

Festival of Sagittarius, London, November 2018

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Friends, welcome to our full moon meditation meeting this evening in the sign of Sagittarius. The time of the actual full moon is 5.39 GMT tomorrow morning, so we are working together in the period of potent build-up when the spiritual energies are at their most intense, prior to their release into the consciousness of humanity as agencies for recognition, for more light and love, for change and for the will to make that change both possible and constructive. As the keynote of the disciple in Sagittarius expresses it: "I see the goal. I reach that goal and then I see another." And we will be using this phrase as the focus point in our meditation later on.

The rhythmic observance of the full moon opportunities for planetary meditation take place over a five day period. Firstly there are two days of preparation. This is the time when we hold the personality quiet and in the background. We aim to cultivate real detachment from outer things, and at the same time maintain an alert inner watchfulness and readiness. Then there is the day of the full moon itself which is a time of stillness, of reception and of safeguarding. This is followed by two days in which the energies we have contacted and stored in the group heart and mind can be stepped down into thoughts and aspirations, into changed attitudes and concrete plans for human progress and be distributed into the hearts and minds of all humanity where they can empower all kinds of activities and initiatives that will foster human uplift and progress.

So let us pause for a moment or two and then we will say together the Affirmation of the Will.

In the centre of the will of God I stand.
Naught shall deflect my will from His.
I implement that will by love.
I turn towards the field of service.
I, the Triangle divine, work out that will
Within the square and serve my fellowmen.

It is almost a cliché to assert that we are living in a time of tremendous turmoil and real planetary crisis. This is causing concern to many people, and we need to address this. We shouldn't shy away into feel-good platitudes, like "God's in his heaven. All's right with the world," or rest back on abstract ideas like 'the ultimate triumph of good'. The latter will only happen when we face up to things as they are – and work. It has been said that to compose a piece of music requires 10% inspiration and 90% perspiration. The same holds true for practising the spiritual life. It is hard, hard work. It stretches us beyond our limits and out of all our comfort zones. But if we are true to our calling, the inspiration grows – and so does the perspiration! As every disciple discovers, it is sometimes not comfortable, to put it mildly, to face up to personality failings.

Of course none of us would be here if we hadn't in our own way experienced something of the soul – the brilliance of an inner light, a realisation of the group that we are a part of, an outgoing all-embracing love, a certainty about the Plan, a

conviction about the beneficence of the overshadowing Spiritual Hierarchy as they attempt to guide humanity into better relationships and the acceptance of responsibilities. And none of us would be here if we were not aware in our personal lives, and in the life of humanity as a whole, that the human personality is flawed, or rather, is incomplete. And as we work to develop our own insights and deal with our own problems, so we extend with love our efforts into the larger whole of which we are an integral part. Our aim is not just to lift ourselves, but to help lift everybody nearer to the light. This is world service.

Today experts abound in every field of human activity who are searching for the causes of what is going on in the world now. Much of their work is enlightening and of great value to humanity. Generally they outline what we would call secondary causes. Nevertheless they highlight real issues, indicate responsibilities and propose wise courses of action. But as trainee esotericists, we are in the privileged position of becoming aware of the inner world of energies and therefore of the truer, deeper causes behind what is happening in the outer world of daily living. So it would be of value if for a few minutes we take a step or two back from the turmoil, the mixed motives and conflicts of our present day world and refresh our minds about this.

Let's start with what is probably the most familiar to us. This is the transition that is now occurring between the past age of just over 2,000 years governed by the energies of Pisces and the incoming and new age that is being conditioned by the energies of Aquarius. We are told that this change over will take approximately 500 years and we are now roughly at the midway point. Much has been written and said about this and it has clearly become part of the common vernacular. We can all think of the 1960s song "The dawning of Aquarius" from the musical "Hair". Perhaps not so well known is that the composer Michael Tippett was fascinated by the ideas of Jungian archetypes and wrote a book called "Moving into Aquarius". Indeed Jung himself worked in depth with this idea in his book "Aion", a major work of his later years.

We note also that this particular transition is accompanied by the withdrawal of the 6th Ray of devotion and idealism which has itself conditioned so much of the Piscean experience and at the same time the coming into incarnation of the 7th Ray of rhythm, ritual and ceremonial order. We thus have a conflict between two pairs of energies that is profoundly affecting not just humanity but all the kingdoms in nature.

