

## Virgo Full Moon Festival, 2021

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Friends, welcome to our still on-line full moon meditation. This one, as you probably all know, is occurring in the sign of Virgo and we will be using the keynote for the disciple in Virgo in our meditation later on. “I am the Mother and the Child. I, God, I, matter am.” The actual time of the full moon is very early tomorrow morning at five to one BST.

It is an obvious fact that we, humanity, and indeed all life on the material planet are going through times of momentous importance. We should remember that this word, material, refers not just to the physical world but also, and perhaps more importantly, to the inner dimensions of thought and emotion which in the great scheme of things are considered to be parts of the form world. Thoughts are things, we are told, and so are emotions. It is also important to remember that what happens on the physical plane is influenced a great deal by humanity’s thought life and emotional reaction.

A positive way to view what is happening in the world now is to think of it as a spiritual crisis. It is taking the form of self-imposed tests. Now a test isn’t a test unless there is both a reasonable chance for success as well as a real possibility for failure. This means that things are really in the balance right now and the situation calls on each of us to respond in two ways.

It almost goes without saying that we need to be intelligent, responsible and creative citizens in our homes, our communities, our countries and alert and wise and kind members of the human family. But as co-workers treading the spiritual path we are also called to be dedicated and committed members of a spiritual group, anchoring the reality of the soul and the will-to-good into the consciousness of humanity, to be a channel for the redeeming light and love of the soul to reach into the dark corners of the human psyche. It is here that is found much of the cause for the mayhem and suffering that we see in so many places around the world.

So let us begin with a few minutes of concentrated contemplation on the reality of the light and love of the soul and the spiritual will that we need to evoke, and then we will sound together the words of the mantram that is now appearing on your screen.

“We reach into the Light and bring it down to meet the need. We reach into the silent Place and bring from thence the gift of understanding. Thus with the light we work and turn the darkness into day.”

Humanity, in our current times, is a remarkable paradox. On the one hand it is giving wonderful evidence of the divine nature, the soul, which exists as the loving and creative reality at the centre of us all. But as we shall see, there is a dark shadow side as well.

Humanity has expressed and continues to express the reality of the soul in astonishing achievements and in every field of human creative activity. For example the Tibetan writes in *A Treatise on White Magic* that: “All great scientists and workers in the realm of objective nature have worked as souls, and all the most amazing of the developments in the realm of

physics and chemistry, as in other departments of human knowledge, have been made when the worker in any particular field has launched forth with faith in some hypothesis he has formed, and has investigated and progressed his work forward stage by stage until he has contacted an aspect of the truth hitherto unformulated by man. Then, having through the use of his intuition entered into a new realm of thought, he takes the knowledge there discovered and formulates it in such way by theory, principle, experiment and mechanical contrivance that it becomes the possession of the group, and in due time is understood and utilized by the world. But in its genesis it has been mystical work and based on a mystical intuition.”

This was written in the mid-1920s. Nearly a hundred years later, and the progress in scientific and technological achievement has been breath-taking. Just a few examples. The internet, which we all take for granted now and without which this meeting would not be possible, has only been in existence since 1983. Yet it has already utterly transformed the way in which we work and study, bank and shop, share and play, and of course serve.

Genetic engineering with its new CRISPR technology, whatever one thinks of the wisdom of using it and of the possible long-term consequences, will probably have a similar effect on all life on the planet. The Voyager space probes launched in 1977 to investigate the outer planets of our solar system have both now left the heliosphere and are penetrating deep into interstellar space.

From a distance of over 11 billion miles and continually travelling away from the earth at speeds of up to 38,000 mph they are still sending scientific data back to us and will continue to do so until at least 2025 when their power will probably have completely dwindled away to nothing. Voyager 2 is serendipitously going roughly in the direction of Sirius, that system which plays such an important part in the spiritual life of our earth. From it, we are told, pours a stream of energy which enters directly into the spiritual Hierarchy of our planet, carrying with it the principle of buddhi, of cosmic love. This, in a mysterious way, is the principle found at the heart of every atom. Voyager 2 will pass this star system in a near miss, cosmically speaking, in approximately 296,000 years.

The magnitude of these big numbers is often difficult for people to grasp. We think of a million as a big number, and a billion – well that’s a bit bigger. Here’s a good way to think about it. How long does a million seconds last? The answer is about eleven and a half days (11.57 actually). Now how long does a billion seconds last? The answer is 31.7 years. And a trillion seconds? That’s 31,700 years. This makes us aware of the enormous scale of these large numbers. We can see what a huge difference there is for example between a millionaire and a billionaire. There are about 47 million millionaires in the world today, and 2,755 billionaires.

