

The Spiritual Hierarchy

by Alice A. Bailey

The text of this booklet contains quotations (with slight adaptations in some cases) from several books by Alice A. Bailey.

Although these books were written during the period 1919 – 1949, their presentation of the perennial philosophy's tradition of the Spiritual Hierarchy as a major link in the Great Chain of Being, and as actively involved in the spiritual evolution of humanity, is as relevant and important today as it has ever been.

Many sense that there is a new universal religious spirit alive in the world. Yet what is often lacking amongst intelligent, spiritually inclined servers is a sense of the reality of that group of beings on the inner planes who are the intelligent forces of nature and who guide the evolutionary process. The active cooperation of human creativity, ingenuity, love and will are needed in the creation of the new; yet evolution proceeds in accord with the Plan of God.

Hierarchy: That group of spiritual beings on the inner planes who are the intelligent forces of nature, and who control the evolutionary processes.

Intelligent Spiritual Direction

Wisdom teachings throughout the ages affirm the fact of an intelligent spiritual direction, a chain of being, underlying the evolution of consciousness. The name given to that guiding purpose varies in different traditions. Some refer to it as the spiritual Hierarchy of the planet, or the great White Lodge.

I assume that my readers recognise some intelligent or spiritual direction of humanity. I care not by what name they call that guiding Purpose. Some may call it the Will of God; others, the inevitable trends of the evolutionary process; still others may believe in the spiritual forces of the planet; others may regard it as the spiritual Hierarchy of the planet, or the great White Lodge; many millions speak of the guidance of Christ and His disciples. Be that as it may, there is a universal recognition of a guiding Power, exerting pressure throughout the ages, which appears to be leading all towards an ultimate good.

Some definite direction has led from the stage of primeval humanity to that evolutionary point where a Plato, a Shakespeare, a da Vinci, a Beethoven can appear. Some power has evoked the human capacity to formulate ideas, to produce systems of theology, of science and of government; some inner motivating power has given humanity the ability to create beauty, to discover the secrets of nature; some realisation of divine responsibility lies behind the philanthropy, the educational systems, and the welfare movements throughout the world.

Planetary Evolution

Our planetary Hierarchy is part of a greater Hierarchy governing the evolution of the Solar System.

The entire Hierarchy of spiritual beings represents a synthesis of forces consciously directed for the furtherance of planetary evolution. These

forces link those great Personalities Who compose the Hierarchy with the greater Hierarchy. Our Hierarchy is a miniature replica of the greater synthesis of those self-conscious Entities who demonstrate through the sun and the seven sacred planets, as well as the other planets, greater and smaller, of which our solar system is composed.

The Result of Human Achievement

The spiritual Hierarchy is the result of human activity, aspiration and achievement; it has been created by and of humanity.

This Hierarchy is composed of those Who have triumphed over matter, and Who have achieved the goal by the very self-same steps that individuals tread today. These spiritual personalities, adepts and Masters, have wrestled and fought for victory and mastery upon the physical plane, and struggled with the miasmas, the fogs, the dangers, the troubles, the sorrows and pains of everyday living. They have trodden every step of the path of suffering, have undergone every experience, have surmounted every difficulty, and have won out. They have experienced the crucifixion of the personal self and have known the utter renunciation of all. Herein lies Their right to serve. Knowing the quintessence of pain Their methods can be exquisitely measured to the individual need.

These Elders of humanity are characterised by a love which endures, and which acts ever for the good of the group; by a knowledge which has been gained through millennia of lives, in which They have worked Their way from the bottom of life and of evolution to the top; by an experience which is based on time itself and a multiplicity of personality reactions and interactions; by a courage which is the result of that experience, and which can now be placed at the service of humanity; by a purpose which is enlightened and intelligent, fitting in with the purpose of the Planetary Logos.

Masters of the Wisdom

Senior members of Hierarchy are Masters of the Wisdom.

A Master of the Wisdom is One Who has undergone the fifth initiation. That really means that consciousness has undergone such an expansion that it now includes the fifth or spiritual kingdom, the kingdom of souls. Having progressed through the four lower kingdoms:—the mineral, the vegetable, the animal and the human—the Master's centre of consciousness has, through meditation and service, expanded till it now includes the plane of spirit.

This means that through successive incarnations, the Master has transmuted lower mind into mind pure and unalloyed, has transmuted desire into intuition, and has irradiated consciousness with the light of pure Spirit. The discipline of meditation is the only way in which this can be accomplished.