As the Piscean age and the 6th ray era draws to a close, we tend to focus on the bad aspects of their influences. We think of the dogmatism that has marred much of orthodox religion, the cruel fanaticism of radical extremism. We tend to forget the priceless gifts they have bestowed. The value of idealism for example. And the understanding that, though it has its importance and demand for recognition, the material world is not the one of greatest importance. It is not a principle in its own right, but is in fact the arena in which the values of the inner worlds of thought and truth and love have to work out in practical and redemptive ways.

We tend to forget the gifts of the many political ideologies that these energies have fostered in humanity. In their various ways these have embodied the concepts of freedom and responsibility, the value of personal initiative and the necessity for some form of what is called the social contract. The necessary conflict between the various 'isms' that humanity has formulated has been important in helping to develop a

sense of discrimination and a practical recognition of what Abraham Maslow called the hierarchy of human needs, and how those needs can best be met. It needs to be emphasised that these ideological conflicts needn't have played out in the horror world wars or the menacing threats of cold wars. This has to be put down to the prevailing habit of separateness in the human psyche which is fostered by ignorance, selfishness and the distorted perception of reality that we call glamour.

Similarly as the New Age of cooperation and brother- and sisterhood comes ever nearer we perhaps don't take into account that the energies it brings can also work out in negative ways.

For example the sense of universality that is an outstanding quality of Aquarius, can be turned into such a regimentation of humanity that the value of every individual and their right to freedom and responsibility and choice is suppressed, often with terrible cruelty. A brief look at the recent history of Soviet Russia and of China will illustrate this point. It is an important part of our work to help direct these new energies into stimulation of the soul with its insistence on freedom and creative responsibility and do our best to offset the personality distortions that will inevitably arise.

On their own these transitions would create conditions within the human psyche, and therefore in the outer world as well, that would be really difficult for humanity to handle. But in addition to this, humanity itself as a whole has reached that point of development and achievement where the human personality has unfolded to such a marked degree that the birth of the soul – of the Christ in the heart – is becoming a demonstrated possibility for the many, not just the few which was the situation in earlier epochs. This means that we are not just physical and emotional beings, but are becoming alive intellectually too and are integrating these three aspects of mind, desire and dense physical body into that functioning unity which we call a personality. There are many reasons for this, but undoubtedly one of them is the institution of mass education, which is encouraging people to think for themselves, though, it has to be admitted, often within circumscribed limits. This is a most important development, and indeed we can say that mass education is probably one of the most spiritual events of modern times.

On its own, the personality is self-centred, ambitious, self-aggrandising. It wants to be centre stage, and anything which blocks this has to be got rid of. Fortunately it is precisely at this juncture that the Soul, our real Self, starts to assert its presence and begins to bring to the forefront of consciousness its own values which are the opposite of the personality's. There are many ways to enumerate these but perhaps the following will suffice: a sense of responsibility, identification with the whole, creativity, love of truth, selfless sharing, social healing, freedom, modesty in terms of material possessions, joy and even genius.

All who are attempting to tread the spiritual Path will know only too well from their own experience what the conflict between these two aspects of a human being is like. We often experience the situation where the mind and soul have become integrated, as have also the desire nature and the physical body. We become torn between what we know is right as souls, and what we want as personalities. The Tibetan suggests that we must recognise that our integration is weak, for we are working in two phases or sections: Physical / emotional, and Mental / soul. "We are sometimes one and

sometimes the other and usually very thoroughly in either case.” We sometimes rise into the light of spiritual reality and experience the timeless joy of divinity and see with clarity and enthusiasm our work of group service laid out before us. At other times we slip back into the personality mode whose mental limitations and habits of desire and activity are the antithesis of what we really want to achieve. At the beginning of the Christian era, St Paul wrote movingly about this experience of struggle and his apparent inability to resolve the crisis: “O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

If this is true for the individual disciple, it must also be true for humanity as a whole, now the world disciple. Perhaps that is what is happening now.

The closing of the 2nd World War brought a great liberation and an unprecedented inflow of spiritual energy and a real demonstration of the soul of humanity conditioning thought and action in, for example, the founding of the United Nations with its specialised agencies that have for seven decades done so much good for the world. It is obvious that for humanity, the soul and mind were then clearly in alignment. This still holds true today and we can all see the mind of humanity responding to planetary need with love and the sense of universality as well as detailed planning. We know what needs to be done to solve all the major world problems.

