

## Festival of Capricorn, London, January 2018

### *Self-conscious unfoldment*

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Good evening and welcome to our Full Moon meeting in the sign of Capricorn. A happy New Year to everyone including those who are linking up via the Internet.

The keynote for Capricorn, which we can hold in our consciousness, is: *Lost am I in light supernal, yet on that light I turn my back*. Before we explore some of the symbolism of Capricorn, at the beginning of another New Year it may be worth reflecting on the opportunities of the Full Moon approach to the Hierarchy, which persist month after month. The full moon is a period when spiritual energies are uniquely available bringing a closer rapport between humanity and the spiritual Hierarchy with the fully-lighted orb of the moon indicative of a free and unimpeded alignment between our planet and the sun - the solar centre, the source of all life on earth. Each month energies qualified by the constellation or group of stars influencing that period are available - a spiritual inflow that can be tapped into and channelled into human consciousness. This rhythmic work offers the opportunity of cooperating with Hierarchical Intent and is also an expression of group responsibility and service to the divine Plan.

Capricorn has been described as being one of the most mysterious signs - it is the sign of the Goat - particularly the wild mountain species which dwells on the rocky mountain ranges. This is a sure footed animal which has an instinctive ability to keep its footing and balance on even the steepest slopes. Using the creative imagination this symbolism reveals a picture of man with his feet upon the earth, yet able to climb the heights of worldly ambition on the normal path of evolution. But on the reversed wheel - the path of return - the disciple ascends the spiritual heights that lead to initiation. This symbolism was highlighted by Martin Luther King, in his famous last speech, when he said that "I've been to the mountain top...I've looked over...And I've seen the Promised Land".

At this point let us pause for a few minutes of stillness and sound together the Affirmation of the Disciple:

"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.”

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It's interesting to note that the keynotes of Capricorn are all suggestive of a crystallising process and can be considered in various ways, as outlined in the book *Esoteric Astrology*, by Alice Bailey. **1.**

Firstly, as an earth sign, Capricorn expresses the densest concrete materialisation of which the human soul is capable; however, when crystallisation has reached a certain degree of density or hardness the form becomes brittle and shatters more easily. Indeed, it's said that man in Capricorn brings about his own destruction due to his materialistic nature and suffers the “blows of fate” or karma prior to the release of the indwelling life and the later rebuilding of the form, either in this life or in a future incarnation.

Secondly, the symbol of the mountain top frequently marks a point beyond which further ascent in any particular life cycle is not possible. It is a sign of “periodic arresting” and there is a descent into the valley of pain and suffering before a fresh attempt to scale the heights takes place. At the time the book - *Esoteric Astrology*, was written, attempts to climb Mount Everest were described as being “amazingly symbolic” and now some 70 years or so later such ascents are more frequent, organised, and expensive, constituting a kind of extreme tourism, although they are still extremely dangerous requiring much courage and wilful intention. Many have perished on the treacherous mountain slopes. Extreme sports and hazardous pursuits are now, of course, common place and perhaps these physical tests are symbolic of the human being striving to find his or her life purpose on the dense physical plane - a preliminary to ascending to the spiritual heights through meditation and deep reflective thought. This spiritual symbolism is expressed in many ways, one example being through the beautiful and vivid paintings of the Himalayas, by Nicholas Roerich.

Thirdly, Capricorn is a sign which brings a new cycle of effort through the tests of discipleship with constant strain, struggle and conflict against the forces of the lower nature. Throughout the history of humanity the struggle to move forward and to expand the frontiers of the mind, has involved crisis after crisis and this process continues in our present times. From a spiritual perspective the crises of

the soul and the resultant turmoil could be considered as being a prerequisite to a step forward in “self-conscious unfoldment” <sup>2</sup> leading to an awakening of the sense of responsibility, which works out in so many wonderful service initiatives. We can therefore be encouraged that, in the midst of dense materialism, the expression of responsibility is evidence that the soul of humanity is alive and well.

This “self-conscious” unfoldment means that we can have faith that humanity will, increasingly, become more sensitive to the potent influences playing upon our planet, although, it’s said that as yet humanity remains “occultly unresponsive” to these higher impressions because mind and brain are not of a quality that allows a response. In this connection, it’s significant to consider that sound techniques of meditation and deep reflective thought serve to uplift the vibratory frequency of the atomic structure of the physical body and raise it to a higher level through a process of light intensification - making it more receptive and sensitive to higher impressions.

In considering “potent influences” and the world of energies and forces it’s inspiring to reflect on the idea, expressed in Esoteric Astrology that:

A vast system of interlocking energies is in active and rapid circulation throughout the whole cosmic etheric body—of which our systemic etheric body is an integral part”. Interlocking is a key word for everything is interrelated and interconnected although, it’s said that “Until man thinks in terms of larger wholes a general outline is all that is possible”. This idea reinforces the necessity for humanity to build right relationships at all levels and in all directions. <sup>3</sup>

As for how the human race responds to energies, forces and influences, we’re told that:

*1. The mass of humanity is primarily conditioned in its life and circumstances by the influence of the lesser zodiac and thus by the position of the planets in the twelve houses.*

*2. Intelligent humanity and those nearing the Path of Discipleship and upon the Probationary Path respond consciously to*

*a. The planets, affecting their personalities.*

*b. The Sun sign, as indicating life trends which are already established and which constitute the line of least resistance.*

*c. The rising sign in a small measure. This indicates the life goal for that particular life cycle or else over a period of seven lives. The last two constitute the Greater Zodiac.*