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or with the soul of humanity*

Masters of the Wisdom choose to stay upon our planet and limit Themselves for the sake of men and women who are pressing forward on the wave of evolution. They serve the evolutionary process through meditation, or the manipulation of thought matter, and by work on the mental bodies of humanity

The Hierarchy works only with the spiritual nature or with the soul of humanity, and—to the Master—the form is regarded as relatively of no importance.

Custodians of the Plan

The Hierarchy directs world events, as permitted by human free will, so that the evolving consciousness may express itself through adequate social, political, religious and economic forms.

The Hierarchy works constantly at the task of awakening the consciousness aspect in all forms, so that it is awakened, expanded and intelligently employed.

The Hierarchy directs world events, as far as humanity will permit (for the free will and free decision of humanity may not be ignored), so that the unfolding consciousness may express itself through developing and adequate social, political, religious and economic world forms. They give direction; They throw a light; They impress those who are in contact with Them, and through the inflow of ideas and through revelation They definitely influence the tide of human affairs.

The Hierarchy directs and controls, more than is realised, the unfolding cyclic cultures and their resultant civilisations. These can then provide adequate forms, temporarily useful for the emerging soul of humanity. The format of cultures and civilisations receives special attention.

There is a Plan for humanity and this Plan has always existed. It has worked out through the evolutionary developments of the past ages and through that special impetus which has been given it from time to time by the great intuitives and teachers.

The immediate objectives of the Plan might be stated as follows:

1. To raise the level of the human consciousness so that intelligent thinking men and women will be consciously in touch with the world of ideas and the realm of intuitive perception. This means that they will be oriented towards reality.
2. To clarify the international situation. Each nation should attend to its own business of beautifying the national life, by the production of order, stabilisation, and above all, freedom; at the same time realising its responsibility to all other nations, and the interrelation of all parts of the life of our world. The providing of adequate food, clothing and housing facilities to populations everywhere will bring about a changed world psychology, which will be constructive and sound, and which will usher in the deeply desired era of peace and plenty.
3. The growth of the group idea with a general emphasis upon group good, group understanding, group inter-relation, and group good will. These four are the ideals of that subjective group, working on the physical plane, which we call the New Group of World Servers.

One Great Ashram with 7 Divisions

The Hierarchy is one great ashram, the Ashram of the Lord of the World. Headed by the World Teacher, it radiates light, understanding and power in service of evolution. This one ashram consists of seven divisions, seven ashrams, or centers of consciousness. Each of these seven main ashrams includes subsidiary ashrams, which focus on a specific department of human evolution while contributing to the purpose of the whole.

This Ashram is a community of souls who are swept by the desire to serve, urged by a spontaneous impulse to love, illumined by one pure Light, devotedly fused and blended into groups of serving Minds, and energised by one Life. Its Members are organised to further the Plan which They consciously contact and with which They deliberately cooperate.

The entire planetary Hierarchy, though cognisant of the present endeavour and therefore participating in the plans of the Council, are not all occupied with the problem of humanity in this present moment of crisis. There are many other lines of activity and of evolutionary expediency and undertaking which must parallel the present endeavour. Work in relation to other kingdoms in nature (both subhuman and superhuman), and work in preparation for the period which must succeed this present time of crisis must be continued as usual. The great Ashram is likewise magnetic in its effect, and through its magnetic potency “units of life and devotion”—human beings—are brought into the Ashram as disciples in preparation for initiation.

The Plan is the expression of Divine Purpose

It is this magnetic potency, this dynamic active and energising will, which produces cohesion among the various Ashrams, and is one of the sources of hierarchical unity. Putting it in other words, it is the service of the Plan which binds the seven Ashrams, with their subsidiary Ashrams, coherently into the one great Ashram. The Plan is the expression of Divine Purpose or the Will of God, the Lord of the World.

The Hierarchy receives that esoteric “Fire of God” which brings to an end cycles, ideologies, organisations and civilisations when the due and right time comes. This They do in order to make place for that which is better and which will prove adequate and not limiting to the awakening consciousness and the emerging life.

The Hierarchy prepares men and women for initiation by:

- a. Receiving them into the Ashrams of the Masters.
- b. Offering Their disciples opportunity to serve in relation to the emerging Plan.
- c. Inaugurating through the means of the disciples of the period those new presentations of the training needed for initiation. Each major cycle receives new forms of the same ancient, yet basic, teaching.

Christ as World Teacher will Return

The Christ, the Master of the Masters and the Instructor of the Angels, is the WORLD teacher. He is known by other names in other religions, such as the Imam Mahdi, Maitreya, and the Kalki Avatar. He is in process of returning.

The Christ is the World Teacher and not a Christian teacher. He Himself told us that He had other folds and to them He has meant as much as He has meant to the orthodox Christian. They may not call Him Christ, but they have their own name for Him and follow Him as truly and faithfully as their Western counterparts.