However, this is being constantly frustrated. Old habits die hard and the physical / emotional alignment of nations is re-emerging into prominence with the resurrection of national myopias and prejudices. These are exerting a tremendous pull on national psyches all around the world, for example in fear of the foreigner, the repudiation of refugees, and the rise of isolationist populism. Then there is the phenomenon of trying to resurrect past national achievements that should actually be being consigned to the history books. It's not just America that wants to be great again! And so humanity is being torn between the soul and the form, between love and the sense of separateness. And millions suffer!

There are of course many other spiritual events as well that are affecting humanity deeply. Perhaps we could mention one more and this is the mystery of the life of our own planetary Logos, who is currently experiencing the tests and processes of initiation on his own high plane. None of us can have the faintest idea of what this means, except that this must necessarily and profoundly affect his whole body of manifestation – our world in its many dimensions and planes of consciousness. In particular the role of humanity within the planetary scheme has an importance that we need to recognise.

It is interesting to note that the human kingdom is a major energy centre within the planetary life, and it seems that a major aspect of the Plan is to produce an alignment between humanity and the heart centre of Love which we call Hierarchy and the planetary head centre of embodied Will which we call Shamballa. It is interesting to note in the Lord's prayer the following phrase: “Thy Will be done on earth as it is in heaven”. This implies that Hierarchy is naturally an expression in love of planetary Will, whereas Humanity on earth has yet to express that Will in daily life.

However, the Tibetan encourages us to believe that a start has been made. For example he writes: “Certain great readjustments are going on in that centre [humanity], for it is beginning to conform at long last to divine intention. ...For the

first time in the long history of human development, energy from Shamballa has made a direct impact upon this third planetary centre. This is not due entirely to the point in evolution attained by mankind; this attainment is only a secondary reason or cause. It is due to the will of Sanat Kumara Himself as He prepares for a certain cosmic initiation. This initiation requires the reorganisation of the energies flowing through and composing that 'centre which we call the race of men'; this creates a rearrangement within the centre itself, and thus brings into manifested expression certain aspects and qualities – always inherent in those energies – which have not hitherto been recognised.”

In this respect it is interesting to note that at one time in the distant past humanity embodied the planetary solar plexus centre. At present we are the planetary throat centre of creativity. In the future our destiny will be to form the planetary Ajna centre of creative energy direction. It is then that we will fulfil our part in the 'One Work' when planetary creativity expresses both the Will and the Love of Deity in a great triangle of redemptive power.

In a pictorial way the changing symbol for Sagittarius describes this well. In the early stage the symbol was of the centaur with a bow and arrow. This represents the human being entirely identified with the animal nature and the arrows are those of desire aimed at what will bring satisfaction. Later the symbol changed into the archer mounted on a horse. Here the human being is no longer so identified with the form nature and is now learning to control it. It is the mind which aims the arrows. Of course as the mind gradually comes under the influence of the soul the arrows are more and more aimed towards the targets of group service and the manifestation of the good, the true and the beautiful.

Today the symbol is aspirational, indicating future possibilities. It is simply the arrow with a trace of the bow across it, pointing upwards towards the intuition where naked reality can be known, undistorted by the intellect or the desire nature. And the arrow, fired true, returns bringing with it intuitive understanding of the Plan and a clear understanding of the next steps that need to be taken.

In relation to the rays we were discussing earlier it is interesting to note two things. Firstly that in Sagittarius the 6th Ray plays an important part during the path of evolution for it indicates possibilities and goals, and fosters aspiration. Secondly that the 7th ray comes into its own in Sagittarius on the path of initiation where the challenge is to ground spiritual achievement in the outer world of daily living. This can perhaps show us that the transition from one ray to another doesn't necessarily have to involve conflict; they can actually lead from one to the other in a beautiful sequence of unfoldment.

And this brings us neatly back to our work this evening. We need to rise above the worries and fears of the solar plexus, and take our stand in poised mental awareness of the issues at stake. We need to love humanity warts and all, as does the Hierarchy. We need to serve and strengthen the light wherever it appears, as does the Hierarchy. We need to subordinate our self-will to the divine Will to good. This is the long term goal for humanity, and as it is achieved we can be certain that a new goal, undreamt of today, will appear over the horizon of our expanded consciousness.

So let us now go into our meditation.