

THE CHRIST'S FESTIVAL
THE FESTIVAL OF GOODWILL
New York June 14, 2011

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Good evening friends. Welcome to this celebration of the Festival of Goodwill, the Festival of Humanity; it is also known as the Christ's Festival. And more recently it has been called World Invocation Day. It is also the third Festival of the Three Spiritual Festivals of Easter, of Wesak and the Festival of Goodwill. These three Festivals represent the high point of the spiritual year, a time when the in-pouring energies of Light and Love and the Will-to-Good are at their peak.

The central figure Who is present at all three of these festivals is of course the Christ. It is His experience and demonstration of resurrection that we celebrate at the Easter Festival. At the Wesak Festival a month later, the Buddha, as the Agent of Shamballa, conveying the first Ray energy of Will, returns to the assembled Hierarchy and directs this potent power onto the Christ Who receives and holds this potent energy for distribution at the June Festival of Goodwill. For two thousand years, Christ has also acted as the "receiving agent" for the great cosmic second ray energy of Love-Wisdom. And over all that time, the Christ and the Hierarchy have directed this energy into human consciousness, gradually conditioning human thinking and shaping human thought in the value of love and goodwill. Behind all Hierarchical activity is the impulse of Love. Only now are we in the human family beginning to express this magnetic force in a cooperative way. But this is no time to rest on our laurels. There is still a great need for this quality to be expressed in the world. The spiritual quality of universal love is still the central theme of the Hierarchy and it should be our on-going objective as well.

This is why the keynote of our meditation work this year is so vital. "Let the will-to-love fire the entire world with the 'spirit of relationship'". As a way of preparing our thoughts for working with this keynote, let us focus on the potent words of the Mantram of Unification. It is a mantram of love that will enable us to synchronize our minds with the universal objective of the Christ and the spiritual Hierarchy, and with the sustained purpose behind the Festival of Goodwill.

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.

"Let love prevail. Let all men love". The quality of love which is referred to in this mantram is a love expressed for the greater whole—not the glamorous, sentimental attitude which is so prevalent today. The

love that we as a group should be learning to understand and express is that described by the Tibetan as “a process of determining action on the basis of the ultimate good of the individual or the group, and that the immediate reactions of the personality are secondary.” To illustrate this he says “the Hierarchy is concerned with the final issue, with the future welfare and the ultimate well-being of humanity. They are not so concerned with the immediate suffering and pain of the personalities involved.” Now this approach to love may be hard for us to understand, especially today with all the suffering and pain and conflict and death taking place in the world. But the Hierarchy works always towards the future. As you know, we are in the midst of a long, painful transition period; a crisis period in which many new lessons can be learned, if we are open to what is possible and are willing to let go of the past, and let go of the illusions we have created. They are blocking the way ahead. We can continue to focus our attention on the illusions and blockages, or we can learn to adapt to a new way of thinking—to think and observe with great compassion for the suffering in the world, but to see ahead and think and reflect deeply about the welfare of humanity in the future. In other words, to think as the Hierarchy thinks about the new and universal expression of love and goodwill that will manifest in the future under the growing influence of Aquarius. The Hierarchy is aware of what is humanly possible as we evolve over the next two thousand years. And it is that soul potential which needs to be brought forth into the light. So, yes, let love prevail. Let all men love. Not just a few, but the greater whole of humanity.

That there is intended to be a new expression of love in the world is the spiritual intent behind the work of the Festivals. It is the major objective of the Plan of God and therefore the objective of the Hierarchy. In fact, the theme of love is one of the three keynotes of the Christ’s Festival.

But this is “love in its hierarchical sense, free from sentiment, emotion and personal emphasis—a love that sacrifices and understands, that acts with strength and decision and that works on behalf of the whole and not the interests of any group or individual.” Now it is significant to understand the expression of love in this way—“free from sentiment, emotion and personal emphasis.” We don’t often think of love as being a quality that must be freed, like being freed from prison. And yet, for the most part, that is exactly the problem; it is narrowly confined in our consciousness. But expressed in this manner, the energy of love is not free. It is desired and gathered in by the little self and for the little self. It is therefore imprisoned and narrowly confined by our emotional-desire nature. In this freedom-loving nation perhaps this is something we need to think about: the liberation of love. Love turned inward often leads to selfishness and greed. But if allowed to flow freely, the emphasis shifts to that which lies beyond the self. Then the little self recedes into the background. The real challenge before humanity now is to attain that point in consciousness where it can sustain this flow of loving energy with complete understanding, and where we are freed from the attachments imposed by the self that inhibit the flow of love. In other words, as with Hierarchy, free from sentiment, emotion and personal emphasis.