The Christ Who will return will not be like the Christ Who (apparently) departed. He will not be a “man of sorrows”; He will not be a silent pensive figure; He will be the enunciator of spiritual statements which will not necessitate interpretation and receive the wrong interpretation, because He will be present to indicate the true meaning.

He has been for two thousand years the supreme Head of the Church Invisible, the Spiritual Hierarchy, composed of disciples of all faiths. He recognises and loves those who are not Christian but who retain their allegiance to Their Founders—the Buddha, Mohammed and others. He cares not what the faith is if the objective is love of God and of humanity.

If people look for the Christ Who left His disciples centuries ago, they will fail to recognise the Christ Who is in process of returning. The Christ has no religious barriers in His consciousness. It matters not to Him of what faith a man may call himself.

The Son of God is on His way and He cometh not alone. His advance guard is already here and the Plan which they must follow is already made and clear. Let recognition be the aim.

The Externalisation of the Hierarchy

The Spiritual hierarchy is in process of externalizing, so that in time the masters will again walk on Earth, amongst us.

We are working and living in the initial stages of the period wherein preparation is being made for the emergence of the Hierarchy. This emergence is at present purely on mental levels, but when the thoughtform of exoteric existence is created by Humanity itself and the invocative cry is intense enough, then the Great Ashram will slowly make its appearance upon the physical plane.

In the meantime the Hierarchy is orienting itself to a much closer rapport with humanity, and to an interior reorganisation which will make it possible to admit disciples in large numbers into the great Ashram.

The members of the Hierarchy are already—one by one—entering into outer activity upon the physical plane. They are not recognised for what They are, but They work on implementing the Plan, demonstrating goodwill, seeking to enlarge the horizon of humanity, and thus prepare the way for the One Whom They serve, the Christ, the Master of all the Masters and the Teacher alike of angels and of men.

World Servers

The Masters work through seven major groups of thinkers and workers in the world.

In preparation for the Reappearance of the Christ and for the coming in of the Aquarian Age with its distinctive energies and amazing opportunities,

members of the Hierarchy have been forming and training those groups of workers and thinkers who, through their activities, have so largely governed and moulded our world for the past three or four centuries. These groups fall generally into four major divisions; cultural, political, religious, and scientific. In more modern times three other groups have definitely emerged; they are the philosophical, the psychological, and the financial groups. Philosophers have, of course, always been with us, but they have been for the most part isolated units who have founded schools characterised by partisanship and separativeness. Now there are no outstanding figures as in the past, but groups who represent certain ideas. It is of profound importance that the work of these seven groups of thinkers be recognised as part of the hierarchical programme, designed to produce a certain situation, to bring about certain preparatory conditions, and as playing a definite part in the work of world evolution as far as humanity is concerned.

Distinguishing the Real from the Unreal

As more attention is given to the existence of the Hierarchy it becomes increasingly important to distinguish between astral reflections of the Masters and the reality.

The fact of the existence of the spiritual Hierarchy and of Masters is being brought to the attention of large numbers even if it is being done by those who are confusing the reflection and the thought form with the reality.

How can the mystic avoid this error and confusion? How can the real be distinguished from the illusory? The only rules which I can give you are so simple that those who are occupied at this time with teaching and proclaiming that which they have astrally contacted may not like to follow them. The attitude of mind which will guard the mystic from astral delusion and error is:

1. The cultivation of a spirit of true humility. There is a spiritual arrogance which masks itself behind a cloak of humbleness and which is very prevalent at this time. It leads people to regard themselves as the chosen of the Hierarchy to save the world; it leads them to look upon themselves as the mouthpieces of the Masters or of the Christ; it tends

to make them separative in their attitudes to other leaders and teachers, refusing to recognise the many aspects of the one work and the many methods which the Mind of God has devised for reaching a wide audience.

2. The refusal to accept any contact or message which has personality implications or which sets its recipient apart, thus tending to the development of a Messiah complex. A true contact with the Hierarchy and the true accolade of service carries with it the conviction of the existence of the many servers in the one Service, of the many messengers carrying the one message, of the many teachers of the many aspects of the one Truth, and of the many and various ways back to the Heart of God. When this all-embracing revelation accompanies the call to service, then the spirit of inclusiveness is developed and the person can be sure of being truly called to cooperate and convinced of the reality of the vision.
3. The freedom from emotional appeal. The true disciple and mystic is ever mentally polarised. Vision is free from the deluding reactions of the solar plexus centre. This vision awakens the heart centre and evokes the response of personality energy (focussed in the ajna centre) and produces eventually a “centering in the place of light”. This indicates the growing activity of the head centre.

