

## Pisces Full Moon Meeting February 26<sup>th</sup>

*I leave the Father's house, and turning back, I save*

Simon Marlow

Dear friends welcome to our Pisces full moon meditation meeting with its seed thought “I leave the Father’s house, and turning back, I save”. We will of course be using this in our meditation later on, as we always do.

In these Covid days most of us are still unable to meet together in specific physical plane places. We all really miss these opportunities of togetherness, and much look forward to a time when these meetings can resume, which according to this week’s news may not be quite as far away as we thought, in Britain at any rate. This has obviously been one of the downsides of the present pandemic, though of course there are others much more serious. But there are enormous pluses to this situation too. For example, as people are able to log into these meetings from their own homes we now have a level of participation that greatly outnumbers what we used to have. In fact we know that today people are tuning in to our meetings from all over the world, in a unity of consciousness that – to use the Tibetan’s phrase – annihilates time.

Another plus is the change in attitude towards the world that has taken place at the same time as Covid has hit us all. Is there a causative link between them, we wonder? Many think that indeed there is. While we have always intentionally thought in world terms, in terms of the One Humanity as a centre of creativity within the planetary life, this has now become much more than just a concept, a mental image. The one humanity is not simply an idea; it is definitely a growing reality in all our lives. Consequently, we have become much more open to the world and identify more deeply in heart and mind with it in all its complexity, its crises, its beauty. We see too the ugliness and wrongly destructive effects wrought by unredeemed human desire and thought. But we also see a coming together of human minds and hearts to deal with all the problems, the crises, that are now coming to the surface and crying out for resolution.

In both personal and group terms, and also in terms of the leading servers in the world we are now coming to the realisation that putting off decisions and actions to tomorrow is not an option, if indeed it ever realistically was. Today there is now no longer time to procrastinate. We should all be thinking of the urgency of the situation, and wonder how we can best contribute. We should be asking ourselves in the words of the Jewish philosopher, Hillel, “If not me, who? If not now, when?” We can also say in the words of Christopher Fry’s well-known poem, ‘A Sleep of Prisoners’. “Thank God our time is now when wrong comes up to meet us everywhere never to leave us, till we take the greatest stride of the soul man ever took.” What an accurate description this is of the state of humanity and of the world at large! And also such a brief and succinctly true remedy.

As we face huge human and planetary difficulties, it is good to recollect the truth that we, humanity, grow through the presentation of moments of crisis. When we are in the midst of a crisis, we have the sense of being overwhelmed, that we will not be able to rise to the occasion. Yet this is an oft repeated feature of human life. Humanity in fact has the “habit of crisis”. Yes, we have failed in the past, but we have triumphed too. The Tibetan writes that: “Crises are only the points of examination as to strength, purpose, purity and motive and the intent of the soul. They evoke confidence when surmounted and produce greatly expanded vision. They foster compassion and understanding, for the pain and inner conflict they have engendered is never forgotten, for they draw upon the resources of the heart. They release the light of wisdom within the field of knowledge and the world is thereby enriched.” Crises are tests in fact, and a test isn’t a test unless there is a possibility of failure as well as success.

So let us all pause for a moment or two of contemplation and then we will say together the words of the mantram on your screen

We know, O Lord of Life and Love about the need.

Touch our hearts anew with love,

That we too may love and give.

The story of humanity is the story of the prodigal son who chooses to leave his father’s home and go into the far country where he spends, or rather squanders,

his divine inheritance in wild living. But this is only the beginning of the journey. There comes a point as we all know when the prodigal, now in a state of destitution, comes to himself and says “I will arise and go to my father”. Here the long descent into matter is arrested and the shorter though much harder journey of ascent begins back into the spiritual reality which is our origin. It is here that the wheel of the zodiac reverses and presents a series of challenges to the newly dedicated disciple as he incarnates through the reversed sequence of signs, starting with Aries and culminating in the manifestation of a world saviour in Pisces. The errant human being transforms into the spiritual aspirant and then, as the mind is brought under control, into the dedicated disciple. For this is what the prodigal son has become.