Which brings us to the second and related keynote of this Festival, that of Resurrection. This keynote emphasizes the new note of livingness and of the loving Christ and of that “life more abundantly.” The words “livingness” and “life more abundantly” imply an identity with that which animates and gives life to the form. In other words, the soul within. That is what is resurrected after the form disappears. When the life of the soul is more present and apparent in the world, spiritual values—soul values like love, sharing, cooperation and goodwill—will then govern human thinking. Living will still be in the form but will be more simplified and vibrant and less encumbered by the form. Life more abundantly doesn’t mean having a good life of easy living here in the material world—a life full of more expensive stuff. It means moving into a higher, more refined state of consciousness and gaining a more abundant appreciation of the one Life—Life as it is beyond the material world, where “livingness is lovingness”, where the resurrected soul is free. And as this happens, humanity will come to understand the meaning of the third keynote of Contact.

Contact implies a closer relationship between Christ and His people, meaning all humanity and not just Christians. It means a closer recognition of and an identity with the spiritual Hierarchy. This direct contact with the spiritual Hierarchy is a prerequisite for the establishing of the kingdom of souls on earth, and for that future time when members of the Hierarchy will once again walk openly among us and take a more active role in the daily affairs of humanity. This is the ultimate goal for the Christ and the spiritual Hierarchy today, and it is why these three keynotes of Love, Resurrection and Contact are emphasized at this Festival of Goodwill. So it is a time to reflect on where our responsibility lies. To paraphrase a famous quote: Ask not what God can do for you, ask what can you do for God.

There is a significant feature of the Three Spiritual Festivals and the zodiacal signs they are aligned with. There is good reason why these signs are chosen and not three other signs. It is said that "In this world cycle Gemini, Taurus and Aries are three subjective energies or three conditioning signs which lie behind manifestation. They lie behind the form-taking experience in Cancer and they also lie behind manifestation in Pisces. So we need to bear in mind their cause-initiating nature and the fact that they have a more specifically psychic effect and subjective influence than their strictly phenomenal and physical effects would lead one to imagine. These three signs represent a time in the annual cycle when ideas can be impressed on human consciousness which will eventually manifest in some outer form.

We have examples of this effect taking place in past and recent history. For example, in 1775, the writing of the Declaration of Independence. All the inspired discussion and writing took place in the spring of that year, during the period of those three signs. And it finally achieved manifested form in the sign of Cancer of that year, and is now celebrated on July 4th.

Another highly significant example: the founding of the United Nations and the writing of the U.N. Charter in San Francisco in the spring of 1945. This of course was a continuation of an idea that first came through from certain members of the Hierarchy and later manifested as the League of Nation in the 1920s. The idea was picked up again by President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill who initiated the idea for this world forum just as World War II was winding down.

A third example is the current Arab Spring where the idea and ideal of freedom is painfully and hopefully manifesting. This drive for freedom of expression is widespread across the Arab world. It is clear evidence of the power of the human spirit to remove all barriers to the free flow of divine energy and man's free will. The Tibetan speaks about this great power existing in mankind. "The forces of spirit are unconquered", he said, referring to an earlier war but still relevant today. "These aspects of human behaviour indicate the wonder of the divinity which is in man and the success of the divine plan for humanity. Divinity, however, awaits the expression of man's free will; his intelligence and his growth in goodwill are already being expressed.

The Christ and the spiritual Hierarchy never—no matter how great the need or important the incentive— infringe upon the divine right of men to make their own decisions, to exert their own free will and to achieve freedom by fighting for freedom—individually, nationally and internationally. When true freedom covers the earth, we shall see the end of tyranny—politically, religiously and economically... I refer to that period which will surely come in which an enlightened people will rule; these people will not tolerate authoritarianism in any church or totalitarianism in any political system; they will not accept or permit the rule of any body of men who undertake to tell them what they must believe in order to be saved or what government they must accept. When the people are told the truth and when they can freely judge and decide for themselves, we shall then see a much better world."

So from just these three examples—and there are many more—we see how powerful the energies are during this Three Spiritual Festivals period. We can see the hand of the Hierarchy impressing new ideas on human

consciousness—ideas that are rapidly awakening human free will. Ideas that provide right guidance for manifesting the Plan.

Another powerful tool given to us to assure right guidance is of course the Great Invocation—an invocation for Light, Love and the Will-to-Good. And of particular importance during this Festival of Goodwill is the fourth verse: “From the center 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.” This is the prime objective behind all the work of the spiritual Hierarchy today—to free human free will which has been imprisoned for many long ages. Evil exists wherever free will is imprisoned. When humanity is free to intelligently respond to the call of the loving heart, it will then have the capacity to blend and fuse with the greater Will of God. That power of the will is what the return of the Christ will bring to the world. And to make way for the free, unimpeded inflow of that power is the purpose of our work. It is the objective behind the theme of our meditation work: “Let the will-to-love fire the entire world with the ‘spirit of relationship’”. Building right relationships becomes automatic when the magnetic, attractive power of universal love governs the consciousness of humanity.

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