

*A Double Shot of Aries:
All Our Intuitive Sensibilities Should be on Alert*

Second Aries Festival

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Greetings and welcome to the second Aries full moon in 2019. It is really something that this year sees a double dose of Aries. Two full moons in the same zodiacal sign are not that uncommon. They tend to happen at least once every two or three years or so. But two full moons in the same sign during the Three Spiritual Festivals, is a little unusual.

As much as anything else, it encourages us to pay attention to our intuitive insights and expectations for the future; puts us on the alert! This is a year when we really do need to pay attention to signs suggesting something significant is taking place in the subjective realms. Later in the year there is another unusual alignment of note in December, a special Festival Week that comes around every 7 years.

In the early 1940's DK wrote about a tide of augmented Capricornian energies flowing into human consciousness every seven years, providing a "week of group impact" from December 21 to 28. These energies were said to bring an impetus to the New Group of World Servers – vivifying the work of the Group. DK suggested that the week be regarded as "pre-eminently the "festival week" of the New Group of World Servers". During the week this year an eclipse will also occur, adding to the potency of the incoming energies. The last time this seven-year festival occurred in 2012 there was widespread popular interest in the Mayan calendar, particularly in spiritualist, channeling and New Age circles. So even though not so much attention went to the Festival Week, there was a significant focus of attention on astrology, ancient mythologies, and the relations between humanity and the Cosmos.

This year we can expect the Week to be out of the spotlight of popular mythology, and that's not such a bad thing. Apart from the small community of Bailey students there are probably very few people aware of anything special happening astrologically in December, although astrologers will be interested in the significance of the eclipse; yet the energies that the Week will bring provide a perfect opportunity for esotericists to focus attention on the group of active inner and outer servers whose work organizes, mobilizes, educates and empowers people of goodwill. It is work that can be done quietly, with esoteric focus, and with an enhanced sense of group inter-connections.

Can we pause for a moment to recognize the reality of the soul and the Ashram? Imagine yourself as the soul, embedded in its ashramic group ... your central spiritual Self. Holding this point of identity, consider the opening stage of the meditation outline which we will be using later and silently *affirm the fact of group fusion and integration within the heart centre of the new group of world servers, mediating between Hierarchy and humanity*. This is where we figuratively stand, as a group of esoteric workers.

And now can we say the *Affirmation of A Disciple* together, with *our whole heart as a soul*:

I am a point of light within a greater Light.
I am a strand of loving energy within the stream of love divine.
I am a point of sacrificial Fire, focussed within the fiery Will of God.
And thus I stand.

I am a way by which men may achieve.
I am a source of strength, enabling them to stand.
I am a beam of light, shining upon their way.
And thus I stand.

And standing thus revolve
And tread this way the ways of men,
And know the ways of God.
And thus I stand.

In the Alice Bailey teachings, Aries is referred to as the sign of the *pure first ray type*. Will or power is said to reach our planetary life through this constellation. It is a sign of initiatory beginnings and of totally new creative initiatives that, in some way or other, serve the unfolding Plan.

Consider, for example, the energetic environment reflected in DK's comment that Aries provided *the impulse and energy* enabling Christ to initiate the Christian era. Consider the way in which Christ's overshadowing the historical life of Jesus has impacted human history - affecting values, ethics, aspirations and ideals throughout the Christian world; transforming understanding of the better angels of our nature in ways that have had a marked effect on every area of human relations, including economics, law and governance; and reaching right into the heart of what it is to be human and what it is take on some responsibility for the wise shaping, direction and managing of human development. The impulse and the energy enabling this to happen through the centuries came through Aries.

It's important to note that this initiatory pulse dating from the time of Christ's overshadowing of Jesus reaches far beyond what we think of as the Christian world. From an esoteric perspective the incarnation in Palestine marked the beginning of an energetic, alchemical process that continues to impact the entire human species; working through history and reaching into the minds and hearts of all peoples, all faiths, and all cultures. Through this alchemical process humanity is being led into an Age of Love. It can be difficult to see this process when immersed in the crises and challenges of the 24-hour news cycle – but it can be seen from the perspective of detached observation – from the perspective of the historian trained to notice signs of an unfolding Plan.

We live in a time when it is not so unusual to think in universal terms. So, it shouldn't be difficult for us to imagine the redemptive, transforming energies flowing through the living Christ, radiating out and through the community of Avatars, Saints, Rishis and Ancestors of other traditions and other faiths. Christ's dynamic presence in the psychic substance of human development (the substance of consciousness, time and space) flows ceaselessly through the Communion of Saints Who stand at the heart of every community of positive goodwill, whatever their bible and however they worship.

