

## Sagittarius Full Moon Meeting – December 2020

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Friends, welcome to our celebration this afternoon of the full moon festival in Sagittarius. The actual time of the full moon is tomorrow morning, Monday, at 9.30 GMT. As most of you will know, the keynote for the disciple under the influence of the energies of this zodiacal sign is “I see the goal. I reach that goal, and then I see another”. And as usual we will be using it as the seed thought when we come to our group meditation later on. This keynote confronts us, straight away, with the basic need in every disciple’s life for the sense of vision, for the recognition of the next goal to be achieved, and for the recognition that on the path there is no time for resting on one’s laurels.

Always the need of humanity and the world must evoke our increasing desire and ability to love and serve. Always the soul urges us on to a life of increasing self-forgetfulness, and a consequent increase in our ability to transmit its life-giving and healing energies out into the world. Always the searchlight of the soul brings into our minds a deeper understanding and commitment to the Plan. And simultaneously it ever probes with an intenser fire into the dark places of the human psyche and equally into those dark areas of the world where energies distorted by glamour, illusion, pride, selfish ambition, and cruelty devastate the lives of millions of our fellow human beings — and our own lives too, of course, as we become more and more sensitive to the cry of all humanity for love, for spiritual freedom, for release from anguish, for the revelation of meaning as well as for those basic outer necessities and securities of food, education, shelter, health care, and so on. Meeting these latter needs is an essential part in the one work of lifting humanity, especially for those of us in physical incarnation. And always, of course, the evoked soul will give in abundance the energy and wherewithal we need to fulfil these needs. But for this to happen it requires of us that our minds are held in the light, our hearts are open, our motives are as pure as we can make them, and importantly that our faith in making the apparently impossible possible is firmly anchored both in the world of the Soul and in the realism of the constraints of the physical world.

A beautiful illustration of this is in a talk given to us at a World Goodwill meeting some years ago by Joyce Pearce. She was the founder and director of the Ockenden venture, the first refugee charity to be set up after the end of the 2nd world war. She related how she was being interviewed on BBC television about the then crisis issue of giving succour and safety to hundreds of Vietnamese orphans as that terrible war was drawing to a close. A business man had chartered an aeroplane to bring a number of these children to Britain, but the government of the time was opposing this for the somewhat spurious reason that there was nowhere to accommodate them. Joyce Pearce made a daring commitment on live TV, “Well, we will provide this”. Afterwards as she walked home up the hill from the station, she became aghast at the undertaking she had made, and was wondering how on earth she could do this. A minute or so later a man walking in the opposite direction approached her, and asked her if she was the Joyce Pearce he had just seen on television. “Because if you are, you will need accommodation. And I would like to offer you my large country house for this” – a gift she gratefully accepted. Later that evening she had a phonecall from a supplier of hospital beds saying that they had surplus stock which they would put on a lorry for her, as she would no

doubt be needing them. The following morning she received a phonecall from a group of medical students saying that they had heard about what she was doing and were coming armed with paint and brushes ready to clean and decorate. What a beautiful example of how an exact need articulated by the dedicated vision of a practical spiritual life can achieve a specific manifestation.

So let us pause here for a moment to consecrate ourselves with full consciousness to our work this afternoon and then we will say together the words of the mantram on your screen.

I know, O Lord of Life and Love  
about the need.  
Touch my heart anew with love  
that I too may love and give.

This Sagittarian theme of vision and of the next goal to be achieved must surely make us all think of that special group of selfless human beings and visionary activists which we call the new group of world servers, of which Joyce Pearce was clearly one. As we know, one of the main characteristics of this group is the ability to hold the vision before the eyes of humanity. And how necessary this is. For, as we have discovered over the long and painful course of human history, and know only too well now, without vision the people perish. But the fact that this group was able to be co-ordinated at all getting on for a hundred years ago is actually a testimony to the extent to which humanity has developed and spiritually unfolded over the past two millennia, and especially in the recent few hundred years.

Let us be clear in our assertion of the reality that over the course of history humanity has displayed a real trajectory of spiritual progress and development. This view causes not a few eyebrows to be raised, especially these days, when there is so much apparent evidence to the contrary. The conventional scientific and sociological view is that humanity has not really changed at all for thousands of years; that the great civilisations are but superficial veneers which temporarily paper over the permanently present and serious cracks or flaws in the character of humanity; that humanity is in fact fatally flawed. All apparent progress is only notional, to use Stephen J Gould's striking phrase.

