

Leo Full Moon, July 2018

The Lion's Skin

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Good evening friends and welcome to our full moon meditation in the sign of Leo. The time of the full moon is tonight at 9.20. Let us begin by reminding ourselves that this is a planetary meditation and that there are millions of us all around the world who love truth, who love humanity and who love the Plan joining together over this five day period. Our group intention is to assist in the work of raising human consciousness and to help illumine the path for humanity as a whole into the light of better values, less selfish motives and into that multitude of creative initiatives which will help release the potential for good in all people. This will also of course lead to the release of our world from its concentration of pain and create a more joy-filled existence. And about pain, let us remember that this is not just a physical phenomenon, it is felt more deeply in the emotional body, and it's said that the worst sort of pain, of agony indeed, is experienced in the mental body. So we are in fact talking about the need to transform the whole of the form nature.

The personality keynote for Leo is "Let other forms exist, I am because I am", or to put it in the vernacular, the Jack principle (if you can call it a principle!) "All that matters is that I am alright, Jack". We can see that this has been operating on a wide scale within humanity for centuries, producing temporary self-aggrandisement, power and success but wreaking havoc and suffering on all. No department of human activity has escaped contamination from this attitude of the separated self. But at the same time over the centuries, and in our present time too, there have also been, and are, great exponents of the opposite, of people who have embodied the disciple's keynote for Leo, "I am that and that am I".

They have worked through the crisis of understanding what Self really means. They have discovered and realised their own spiritual nature. They live lives of empathy and compassion, of selfless love and service and give us all examples of a better path to tread. Identifying with the higher, true self they have learnt to overpower the aggressive lion of the personal separated self. After the successful completion of this great task they don the dead lion's skin, as the Labour of Hercules in this astrological sign informs us. The form nature appears the same but the reality has become utterly different. The disciple is now in possession of his equipment. As St Paul expresses it in his second letter to the Corinthians: "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!"

So let us now pause for a moment and then we will together say the Gayatri.

O Thou Who givest sustenance to the universe,
From Whom all things proceed,
To Whom all things return,
Unveil to us the face of the true Spiritual Sun
Hidden by a disc of golden Light
That we may know the Truth And do our whole duty
As we journey to Thy sacred feet.

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Now it's said, and truly said, that humanity progresses by presentations of moments of crisis. All disciples know this from their own experience. Has it not been the times of crisis that have provoked the major turning points in our lives? The same is necessarily true of humanity as a whole. There have been many notable crises in human history, and if we look

back over the years we can see that these crises have been piling on thick and fast and are actually now coalescing into the point of extreme tension or crisis that is the world's present reality.

Let us look at a few of them. Almost exactly a hundred years ago the First World War was gradually coming to an end. This war was a manifestation of the crisis of the demise of the great European empires, those seemingly invincible institutions which collapsed into the carnage of the trenches. Out of that terrible experience arose, phoenix like, the fruit of a desired and manifested internationalism, the League of Nations. The Palais des Nations in Geneva was built to accommodate its forums and secretariat, and wonderfully today it is still fulfilling its global functions, although in a new incarnation. Its primary goals, as stated in its Covenant, included preventing wars through collective security and disarmament and settling international disputes through negotiation and arbitration. Other issues in this and related treaties included labour conditions, just treatment of indigenous people, human and drug trafficking, the arms trade, global health, prisoners of war, and protection of minorities.

As we all know this experiment in international relationships and law foundered as the spirit of selfish nationalism re-emerged and the world plunged into a new, or rather, second phase of the world war in 1939. This time its inner purpose was to use the means of crisis to give humanity the opportunity to assert and empower the spiritual necessity for a world characterised by human freedom and responsibility. By a hair's breadth, that phase of the world war was won by the forces of light. At its end the nations came together at the San Francisco conference of 1945 to plan for a new and better world order with the establishing of the United Nations.

We know from the Tibetan's writing at the time how incredibly important Hierarchy regarded this Conference, seeing it as the first in a sequence of many initiatives to establish a new and workable international order of goodwill and right relationships. "Not for nothing", he wrote, "is this conference being held during the five days of the Wesak Full Moon."¹ To this end the energy of Hierarchy and Shamballa was consciously directed towards its successful conclusion. We can get some idea of the strength of this energy if we look at the films taken at this event which can be accessed on the UN website and YouTube as well.² Surely we can see the fire of the higher kingdoms focussing through many of the speakers, for example President Harry Truman as he addressed the final session of that conference. And, true to the Tibetan's prediction, this conference was just the first in a sequence of many that have been held over the subsequent seventy or so years in order to address human and planetary issues and chart a lighted way forward for us all.