When we consider that Aries is the sign of the *pure first ray type*, it is not surprising that it forms one of the four arms of the Cardinal Cross. Astrologers divide the 12 signs of the zodiac into three crosses, mutable, fixed and cardinal, each reflecting specific qualities. Each cross is composed of 4 signs. DK has much to say about the significance of the three crosses and the role they play in the astrological make-up of successive incarnations as a great transforming and redemptive process works its way forward. Consciousness is held to the fire; and cyclically exposed to the interacting energies of the four arms of the Mutable Cross, the Fixed Cross and the Cardinal Cross. Thus, one can perceive the endless rounds of incarnation as periods when the incarnating One is purposefully crucified on a cross – with the specific goal of burning through all that hinders the path towards enlightenment and service. During experience on the Mutable Cross the Christ-life is hidden so that the aligned personality can be built-up and, in time, become a reliable vehicle for the soul. It's a time of mutability and change. This is followed by a more stable experience on the Fixed Cross of the Son of God when the Soul is *driven through love to fully incarnate and become consciously crucified upon the Cross of matter* – the Soul radiates through matter. And then, in the final stages of human incarnation, Aries comes into focus as the first of the four arms of the Cardinal Cross. It is the Monad that is crucified on the Cardinal Cross, providing all the necessary experiences, challenges and tests for the initiate to be aligned with and integrated into the planetary Head centre to which we give the name Shamballa. The incarnating Monad learns to use will or power in the great creative process of planetary transformation.

It makes sense to imagine that over the past month many esoteric students will have been pondering what it means for this year's Three Spiritual Festivals to be starting with a double dose of Aries energies. Different students will no doubt have directed their research along different lines, reflecting the themes and questions that are especially alive for them. So right now, as we prepare to begin the full moon meditation work, we can imagine that the group field of thought is unusually rich and alive with creative thinking. And at the heart of this field of thought we can imagine electrical flashes of intuition, reaching into the Mind of God. This is the inner environment of thought in which we are preparing to work.

Through all the esoteric reflections on the meaning of this second Aries full moon, we can imagine the planetary group touching some essential, archetypal questions. For example: what does it mean to be a responsible, spiritually dynamic human being right now, in the unique circumstances of this time in the early twenty-first century; and how are we to seek to serve

esoterically and occultly now, during this cycle of evolutionary history? DK worked with Alice Bailey during the tumultuous, chaotic years between the two World Wars. Ours is a very different time. For example, international conferences are a feature of our age. In the inter-war years of Alice's time these conferences were a new phenomenon. New relationships were being forged and the world looked on with bated breath. Today it sometimes seems as if the world hardly notices.

One of the reasons why ours is a difficult time for esoteric work is that we now face seventh ray challenges with their call for persistence, and focused labor. As the ideals and principles of the post-war vision are brought into national and international expression, through endless conferences, dialogues and difficult decisions, there is a not surprising resistance from groups that fear a loss of national independence and a threat to what we might think of as the national personality. And this seventh ray process of bringing principles of sharing and cooperation into expression is happening at a time when individual forces have never been so potent – desires, ideals, creative potentials; in a sense young people have more freedom than ever before; but that freedom is matched by diminishing opportunities for a good well-paid job and for a secure future; and so we see frustration when desires are not gratified and discontent fading into depression and despair; competitive instincts rubbing up against dreams of cooperative possibilities.

In this environment, perhaps one of the things that is happening is that the New Group of World Servers is itself being held to the fire. Out of this fiery ordeal we can imagine a stirring of the will taking place: a deeply rooted, grounded will to initiate changes that reach right into the substance of the human, bringing about a shift in the relation between soul and personality. In this sense the work of the group of servers in our day can be understood as the work of the Christ. There is, for servers today, no escaping the deeper work needed to initiate right relations within the psyche of the self; within local communities; within one's own nation, ethnic and religious group, ideological group and so on.

One of the things that makes this year's Three Festivals especially interesting is the different approaches to the date of Easter. DK suggests that the first of the important Three Spiritual Festivals, Easter, is to be observed at the time of the first Aries full moon of Spring in the northern hemisphere – meaning that Lucis Trust and many, but not all, Alice Bailey inspired groups observed Easter in March. But in the vast church-going Christian community, following well-established traditions of ecclesiastical law, Easter is being celebrated in the period of this second Aries full moon. This often happens with Wesak, but that is largely because the Buddhist community has no common approach to the date of Wesak – it is normal for the festival to be celebrated in different parts of the East on different full moons. And in 2015 only around 7% of the world's population were Buddhist, while just over 31%, 2.3 billion people were Christian. So the sheer numbers of people that will be spending some time in prayer and reflection during this Easter week is significant. The mental and astral life of humanity will be affected by the widespread religious observances. It is important to recognize, too, that this month, the Aries