If we just existed as the form, as separate selfish personalities, as forever warring nations and competing power blocs, I think we would be quite justified in holding this view. But the point is we are not just personalities. The personality is, if you like, only the tip of the iceberg, the visible bit. Deeper than that, perhaps hidden to many but always present, are far more extensive, holistic and loving dimensions of our being. These dimensions are now demanding a widespread recognition. And did we but know it, the very flaws and deficiencies within humanity are forcing us all to become discoverers of these dimensions of conscious living that lie hidden within us all. And the guarantee of their existence is their revelation in the lives of the increasing number of spiritual giants and geniuses who have emerged from the womb of humanity over time.

We do not perhaps hold sufficiently in our minds the reality that it is our *recognition* of these problems that is so encouraging. The fact is that millions of people all over the world are facing up to this reality and are now working and serving to heal, to remedy injustice, to resolve the

urgent environmental and climate problems, to hold new images of beauty before the eyes of everyone, to penetrate ever more deeply into the mysteries of the unknown, and to attain to new heights of achievement in every single field of human activity without exception.

We are seeing today a factual demonstration of one of the laws of disease and healing that the Tibetan formulates for us in *Esoteric Healing*. “Perfection calls imperfection to the surface.” The flames from the inner perfection of the soul bring about a ferment within the personality and, rather like when you make jam, the scum and dross rises to the surface where it can be seen, skimmed off and thrown away. I am sure we have all had a personal experience of this process in our own lives. Have we not all discovered that if faced courageously, and with a conscious invoking of the help of the soul, a difficult, sometimes even desperate, situation can thereby be transformed into a life-bestowing challenge. It becomes a means to make much quicker progress on the path than would otherwise be the case. Truly, these difficulties or obstacles need not remain millstones round our necks, but can become stepping stones on our collective spiritual journey.

One of the spiritual gifts bestowed by the sign of Sagittarius is the intuition, which perhaps can be well described as an absorption into the reality of truth. Properly functioning, therefore, the intuition is infallible. In contrast, the rational mind analyses and breaks down things into their component parts. It sees the part but not the whole and is therefore always liable to error. We can get a glimpse into the truth of this when we look at experts. An expert will be asked to give a professional opinion about something or other which he or she will justify on apparently impeccable evidence and logic. But there always seem to be other experts who will come up with impeccably argued contrary opinions, and the layman is understandably bewildered, not knowing what to believe. In contrast, the intuition sees everything whole. Rationality sees cause and effect in linear terms linked through time. To the intuition, past present and future are a synonymous reality — an eternal Now that is always inviting us to co-participate in lifting humanity to goodness and bringing essential goodness down into human consciousness. Thus the Tibetan writes, “the intellect which has been developed, used and finally illumined, becomes sensitive to a still higher type of mental experience and to this we give the name of intuitive perception. There come flashes of light upon problems; a distant yet possible vision of attainment is seen”. And with special reference to our work this afternoon he writes, “the arrow of aspiration fired towards the goal by the disciple in Sagittarius returns to the sender as the arrow of the intuition”. In terms of the full moon cycle, we begin to climb out of the depths to which we have descended in Scorpio and in Sagittarius see the vision ahead of us. This is the mountain of initiation in Capricorn which we know we will all have to climb.

We can now see why Sagittarius is the sign preparatory to the goal of initiation. It kindles the fiery determination to always hold the goal of the evolution of consciousness in mind and heart and to strive unremittingly towards it. And while we are thinking briefly about initiation now, about sensing the vision and making due preparations for achieving it, I think it would be useful to remind ourselves a little of the Capricorn experience. In Capricorn, we attempt to realise the vision, which we have seen and anchored in our consciousness in Sagittarius. We find our way to the foot of the mountain and start to struggle up its slopes, lifting not only ourselves and our group brothers and sisters, but also, and even if only by a minute amount, all of humanity with whom we are one. The higher we climb the brighter the light shines and

the further we can see, till eventually we become absorbed in the light supernal and recognise our essential identification with the reality of all goodness, all truth and all beauty, which we call Love. But the moment this happens we hear again the call of humanity. We have to turn around, go back and save.