This symbolic journey has been beautifully described in a multitude of ways throughout the ages. One robust example is John Bunyan’s “Pilgrims Progress” where the pilgrim who is called Christian is beset by various temptations and hindrances appositely named after their qualities. Early on for example Mr Worldly Wiseman attempts to deflect him from his purpose. Having struggled out of the Slough of Despond Christian is guided to the wicket gate where he is directed to the straight and narrow way by a character, named, you will be interested and pleased to know, Goodwill. To Christian’s query about relief from his burden, Goodwill directs him forward to “the place of deliverance.” A more modern example is the opera by Stravinsky, “The Rake’s Progress”, set to a libretto by W H Auden. One normally thinks of the rake’s progress as the downward spiral into destitution as the illustrations of Hogarth so memorably portray. But the main protagonist in the opera, Tom Rakewell, is already at the bottom, and the rake’s progress in this case is the journey upward in which he is redeemed by Anne Truelove, depicting the Soul, despite the attempts of the devil called, our Jungian co-workers will be interested to know, Nick Shadow.

A much more esoteric note is sounded by Alice Bailey in her book “The Labours of Hercules”. Here Hercules, as the embodiment of the struggling disciple, faces a series of interior challenges or labours. Each of these match beautifully with the energies and qualities of the sequence of the different constellations or zodiacal signs. This final stage in the human journey is put into a deeper perspective by the Tibetan when he reveals the divine origin of all

human beings which the Bible refers to in the myth of the fallen angels. He writes:

“The sacrifice of the solar angels brought the fourth kingdom in nature into being. The ‘returning nirvanis’ (as they are called in esoteric literature), with deliberation and full understanding, took human bodies in order to raise those lower forms of life nearer to the goal. These were and are ourselves. The ‘Lords of Knowledge and Compassion and of ceaseless persevering Devotion’ (who are ourselves) chose to die in order that lesser lives might live, and this sacrifice has made possible the evolution of the indwelling consciousness of Deity. This consciousness, having worked its way through the subhuman kingdoms in nature, needed the activity of the solar angels to make further progress possible. Herein lies

- a. Our service to God, through sacrifice and death;
- b. Our service to other souls, through deliberate self-sacrificing purpose;
- c. Our service to other forms of life in other kingdoms.”

Here we are given an understanding of the real meaning of death, which is the imprisonment of the soul in matter. What we usually call death, death of the form, is actually life to the soul for it is being released from the trammels of the material world.

This whole incarnational journey is well summarised in the two keynotes of Pisces. The seed thought for the ordinary human being is: “And the Word said, Go forth into matter’.” This exemplifies the fact that the human journey is initially one of increasing enmeshment in matter.

But as the ordinary human being eventually transforms into the disciple, the keynote is transformed as well and it becomes: “I leave the Father’s house, and turning back, I save”. We enmesh ourselves in the material world in order that we may spiritualise it, redeem it, save it in fact on our return journey.

The soul calls us and no one who has truly heard the call can turn back. And this is our deep motive, to become again in full consciousness what we faintly know we are in reality. All our efforts bend in this direction and the crises that

inevitably appear on our path in reality are gifts that keep our eyes on our goal by their beneficent obstructiveness.

In these terms it is both salutary and perhaps even encouraging to take a brief look back over the history of the last 75 years, from the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war in fact, that marked such an important moment of change in the direction of humanity. That time saw the end of the competing European empires, a general coalescing of humanity down the path of international unity, the start of the cycle of conferences which began with the founding of the United Nations with the recognition that “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed”. That wonderful ideal has so far only been partially implemented; there is still so much work to be done on that front. Much of this opportunity of practical idealism – a gift to humanity by the spiritual Hierarchy – was wasted in humanity’s selfish mismanagement of what the Tibetan called the conflict of the ideologies. The tension of this conflict should have been retained on the mental plane where it could have provided the energy for the creative resolutions of many of humanity’s problems.

But instead, enormous quantities of money – trillions of dollars – were squandered on the arms race and proxy wars. And if people think those proxy wars are over, look at Yemen today. And not only money was misused, but also vast material resources, not to mention the priceless gifts of the human imagination and intellectual ingenuity that should have been dedicated to our collective work for human uplift. Just think for a moment what the world would be like today if these gifts, talents and resources had been used for human uplift, for education, for planning for the good of all. Instead of being poured into the festering swamp of unenlightened self interest, these could have raised humanity out of the dogmas and fanaticisms of the past, into an attitude of mind and heart that saw that the good of each individual could only be achieved by ensuring the good of all, and then gladly worked for. How well Covid has reminded us all of this!