Around the same time as the San Francisco Conference the Tibetan and Alice Bailey produced their book which they called *Problems of Humanity*. This outlines the six basic world problems of that time. Firstly there was the urgent need for the physical reconstruction and psychological rehabilitation of the nations after the war. Then there was the need to address how we treat and properly educate the children of the world. Following this there was the issue of the conflict of the various ideologies which focussed post-war into the confrontation of capital and labour. The problem of racial minorities came next, then the problems associated with institutional religion, and finally the long term problem of how to establish a sensible and workable international unity that would be to the benefit of everyone.

Although the title of this book uses the word "Problems", in reality each one is in the nature of a crisis. A crisis properly understood is always a crisis in consciousness and is a moment of realisation that can lead us to an extended vision and real progress or, if we don't measure up to the opportunity, to a separating wall and continuing conflict. So it might be interesting to

assess how humanity has responded to these crises over the years, and, just as importantly, what other crises have presented themselves to us for our willing recognition.

Immediately we can see, for our encouragement, that progress of sorts has been made in almost all the areas outlined all those decades ago. As far as the psychological condition of nations is concerned we can note that though most are still concerned with material improvement and acquisition, the idea is gaining ground that material well being on its own does not bring a sense of purpose or happiness. Good relationships, it is coming to be realised, are more important than things. It has been suggested that Gross National Happiness, or GNH, is a better way of assessing the state and well-being of a country than GDP. Although this idea can strike us as a bit utopian it is obviously resonating around the world. For instance, in 2011 the UN General Assembly passed a resolution titled: "Happiness: towards a holistic approach to development." This urged member nations to follow the example of Bhutan, where the idea had originated, and start to measure happiness and well-being. It called happiness a "fundamental human goal". Perhaps it is important here to remind ourselves that happiness is not superficial pleasure, but rather a moral virtue, as philosophers down the ages have pointed out.

The situation for the young people of the world, although still far from perfect, has improved enormously, especially for girls. The statistics from the Millennium Development Goals, the second of which was universal primary education for all children, show progress. For example, the number of primary school age out-of-school children dropped by 42% between 2000 and 2012. In addition we can note that there have been many experiments in the educational field that have tried to reflect its proper meaning of drawing out the best potential that is in every child and teenager. Consequently there are many young people all around the world now who have developed a sense of justice and a healthy independence and are not so willing to be made to conform to the straitjacket of society's prejudices and supposed needs.

The problem of the conflict of capital and labour has morphed into the present issue of the grossly unequal distribution of wealth and resources and the associated deep financial and job insecurity for the many. As a lot of commentators have pointed out, this is a major injustice and a fertile breeding ground for continuing social tension and conflict. We all know that this situation is unsustainable, but there is not much sign of it coming to an end yet.

The problem of racism has most certainly not been resolved, for prejudices of some sort still lie in the hearts of so many people and societies. But the issue has really improved in many parts of the world. Generally, or so it seems to me, the problem is now universally recognised as one that needs to be addressed, which it wasn't really before, and that is surely three quarters of the battle done.

The problem of institutional religion is an interesting one. This field of human experience and activity reflects, probably more transparently than any other, the energetic change resulting from the fading away of Pisces with its associated 6th ray energies and the new inflow from Aquarius and the 7th Ray dispensation. So the world of institutional religion is presenting an almost schizophrenic picture of a crystallised, arrogant and dogmatic fundamentalism on the one hand and an open hearted inclusive universalism conditioned by a welcome humility on the other.

As far as building international unity is concerned, well, that is a work in progress. But as we shall see, another crisis has arisen which should change things for the better here.

We can also see other problems or crises arising which have challenged humanity to change. For example there was the crisis of the emerging nations seeking independence and wresting control from the old European colonial powers and starting on the long path to national self-

hood and self-determination. This has brought much suffering and also much progress. And it has incidentally increased the number of sovereign state members of the United Nations from the original 51 in 1945 to 193 today. There are actually only two states that are not full members, the Holy See or Vatican, and Palestine.

The Tibetan talked a lot about the crisis of the ideologies and as we know this developed into the major crisis of the cold war nuclear confrontation between East and West which so nearly brought the world to a cataclysmic end on several occasions. More by good luck than good judgement, and I am sure also thanks to the discreet guiding hand of the Hierarchy, we have so far survived to live another day. Though it is obvious that with a world armed to the teeth and power blocs regressing into confrontational modes, sooner or later the final explosion will occur unless humanity changes course. Thankfully there is a clear desire of the majority of the people for this change, but will governments follow this lead?