*3. Disciples and initiates can begin consciously to respond to all the above influences, handling them constructively, plus those potent yet infinitely subtle forces which pour into our solar system... In the early stages, the response is in the [subtle] bodies and the brain fails to register them, but after the third initiation, there is a recognition of them upon the physical plane. 4*

Having touched on the responsiveness of humanity in a broad sense it is interesting to consider some influences of the seven rays, particularly the third and fifth rays, which according to the Tibetan:

*...work pre-eminently through [Capricorn] embodying the third major aspect of divinity, active intelligence plus that of its subsidiary power, the fifth Ray of Mind. These pour through Capricorn to Saturn and to Venus and so reach our planet, the Earth. Saturn is one of the most potent of the four Lords of Karma and forces man to face up to the past, and in the present to prepare for the future. Such is the intention and purpose of karmic opportunity. From certain angles, Saturn can be regarded as the planetary Dweller on the Threshold, for humanity as a whole has to face that Dweller as well as the Angel of the Presence, and in so doing discover that both the Dweller and the Angel are that complex duality which is the human family. Saturn, in a peculiar relation to the sign Gemini, makes this possible. Individual man makes this discovery and faces the two extremes whilst in the sign Capricorn... 5*

At this point it may be useful to reflect on the nature of the seven rays in the cosmos with one of these great rays (the second ray of love-wisdom) being in operation in our solar system. The seven subdivisions of this ray constitute the seven rays “...wielded by our Solar Logos ...[and are] the seven channels through which all being in His solar system flows...the seven predominant characteristics or modifications of life, which apply not only to humanity but to the seven kingdoms. In fact there is nothing in the whole solar system, at whatever stage of evolution it may stand, which does not belong and has not always belonged to one or other of the seven rays. 6

The ray make-up makes a man what he is, along with karma and environmental influences - it brings strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and limitations. The changing personality shifts from ray to ray, from life to life, until all qualities are developed and expressed. The third and fifth rays working through Capricorn are said to be especially active upon the Path of Discipleship. The third ray is the ray of the abstract thinker or the philosopher and the theorist, good at problem solving but not at putting plans into action on the ground. However when there is a fifth

ray influence there is more of a balance with abstract ideas being brought to practical scientific use. The virtues of the third ray include a clear intellect but a negative tendency may be intellectual pride. The fifth ray scientist - a master of precision and detail - has to take care not to fall into a narrow dogmatic trap from which it is difficult to escape.

Capricorn is a sign of extremes where the individual can express the best and worst qualities. Yet, as the disciple ascends the steep mountain slopes, there is an absolute requirement for spiritual humility in service. And in this regard Capricorn rules the knees and symbolically the individual on this sign has to learn to kneel in all humility and offer his heart and soul to service. Only on the knees can the disciple go through the door of initiation. Humility is such an important quality to be developed on the path of return especially as it negates the false pride of the mind and the fifth ray glammers of the intellect, of knowledge and facts, and the glamour of an assurance based on a narrow point of view.

Humility has been defined as that adjusted sense of right proportion which brings a balanced point of view avoiding extremes of thoughts, opinions and actions. It is the hallmark of the individual who sees things from a higher perspective rather than the restricted view that is available through the eyes of the separated self. For scientific servers on the fifth ray developing an adjusted sense of proportion will cut through intellectual pride and narrowness to reveal the wonder and beauty of the universe. Who can fail to be inspired by the wonderful documentaries and programs about the natural world which stretch human understanding and vividly portray the wonder and beauty of our planet? And, not only that, such programs can help to make people think more deeply about the nature and purpose of life on our planet and in the universe.

According to Vivekananda, who was a key figure in bringing the wisdom of the East to the West in the 19th century, humility means recognising and feeling oneness with everyone and everything in the universe without inferiority or superiority or any other bias. Spiritual leaders of the world faiths speak of pride or arrogance being a great sin whereas humility is a virtue to be cherished. Pride come before a fall, it's said, and manifests through an egocentric view of life and events, yet let us not forget that this is a necessary stage in the evolution of human consciousness. However, through the tests and trials of many life experiences the light of the soul eventually makes its presence known and this brings a more balanced world view. Then, the world is seen, as if, through a wide angled lens.

Having considered just a few aspects of the world of energies and forces, and relating that to the current world situation, we may conclude that there is much knowledge today of the concrete type, there are many facts and perhaps there has been a feeling that humanity is more or less in control of its own destiny. However, this view is changing for, everything is moving so quickly in these

strange and unsettling times. There is a mass of swirling energies and forces at large impacting on peoples and nations and the planet; we live in unpredictable times. So, the thinking individual is challenged to try and understand the forces at work using the attributes of the higher mind and the intuition which can tap into the wisdom of all ages. Then, there can be a greater understanding of the causes of world problems and their solutions.

In meditation we can make a positive contribution to this understanding using the keynote for Capricorn: *"Lost am I in light supernal, yet on that light I turn my back"* – a keynote that is similar to the keynote of the Full Moon approach which is:

*"He who faces the light and stands within its radiance is blinded to the issues of the world of men; he passes on the lighted way to the great Centre of Absorption. But he who feels the urge to pass that way, yet loves his brother on the darkened path, revolves upon the pedestal of light and turns the other way.*

*"He faces towards the dark and then the seven points of light within himself transmit the outward streaming light, and lo! the face of those upon the darkened way receives that light. For them, the way is not so dark. Behind the warriors—twixt the light and dark—blazes the light of Hierarchy." 7*

We shall now go into our meditation for about 25 minutes.

## References

1. Esoteric Astrology p.158
2. Ibid. p.161
3. Ibid. p. 30
4. Ibid. pp. 30-31
5. Ibid, p. 164
6. Esoteric Psychology 1 p. 163
7. Discipleship in the New Age 11 p. 15