

Lightning Strikes
Aquarius Full Moon Festival
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Welcome everyone to this Festival of Aquarius. The exact time of the full moon occurs tomorrow morning at 8:26 and so we are now working together within the full tide of the inpouring energy. Aquarius is the sign of the World Server carrying the life-giving waters and pouring them forth to a thirsty humanity. This is the symbolism of this sign which holds such meaning for our world today.

The importance of this time is magnified by the fact that this full moon is lunar eclipse--one of the two most powerful eclipses of the year. The energy surrounding eclipses is intensified, which quite often manifests in outer events. And this particular cycle of eclipses is particularly auspicious because it falls in the signs of Aquarius and Leo, the axis of the new age into which we are fast entering. This charge of Aquarian energy, therefore, should spur on those individuals and groups who are working towards the realization of the Aquarian keynotes of brotherhood, freedom and equality for all people.

So let us now take a moment of silence to link up in consciousness with all individuals and groups throughout the world, followed by a sounding of the Mantram of the Group of World Servers:

May the Power of the one Life pour through the group of all true servers.
May the Love of the one Soul characterise the lives of all who seek to aid the Great Ones.
May I fulfill my part in the one Work through self-forgetfulness, harmlessness and right speech.
OM

It's helpful to reflect upon the words of this mantram for they can serve to align us with the goal of service, of playing our part, a central quality of Aquarius. When we look around the world at this time we can see how powerful this inpouring energy is, for everywhere there are groups springing up in response to the need as they understand it.

The preceding sign of Capricorn highlighted the spiritual group and its symbol of the mountain goat. In this sign that goat faces the challenge of coming down from the mountaintop. And anyone who has ever watched these goats descending the sheer cliffs, knows that this journey is often more treacherous than the ascent. These difficulties are testified to by the many climbers who die each year while coming down from Mount Everest. Part of this challenge might relate to the exhilaration of the heights, the symbolic taking in of that touch of Shamballa which occurs when one reaches the mountaintop that can then result in a loss of one's footing on the descent into the valleys.

Aquarian group service is manifesting all around us at this time as groups large and small awaken to their own potential to affect change. For Aquarius is a sign related to the center Humanity, to the people, to the 99%. The tide of evolution is in support of their efforts. For the old thoughtform of control by the privileged few is waning within our world, being replaced by calls for justice, for the amelioration of conditions, for equality and freedom, for fairness and sharing. The forces of evolution are supporting these voices.

This Aquarian influence can be seen in such movements as #MeToo and #TimesUp--groups speaking out in support of women and their rights. It can also be seen in the #BlackLivesMatter movement, highlighting the horrors of police brutality against people of color as well as all forms of racial injustice. This Aquarian impulse underlies the demands to stem the tide of modern slavery perpetrated through corporate outsourcing in developing nations. And we also see this Aquarian energy demonstrating in groups such as ICAN -- the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, the 2017 recipients of the Nobel Peace Prize. And, above all, we see Aquarian idealism being grounded into effective action through the development and implementation of such wide-ranging and visionary platforms as the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Accord framed by the UN to bring about a more just and sustainable world for all people. These movements and many, many more encircling the planet are the surest testament that the spirit of Aquarius is alive and well in our world.

But humanity is not alone in moving our planet into the light. There are a number of special alignments within the heavens that are supporting the present shift. There is the combination of the incoming of the seventh ray coupled with that of Aquarius, a situation which we're told has only happened six times in the last one million years or so. Aquarius and the seventh ray work particularly well together for they are both of the same nature. Another powerful and conditioning energy today is the fact that Aquarius rules in the cycle of both the lesser and the greater zodiacs--a combination that only happens once every 250,000 years or so. It's said that the combination of these alignments leads to the illumination of consciousness and creates those conditions wherein the "light supernal [a special type of light emanating from Shamballa] can be known." This period of shifting into the Aquarian age has also been powerfully supported by the three recent impacts from this center Shamballa-- in 1945, 1975 and 2000. These events have powerfully impacted humanity's mental body with the energy of will, and this triple impact has never before occurred in the history of our planet and its effects will be working out for centuries, or more likely, millenia to come.

The Illumination of consciousness, the other result of these inpouring energies, is not something to be sought after but rather it is the natural outcome of sustained spiritual practice and dedication to a life of service. Illumination, therefore, comes as the result of doing the work. As the Tibetan wrote, "illumination is inevitable but incidental" (*Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 1, p. 79*). It manifests as a result of the head and heart vibrating in unison, merging their corresponding energy fields.

The dawning of a new age naturally brings with it an influx of those souls who resonate with the new energies, as well as the passing out of those who are governed by the outgoing energies. So now the seventh ray souls are in the ascendancy. Many of the changes in our world today, changes that are precipitating rapidly, are the result of these seventh ray souls and the changes they came in to manifest in the world. To them is given the task of creating more pliable forms—forms to house the new light. The seventh ray worker anchors the will for it is the place where "the highest and lowest meet."

The creation of these new forms will call for experimentation. It is obvious therefore that a certain reservation of judgement is necessary in relation to new ways of working. Flexibility of approach is needed, for each ray works differently, according to its own vision and this vision might not be understood by those vibrating in response to another note. It's said "to [the seventh ray soul] is committed the task of organising the activities of the new era and of ending the old methods of life and the old crystallised attitudes to life, to death, to leisure and to the population" (*The Destiny of the Nations*, p. 30). So it's not only a change in forms that these souls will usher in but also, and more importantly, changes in attitude to the whole structure and underlying assumptions of the way we live our lives and the values that condition us.

