 'spirit of relationship'". This will be the focus of our meditation work through out the year. So we need to understand what is meant by the will-to-love. As the Tibetan points out: "This fire is not what you think it is. The will-to-love means the

love of the greater Whole and the ability to do that which is needed for the good of the group in the right way and with the needed skill in action. It involves capacity for firm action where need arises, because the disciple has a long range vision and is not misled by the immediate perspective. He works and prepares for the future. It is, in other words, the loving intention to fire the entire world with the new idea of the "spirit of relationship." This is actually why Christ came into the world--to anchor the divine energy of Love in human consciousness and thereby open up a direct link with the Will of God and the human kingdom. So let us make full use of this fiery will-to-love.

So during this Easter Festival, we need to reflect on the true significance of what really happened during that divine sacrificial experience that Christ went through 2000 years ago. What was He really trying to demonstrate to humanity at that time? Did He simply die for our sins so that we might go to some lovely heaven, as some still believe? Or did His life and death and resurrection reveal as new spiritual pathway into the Kingdom of God, a path which all human beings, regardless of religious beliefs, must eventually tread if we are to advance as a human species?

Esoterically we know it is the latter path. Christ did not die in order that you and I might go to heaven. He died as a result of the very nature of the service which He rendered. It was a great cosmic event. He inaugurated a new age and revealed how we, too, should live and love as true sons of God. He demonstrated the true "spirit of relationship".

The important point is not His death, though that was climactic in the evolutionary process, but the subsequent Resurrection, symbolising as it did the formation and the precipitation upon Earth of a new kingdom in which men and all forms would be free from death—a kingdom of which the Man released from the Cross should be the symbol. We thus complete the entire circle, from the Man in space, with arms outspread in the form of a cross, through the sequence of crucified Saviours, telling us again and again what God had done for the universe until we arrive at the culminating Son of God Who carried the symbolism down on to the physical plane, in all its stages. He then rose from the dead to tell us that the long task of evolution had at last reached its final phase—if we so choose, and if we are ready to do as He did—pay the price, and, passing through the gates of death, attain to a joyful resurrection" (B-C 186)

At the heart of the Easter message is of course the mystery of the evolutionary process of initiation. That is the esoteric process lying behind the whole life of the Master Jesus and His relationship with the Christ. Because of this overshadowing relationship, Christ and Jesus were both able to demonstrate the whole series of initiations which humanity will experience in its long evolutionary journey. As the Tibetan describes it: "The Gospel gives us the five initiations of the Master Jesus, beginning with the first (the Birth) and ending with the fifth (the Revelation). But it also gives the initiations of the Christ, starting from the second (the Baptism) and ending with the seventh (the Resurrection). However, we are told, the seventh was left incomplete; it will be finalised when Christ completes His work at the time of the Second Coming. Another good reason why He must reappear; He still has much work to do here before He can move on to His next planetary or solar stage of work.

What this initiation process demonstrates is that in reality there is no death. Death is one of those great illusions that we have eventually to shatter. The veil that has been created by the fear of death (created by the dark forces, in fact) should be torn asunder and the love and will-to-good of God be allowed to shine through. Rather than death, what comes through the Easter experience is liberation and life more abundant. The goal of the initiation process, we are told, "is to admit mankind into the realisation of and identification with the will or purpose of Deity." This should be the basis for a new understanding of the Easter experience.

That is the deep seated urge of resurrection, a word that simply means to rise again, "back to an original state." Easter is a time when we can reflect on the meaning of resurrection. For example, it is said that "two thousand years ago the Christ did not rise out of a rocky sepulchre and re-assume His discarded body. He passed through the great seventh initiation...and knew the secret of life, of which immortality is only one of its many attributes." The sense of immortality is given to us by the continuity of the soul. Christ's resurrection carried Him to an even higher state where He returned to His original state of Being "to remain there throughout all the eternities." This, we are told, is the true and final resurrection. The Son of God has found His way back to the Father and to His originating Source, that state of existence to which we have given the name Shamballa. From then on, the consciousness of the Universal Life is His.

Further reflection on the idea of resurrection brings up another interesting point. Resurrection is the evolutionary keynote and the evolutionary technique upon this planet; it is the keynote of nature; death is not. We see death and resurrection occurring all around us in the four seasons of the year, and yet we still fear death. An interesting fact, we are told, is that "the fear of death is one of the great abnormalities or distortions of divine truth for which the Lords of Cosmic Evil are responsible. When in early Atlantean times they emerged from the place where they had been confined, and forced *temporarily* the retirement of the Great White Lodge to subjective levels, their first great act of distortion was to implant in human beings fear, beginning with the fear of death. From that time on, men have laid the emphasis upon death and not life, and have been ridden by fear all their days."

Removal of the fear of death can be accomplished by a substantial inflow of the will-to-love. The fire of love has the purifying power to burn away that ancient thoughtform of death which has imprisoned humanity for thousands of years. It is a huge thoughtform that is impeding humanity's ability to move forward in consciousness; it is impeding humanity's right to experience those expansions of consciousness and the initiation demonstrated by Jesus and the Christ. The will-to-love holds the key to this expansion and is the intention behind our keynote: "Let the will-to-love fire the entire world with the 'spirit of relationship'". Relationship is not just at the horizontal level, between people and groups and nations; the vertical line of relationship between the personality, the soul and the highest spirit is equally important. In fact, as that vertical line of relationship is more strongly established, it changes the very nature and quality of all horizontal relationships.

As disciples and workers in the light, we must make every effort to live harmoniously and love. The violent vibrations of our surroundings must be stilled by a strong counter vibration of love, remembering ever that as we work on the side of evolution, the power of the Godhead itself is with us, available for use. Nothing can withstand the steady pressures of love and harmony when they are applied long enough. It is not spasmodic efforts that count. It is the long-sustained, unvarying pressure which eventually breaks down opposition and the walls of separateness.

So in our meditation work let us focus, not so much on the negative state of the world today; that would only tend to energise it more. But, in the true spirit of Easter, let us help to resurrect the great heart of humanity and bring more magnetic, uplifting love into the world. That will, in time, overpower the forces of materialism and hatred and open the way for the approaching Hierarchy and the Christ.

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