But let us quote the Tibetan again. “Great is the glory of man and wonderful are the divine functions which he embodies. Through the passage of time, the race

has been brought to the point where [humanity] is beginning to raise the lower energies into the higher centres, and it is this transition which is causing much of the trouble in the world today. [People] everywhere are becoming politically, religiously, scientifically, or artistically creative, and the impact of their mental energy and of their plans and ideas is making itself felt competitively. Until the idea of brotherhood dominates the race, we shall see these powers prostituted to personal ends and ambitions, and to consequent disaster.” How prophetic these words were of the last 70 or so years.

But it seems to me we have now a real chance to turn the tide in human and planetary affairs – which are now soul size as Christopher Fry memorably expresses it. The Tibetan predicted that “the moment that a point of balance is reached, the moment that those who stand for separateness and materialism, for totalitarianism or for any imposed regime (and consequently an evil unity), and those who stand for the freedom of the human soul, for the rights of the individual, for brotherhood and right human relations, are equal in force, in position and in influence, then the doors of the Hierarchy (symbolically speaking) will open, and the Christ with His disciples will come. This balance has to reach a point upon mental levels; it has to be reached by those who can think, who can influence, and in whose hands lies the responsibility for what [people] below the mental level know and believe. The unskilled labourer, the numerous people who never think, who are only young in the experience of incarnation, and the multitudes who evade thought even when they are capable of it, lie in the hands of two vast and dominant groups: the totalitarians and the democracies.”

In our present time it is interesting to observe that the totalitarian powers not only include those regimes that are enforcing ideological conformity with their secret police, their gulags, and with the immense power of digital population control. China is a prime example of this. They also include the totalitarian theocracies who are imposing a strict religious conformity on their populations often with a fanatical cruelty. For example in Africa there are groups who are attempting to ruthlessly impose their beliefs on whole populations. Boko Haram in Nigeria is one example. It is interesting to note that Boko Haram actually means ‘Western Education is Forbidden’. This reveals to us how powerfully

important western education actually is with one of its main aims being to teach people the skill of critical thinking, giving people the ability to think for themselves. Independent thought is never liked by tyrannies.

While this is happening, the democracies are having a rough time. The cherished freedoms of thought and speech has given rise through social media to an amazing plethora of false information and conspiracy theories. These as they attempt for a variety of reasons to undermine the institutions of state astonishingly hoodwink many. People are also being emotionally compromised by the resurrection of glamorous images of supposed past glories. Thus many democracies' standing and power for good in the world is being lessened, just when it is most needed.

On its own the face off between the totalitarian countries and the world's democracies has really reached a stalemate. Business continues between them of course as awkward things like human rights abuses are conveniently overlooked and an uneasy ideological truce pervades the world.

But into this picture we have to introduce perhaps the most pressing issue that humanity has ever had to face and which seems to me to be at this time the only thing that can draw a divided humanity together in an intense cooperation for the good of everybody. This is of course the issue of the degradation and pollution of the natural world and the predicted serious ravages of runaway climate change. What an obstacle is this to humanity's and the world's not only physical integrity and flourishing but, more importantly, spiritual integrity too. But, look on the plus side, the evolutionary side: What an opportunity it is for humanity to make a real change in its values and its sense of purpose, for it requires that together we manifest a global sense of responsibility and willing cooperation. It is only this that will enable us to correctly deal with this major crisis. The cry of humanity for this is sounding loudly in the ethers, and this cry needs to be focussed, amplified and directed to Hierarchy by a conscious invoking of the soul and the spiritual will by those in every spiritual and philosophical tradition who not only realise what the issues now really are, but are developing the spiritual skills to enable them to work in this way.

Simplicity is ever the mark of truth. Principally and everywhere we have to learn to live simply so that others may simply live, as the saying goes. It is this attitude that will transform the human race from in planetary terms an infecting toxic parasite into a benign organism. Humanity will then be able to transmit the love of Hierarchy and the will-to-Good of Shamballa to all life on the planet in an extravagance of creativity. This will be characterised by real harmlessness and the beginnings of a true self forgetfulness. We can correctly view humanity's present state as the dying residue of a world view that is gradually being consigned to the past. Emerging instead is a new consciousness which penetrates below the surface to the meaning and significance of outer events. Environment and climate issues present us all with a crisis of intention, of responsibility, of love and of the precipitation of a realistic vision of a different and better world. While some think we have gone beyond the tipping point, many believe that it is not too late to grasp with renewed enthusiasm this vision of a changed humanity creatively working for the good of all life on earth, and anchor it fully on the physical plane. Then will we, humanity, having aeons ago consciously left the father's house on a mission to transform the material substance of the planet start to turn back and begin to achieve this immense task which we set ourselves.