The incoming Aquarian and seventh ray influences are being focalized through the planet Uranus which rules both of them. One of the symbols of Uranus is lightning which is similar to the symbol of Aquarius itself. Lightning seems an incredibly apt symbol for, symbolically speaking, through its means the will of God strikes the Earth.

Uranus governs powerfully in Aquarius, exoterically as well as hierarchically, bringing its influence to bear both upon the average individual, upon the masses of humanity and also upon the initiates. Humanity first discovered Uranus in 1781. It was the first planet discovered that was invisible to the naked eye and needed the development of the telescope in order to be seen. From the start, therefore, Uranus became associated with inventions and technological discoveries. All of the outer planets are related to a more collective, transpersonal influence and as a new planet is discovered it is an outer sign that new areas of consciousness are being birthed within the human mind.

It was interesting to note, therefore, that as the Aquarian age began to cycle into manifestation it revealed this new ruling planet. Uranus then replaced Saturn which had ruled Aquarius since antiquity. When a new planet emerges as the ruler of a sign the purpose of that sign deepens as its energies become filtered by a new and more appropriate ray and planetary influence that allows its true nature to manifest more effectively. This deepening also has happened in the case of Pisces with the discovery of Neptune and in the sign of Scorpio with the discovery of Pluto.

It's said that the quality of any planet reveals itself in the activities that were going on in the world at the time of its discovery. 1781 was a time of revolutionary movements in America,

in France and also in the workplace with the onset of the industrial revolution. But Uranus is also the planet of the occult--the revealer of the sacred mysteries. The path itself brings in Uranian influence. Perhaps we could say in certain respects Uranus rules that path for it is said to lead the soul to the burning ground. It is "the will to be and to know simultaneously on all planes of manifestation" (*Esoteric Astrology*, p. 139). Uranus fosters the urge to better conditions and aids in the shift from intellect to intuition. And as we move into this age we can foresee that the scientific community will increasingly become open and receptive to investigating the unseen worlds and the causes subtending outer effects. Then this community's domination by concrete thinking will give way to a new and more illumined consciousness.

Because Uranus is so important in the incoming of the new age it is helpful to study its movements in the heavens. Uranus has a seven year cycle of moving from one sign to another in the zodiacal wheel. These cycles correspond to one of the rhythms of the soul, both within the life of an individual as well as within the life of the collective, We can see this influence working out, for example, in the seven year cycles of the Festival Week of the Group of World Servers.

Because Uranus is so central to this new age, as it passes through the different signs of the zodiac it highlights the issues related to that sign and its affairs. This spring Uranus moves into the sign of Taurus and consequently into an association with the second house. Taurus rules the group of world servers and so this would seem to be a highly significant shift for that group, bringing it under a more concentrated seventh ray and Aquarian influence.

Exoterically it might be said that Uranus's passage into Taurus could relate to sudden shifts within the financial world, with all the challenges this could pose. Another one of the results could be a substantial increase in the movement towards the use of digital and crypto-currencies. The bridging between technology and finance in new and dynamic ways is of the nature of the Taurus/Uranus combination.

Second house activity is related to losses and gains which, on a deeper level the Tibetan relates to a "withdrawal from matter" and also to the "acquisition of spiritual powers." So perhaps this shift relates to death on some level. As people move towards valuing inner culture, towards valuing that which is lasting, they will perhaps contribute to the death of that preoccupation with the material and the temporal.

This Taurean influence will surely spur a deepening recognition among people everywhere of the fundamental economic injustice in our world. Uranus will stay in Taurus through 2026, the final period of the sixty year Stage of the Forerunner wherein humanity is charged with preparing the world for the externalization of the Hierarchy. The primary task ahead of the group is the implementation of the principle of sharing. We cannot underestimate the importance of this closing cycle of this stage wherein a tremendous push is on. Aquarius's primary influence at this time, however, is to aid the influx of the life-giving energy from Shamballa to pour into the spiritual Hierarchy. Its influence lies in building a

lighted bridge within consciousness between the planetary head and the planetary heart. This bridging work is being aided by the group of world servers as they learn to stand upon the periphery of the great Ashram. This work will enable the server to move into a recognition of the joy that will be one of the defining characteristics of the new age. This joy that comes as a result of the linking of head and heart, is beautifully expressed in a mantram given out by the Tibetan—a mantra that will surely increasingly define this new age into which we are moving, “Joy settles as a bird within the heart but has winged its way from the secret place within the head. I am that bird of joy. Therefore with joy I serve” (*Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. I, p. 158*).

It is by cultivating this inner bird of joy that we can look out at the agony and harshness in our world and yet maintain the necessary poise, holding fast to the assurance that beneath all the outer tragedies and challenges lies the undying soul. As we hold to our spiritual principles, the lower mind will no longer act as an obstacle to the inpouring light but will become instead a tool of illumination. Through this illumination light is thrown upon problems large and small and the way forward opens out and becomes clear. Then as an ancient passage states, “... the magic of the waters works. The individual stands transformed. The Lion disappears and he who bears the water pot stands forth and starts upon his mission” (*The Destiny of the Nations, p. 146*).

As we go into our meditation work now, let us use this opportunity of the Aquarius full moon to mobilize our collective thought and call upon the Spirit of Peace, that great second ray influence overshadowing the World Teacher, to pour through the heart of the group of world servers and into the heart of humanity, to arrest the forces of aggression and war and usher in instead a period of peace and equilibrium for all people and all life forms.