One of the great difficulties and tests of the path seems to be embodied in the entirety of this experience. It is no coincidence that the sixth ray quality of aspiration to achieve the goal and the fourth ray energy which produces harmony only through the experience of intense conflict are among the dominant energies of this present sign. Our fiery aspiration towards the goals of Capricorn is unquestionable, yet the temptation for all of us in whom true compassion is awakening is to turn back now and help. But if we do this before we have achieved the mountain top, the turning back can so easily turn into going back and will only serve to enmesh us again in the world of the personality and its distorting glammers. We then revert to being a part of the problem again and cease any longer to be a useful part of the solution. We sense that it is only when we have attained the mountain top itself can we safely turn back. Yet all the time we feel our help is needed in the world about us now before we have completed our spiritual journey: help in clarifying issues on the mental plane; help in resolving the turmoils on the emotional levels and help to meet the physical needs of those of humanity, for example the needs of the many millions of us who simply have nothing. It is clear that we must go forward, yet at the same time the cry of humanity is sounding in our ears so urgently that we must turn back and help. This makes for an unsolvable dilemma, does it not. So, what light can the intuition throw on it for us? Of course the intuition is not to be limited by words, but words can help us to become receptive to it. Here are some that might help.

When the intuition is unfolded, “The three worlds of the soul and the three worlds of the personality become one world wherein the initiate works and acts, seeing no distinction, regarding one world as the world of inspiration and the other world as constituting the field of service, yet regarding both together as forming one world of activity”.

“It is through intuitive human beings that knowledge of the Plan is given to humanity.”

“Purity of heart is the most essential possession. Wisdom, courage, self-sacrifice cannot be contained in an obscured heart.”

“Attain and conquer,” says the yoga of fire, “You do not conquer for yourself, but your victorious state is important for the general good.”

Then there is the advice that the Tibetan once gave to one of his disciples. “The active double life of the disciple is your next goal. Your duty and your goal go hand in hand. You must walk with both at once. Thus can the rainbow bridge (the bridge to the intuition) be built”.

These thoughts indicate a solution to the problem, for have we not made the mistake of assuming that there is a separation, rather than a distinction, between outer and inner goals. Surely both inner and outer are inextricably interlinked, as is all else in the universe. It is simply a question of focus. The fact that we become more focused on the inner reality does not negate our involvement with the outer world. On the contrary; we are able to see

situations more truly for what they really are; we are able to be more efficient and effective in what we do. By aiming for the mountain top we gradually come to perceive the true causes of problems and therefore their true solutions. Still climbing, still aiming, we can still serve and meet the need. We must just never take our eyes off the goal.

It is always an essential as well as fascinating exercise to look at the current events and trends in the life of humanity from a symbolic and therefore spiritual perspective. And perhaps the issue of Truth which I referred to earlier is one of major importance now. We are living in what some people have called the ‘post-truth’ age in which emotion takes precedence over thought, and which discounts evidence and facts which do not coincide with people’s emotional biases and pre-conceived ideas. In its extreme forms it becomes a dangerous denial of truth that borders on religious fanaticism. Bertrand Russell wisely once counselled: “When you are studying any matter, or considering any philosophy, ask yourself only what are the facts and what is the truth that the facts bear out. Never let yourself be diverted either by what you wish to believe, or by what you think would have beneficent social effects if it were believed. But look only, and solely, at what are the facts.”

What perfect advice for our present dangerous demagogues and self-seeking politicians to take on board. Interestingly Barak Obama’s recently commented about the need for us all to demonstrate “fidelity to the truth”. I find this such an arresting phrase for it embodies two vital and fundamental spiritual principles. It expresses an abstract construct which has no meaning unless it is put into practise in the material worlds. It also places a premium on faithfulness. This is not wishful thinking or blind hope. It is recognition of a goal – in this case a virtue – and a fixed determination to reach the goal. In other words it is an act of the spiritual Will.

And then of course we have to ask what is the Truth. I think it is now generally accepted that truths connected with the material worlds are usually partial and like everything else are evolving in a material universe. At his trial when he was asked by Pilate ‘What is Truth’, Christ’s response was to say ‘I am the truth, the way and the life’. I do not think he was referring to himself as an individual personality, as most orthodox Christians believe. Surely he was speaking as the embodiment of the world soul. He was affirming that truth can only be known as one creates and embodies the path of light that links the world of form to the timeless dimension of spirit. This is real truth, the truth that makes us all free, free to love perfectly and to serve.

So let us now work in meditation together, and participate in the crucial effort of humanity to not just see the present goal of establishing right relationships, but to work to reach it. And then? who knows what will be the next goal we will all see together.