In our present time I think it is acknowledged that the major crisis we all face is the effect of human activity on the natural environment. The beauty of this crisis is that it is global. It has no respect for the artificial boundaries of the nation state, and the only way to comprehend it and deal with it is through rigorous and honest science, and through a profound international understanding and cooperation. What is required is the sacrificing of national selfishness and of corporate self interest for the good of the whole and for the future security of life in all the kingdoms of nature on earth, not just the human. It is this crisis which will promote, more than any other, that international cooperation and unity which the Tibetan considered to be of such importance.

This crisis is already bringing out the best in humanity in wonderful initiatives. For example, we can already see how the television work of a leading server like David Attenborough has galvanised groups, businesses and states into practical action to deal with something as mundane and as dangerous as plastic waste. Away from the limelight there are other marvellous initiatives far too numerous to catalogue. But one group of projects that is important to mention is the effort to reverse the process of desertification. We do well to remember the words of *Fiery World* in the Agni Yoga series that “It is right to understand the desert as the shame of humanity”.³

One example is the programme to build the “Great Green Wall” from east to west across Africa.⁴ As the website expresses it: “A decade in and roughly 15% underway, the initiative is already bringing life back to Africa’s degraded landscapes at an unprecedented scale, providing food security, jobs and a reason to stay for the millions who live along its path.” And there are similar programmes in China and elsewhere. These are really the coming to fruition of the visionary dream of that great server, Richard St Barbe Baker, who founded the initiative “Men of the Trees” in the 1922 with a Kenyan Chief. His most ambitious project was the re-forestation of the Sahara. He managed to get all the countries around the Sahara to agree to the programme in the 1930s, but unfortunately the 2nd World War frustrated the project and it never got off the ground. Now there is a chance that his vision could materialise.

But we have to recognise that this global environmental crisis, as with all the others, is but an externalisation of an inner crisis that humanity must face up to. They have precipitated because the motives of humanity have not been conditioned enough by the values of the soul. If we can collectively ground the values of the soul in daily life we will truly measure up to the demands of this crisis. This will lead automatically to the resolution of all the other subsidiary crises which are confronting us. Will we continue on the personality path of myopic vision and selfishness, of self-serving political interests and greedy corporate activity, of being the uncontrolled lion wreaking destruction and suffering wherever we go, or will we sacrifice selfishness and on a large enough scale discover the nature of the soul and

consequently learn to use our considerable gifts selflessly in service and for true planetary progress?

This is the big question, the big crisis of our time. Each of us as individuals and members of various groups are irrevocably involved in how humanity answers this question, spiritually, intellectually and practically.

There is a rather good description of our present time in the Agni Yoga book *Heart*:

“The days are so tense that if we think in an earthly way we must walk depressed, but the supermundane law leads us upward. Thus, the one who does not descend ascends. But it is only by spirit that we can avoid descent. Thus, above the earthly decision there is a heavenly one. Thus, above the brain there is the heart.”⁵

So it is clear that we are now collectively experiencing one of the major defining crises in the long life of humanity. We have reached the point where we have, as a species, to start to dethrone the personality ego from its place of pre-eminence in our lives and allow the love of the soul full range of expression. This is the heart that is superior to the brain! As trail blazers for humanity we need to cultivate the realisation of the loving, radiant heart. This is that wonderful manifestation of group life which injects the energy and light of the Plan into the mind of humanity. It is this which pours healing strength on all. It is this energy which will light the way forward in a world that seems darkening to so many.

All this is in the nature of a new epiphany. The Tibetan forecast that a new manifestation of the mystical experience will appear. If what we look for is a repeat of what happened under the influence of the Piscean age and the 6th ray, we will miss it. Under the influence of the incoming 7th ray with its grounding qualities, the new mysticism will be quite different. It will be the time of the practical mystic. It will manifest as such a deep experience of the unity of all life that people cannot but respond in a practical way. One of its main qualities will be a natural tendency in life to serve. The old goals of personality focus and achievement will give way to the demands of the Plan for light, love and the will-to-good.

Put in these terms we can already see signs of it everywhere. And we can know that when enough people are demonstrating this, the world will be on course to give birth to a new humanity. This will be a humanity that has conquered the lion, has donned its skin, and in the words of the mantram of unification, will seek to love, not hate, will seek to serve and not exact due service, will seek to heal, not hurt.

¹ *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, p.450

² https://archive.org/details/6077_United_Nations_Conference_on_International_Organization_San_Fra_00_45_53_01

³ *Fiery World I*, S. 530

⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4xls7K_xFBQ

⁵ *Heart*, S. 149