full moon will be marked not only with the Easter festivals of Good Friday and palm Sunday and so on in Christianity; but also the major Passover festival in Judaism; the Hindu festival of Rama Navami celebrating Lord Rama, an incarnation of Vishnu, and the hero of the Ramayana; and the important Jain festival of Mahavir Jayanti, celebrating the birth of the great Sage and contemporary of Buddha, Mahavira. Beyond what we might think of as the more sentimental and doctrinal elements of these popular religious observations and the holiday atmosphere involving hundreds of millions of people, there will be a widespread global ferment of reflection generated by thoughtful sermons, and by articles and commentaries circulating through publications, broadcasts and blogs and so on aimed at intelligent thinking people of spirituality of all faiths, and often reflecting quite a degree of wisdom. In other words the field of consciousness will be unusually oriented towards the sacred and the challenges of living in right relation to the sacred during this full moon period.

But having two Aries full moons should also make us sit up and take notice because it means that the Three Festivals, marking the start of a new spiritual year, are drawn out beyond the usual three months to four months. It is as if in the cyclic rhythm of the year, the high-point of invocative tension has been held for an extended time. It's a little like changing the regular rhythm of the breath in meditation. The alignment between Earth the stars and constellations are suggesting that this year sees a heightened tension ... a holding of an unusual moment of poised tension in the annual rhythm.

The full moon meditations work with the invocation and precipitation of energies and potencies from constellations and planets as they align with the energies and potencies of the Being that is Earth, streaming through energetic environments of Shamballa and Hierarchy to condition the subtle atmosphere of human thinking, living and being; ensuring that the pressure of future possibilities, the pressure of achievable goals and great living principles to be brought into expression ... the pressure of the Plan ... continues to provoke development.

Sometimes these incoming energies from the Cosmos stir things up in the world of the human, provoking crises and trauma. Sometimes they hold in the light emerging insights that are still waiting to be recognized on the threshold of consciousness. Incoming energies during the heightened flow of the full moon can also bring a cycle of relief from the pressure of the Plan, allowing individuals and groups to contain the heightened tension with a sense of rhythm, focused poise and balance. At such times it becomes increasingly possible for groups to disidentify with the stress of the hour and the debilitating impact it can have on the emotional vehicle; transmuting this into a detached will that stands in the stream of incoming light of the group purpose and radiates that purpose outwards; serving with a light touch while retaining a sense of the Presence.

Through time, through the endless cycle of the twelve spiritual festivals in a year, these incoming energies provide the greater environment of mind and heart in which and through which human thinking and humanity's sense of purpose is being transformed. Transformation is speeding up. Things are happening quickly. And this is a sign of a newly oriented humanity that

is in process of emerging in our lives, through our lives and through the lives of our communities, and nations. So often our attention is on the lunar fires that are part of the transformation process. We tune into the understandable confusion and trauma of so many good people who yearn for some stability and clarity in the path towards development, prosperity and freedom.

And yet, beyond all this confusion, beyond the chaotic, noisy, busy, stressed, polarized and divided consciousness of our nations something phenomenal **is** happening in consciousness: an intuitive understanding of synthesis, wholeness and interdependence is reshaping the human. It is happening in every profession, in every academic discipline, in every art form. The presence of the whole is being noticed in the part; the part is beginning to be seen in relation to a whole. Understanding of the whole and its relation to the part has traditionally been a place of imponderables and mystical speculation about fuzzy mysteries. It is moving now into a place that might be thought of esoterically as the heart centre within the head. This means that it is acquiring definition and livingness amongst leading thinkers (those sometimes referred to be DK as the intelligentsia); and that is where the Plan can most clearly be seen working out in human affairs. Part of the work of esoteric communities is to hold in mind the bigger picture, recognizing that in the midst of all the chaos initiation is in the air: initiation for serving groups, initiation for nations, and initiation for humanity, the World Disciple.

The keynote for Aries is *I come forth and from the plane of mind I rule*. During this second Aries Full Moon, while the Christian world ponders resurrection and the significance of Easter; Hindus reflect on the incarnation of Vishnu through the great Lord Rama; and Jews ponder the blessing of Passover; can we hold in the light the thought that during these critical years leading up to the Hierarchical conclave of 2025 and the worldly international Sustainable Development Goals targeted on achievements in 2030, the intuition of synthesis, wholeness and interdependence is coming forth; nurturing the seeds of the New. Let us remember that this Intuition of Synthesis is destined to Rule and dominate the Mind of the Aquarian Age.