World Religion

The fact of the spiritual Hierarchy, and people’s growing ability to work in cooperation with Them will be part of the new religious spirit.

In the coming world religion, life and not death will be proclaimed; attainment of spiritual status through spiritual living will be taught, and the fact of the existence of those who have thus attained and who work with Christ for the helping and salvaging of humanity will be the goal. The fact of the spiritual Hierarchy of our planet, the ability of mankind to contact its Members and to work in co-operation with Them, and the existence of Those Who know what the will of God is and can work intelligently with that will—these are the truths upon which the future spiritual teaching will be based.

The fact of the existence of this Hierarchy and its supreme Head, the Christ, is consciously recognized by hundreds of thousands today, though still denied by the orthodox. So many know this truth and so many people of integrity are cooperating consciously with the Members of the Hierarchy that ecclesiastical antagonisms and the belittling comments of the concrete minded are of no avail. People are moving out from under doctrinal authority into direct, personal and spiritual experience; they are coming under the direct authority which contact with Christ and His disciples, the Masters, ever confers.

Practical Work is Needed

Disciples, aspirants and all people of spiritual intention intuitively share a sense of responsibility for serving the Plan. This is not a time for visionary dreaming. It is a time for Work.

It will be obvious that a great spiritual movement is under way—perhaps the greatest of all time. Humanity is deemed to have reached a point in evolution where much can be done, because the minds of people—for the first time on a worldwide scale—are sensitive to spiritual impression; the opportunity of the moment is unique, because minds everywhere are becoming superlatively receptive to both good and evil. Men and women are not today governed so much by blind impulse as by considered thought, although the line of least resistance for the majority is the selfish impulse. There have always been small groups and rare souls who have demonstrated the capacity to respond to spiritual impression.

The totalitarian powers have always realised and exploited this capacity of human beings to be responsive to good or bad impression. By impressing certain doctrines, certain principles and certain beliefs on their people, and by withholding the truth or the facts and ignoring the realities, they contrive to swing their people into an acceptance which means—for the controlling initiators—immense power.

Other nations, the so-called democracies, are in a state of great confusion, split into political, religious and social parties, listening to the teaching, the dreams and the plans of every person who has an idea and thrusts themselves forward into the public consciousness, having no true or good

policy, tainted by selfishness (personal or national, and sometimes both), and demanding the settlement of material affairs with small attention—if any—to the recognised spiritual goals and values.

There is fortunately a growing body of those of all faiths, or of no religious faith, to be found in every continent and nation who are aware of the stirring of this spiritual movement—linking humanity and the Hierarchy. This is due to their reaction to spiritual hope, to the expectancy and to the curiously widespread belief that divine intervention is possible and at hand. As the momentum of this spiritual activity develops, so will the responsiveness among people develop, and if the reaction is that which is hoped for, it will be the masses everywhere who will slowly unite to bring about the conditions needed for the reappearance of the Prince of Peace. The number of these semi-enlightened people is growing fast; desperation is hastening their response to help from on high, and in due time their numbers will be so great that totalitarianism, as well as chaotic democracy, will not be able to stand against them.

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1. This is no mystical or visionary dream with which I am presenting you. It involves hard business sense on the physical plane, a practical commonsense, a cessation of the constant presentation of a beautiful future in a mythical heaven of idleness and uselessness. The bringing in of the Kingdom of God, the preparation for the coming of the Christ and the salvaging of humanity demand courage, organisation, business acumen, psychology and persistence; it needs trained workers and much money; it calls for carefully considered programmes, possessing long range vision, plus sensible modern procedures. It is to this that all with true vision and a love of humanity are called today; it means the spreading of an intelligently cultivated goodwill and the fostering of those conditions, attitudes and points of view which will inevitably bring about right human relations.

A Point of Balance

The task is to create a point of balance in the world between those who stand for separateness and materialism and those who stand for the freedom of the human soul.

I would call your careful attention to one most important matter. 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 the members of the public below the mental level know and believe.

The Objectives of World Goodwill

To stimulate and encourage men and women of goodwill everywhere to establish right human relations between races, nations and classes

To assist men and women of goodwill in their studies of world problems, and in the effective application to these problems of goodwill, cooperation and sharing for the common good.

To cooperate with other organisations in constructive activities contributing to world unity, stability and right human relations.

To make available up-to-date information on constructive current action in the main areas of human life through the publication of a regular newsletter. To establish a goodwill Commentary on issues of world interest.

To aid in establishing goodwill as the keynote of the new civilisation.

To create a world-wide contact list of men and women of goodwill.

To support the work of the United Nations and the Specialised Agencies as the best hope for a united and peaceful world.

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