It is sobering to realise how their collective wealth spread across all humanity would empower the solution to so many problems. Globally, it’s quite easy to do the sums. The world’s current population level is about 7.8 billion people and the world’s collective wealth is estimated to be around 500 trillion dollars. Evenly shared out this would give every child, woman and man just over 64 thousand dollars each.

After this short digression, let us get back to the theme of the soul manifesting in the creative life of humanity and look at the field of religion. While in the past this has been such a cause of misunderstanding, friction, intolerance and bloodshed, in its leading servers there is now an amazing growth of spiritual depth, of humility and wise tolerance. And this is filtering down beautifully into the rank and file who used to be so partisan and certain of the rightness of their own position and the wrongness of everyone else's. But they are now coming to see religion as a spiritual adventure of discovery and a journey into a unity that rejoices in the diverse multiplicity of its origins.

In fact we are seeing with our eyes today an astonishing number of people in the world who are fulfilling the Tibetan's prophecy in *A Treatise on White Magic*. He said there will be those "who regard themselves as members of the Church universal and as 'members one of another'. They recognize each other; they accord equal devotion to the spiritual leaders of all races, and use each other's Bibles with equal freedom. They form the subjective background of the new world; they constitute the spiritual nucleus of the coming world religion; they are the unifying principle which will eventually save the world."

One can make many more such observations of the plus side of humanity – the arts, education, the faltering steps humanity is taking towards international co-operation, all give evidence of the soul at work. Yet we need to acknowledge that there is a dark shadow side too. This is what makes humanity such a paradox.

For while the goodness in the human heart and mind shines so brightly, dreadful wars continue, despite all parties knowing what the human cost, the environmental cost, and the economic cost is. The number of refugees in the world is the highest it has been for decades. In 1990 the number was 40 million. In 2020 this has more than doubled to 82.4 million forcibly displaced people worldwide – 26.4 million refugees, 48 million people internally displaced, 4.1 million asylum seekers, 3.9 million Venezuelans who have had to leave their country for economic or other reasons. 1 million children born as refugees in 2018-2020. What will happen to their education, their health, their future? And so on. Then there is the fact that 87% of refugees are hosted in developing countries, who cannot afford to look after them properly, while the wealthy world does a bit – but only a bit!

Then there is the shocking growth of human rights abuses in some countries of the world which should be alarming us all. We read about the fate of community workers in Latin America murdered by drug cartels and logging syndicates. And what about the human rights lawyers in China who are harassed, intimidated, disappeared and so on. Such brave and such principled people. It is salutary to ask ourselves what we would do if we were in their shoes?

Then there is the global climate crisis. This should be such a major focus of the world's attention and remedial action. While many leaders and governments are acknowledging this problem on paper, it does seem at times more like paying lip service. And there are some who are effusing to step up to the bar. Clearly we are not doing nearly enough to avert what many see as a catastrophe that will happen in the near future.

It is no wonder that many people have a deep foreboding of what the future will bring. This is leading to the large scale prevalence of depression and a state of fear among so many. So we need to ask how can we confront this situation in a realistic and helpful way. Well of course the answer is in front of us too. For such is the beauty of the human spirit that whenever a problem or difficulty is perceived, groups arise who work with real dedication along all possible lines to resolve and heal it. This is born out by the following facts. Today there are an estimated 10 million NGOs all around the world. And they are being supported by financial donations from about 1.4 billion people. The Charities Aid Foundation expects this number to rise to 2.5 billion by 2030.

But fear is something that we need to face. First let us remember that Energy follows thought. Sometimes our fears can produce the very thing that we are afraid of. Fear needs to be countered by what we might call a divine optimism. As President Roosevelt memorably said in his 1933 inaugural speech: “So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is...fear itself — nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyses needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.”

I was rather amused to read something that Mark Twain once wrote: “I have lived a long life and had many troubles, most of which never happened.” There is a lot of truth in this pithy epigram. But it should not be taken as an encouragement to relax and take a ‘laissez-faire’ attitude to the problems we are all facing. Now is the time for us all to serve to our maximum capacity, to forget our little personal problems and live increasingly the life of the soul, seeing need and doing whatever we can to meet that need wherever we are. And remember to smile too, to generate joy! “Joy settles as a bird within the heart but has winged its way from the secret place within the head. We are that bird of joy. Therefore, with joy we serve.” In the presence of joy many fears are seen for what they are – emotional illusions, and they can evaporate for us and for many when joy infuses our consciousness.

Therefore, without ignoring the difficulties and the problems, we should surely be concentrating much more on the good the true and the beautiful which are most surely on their way. Let us constantly remember that every move that a disciple, and especially a discipleship group makes in the right direction will inevitably evoke the assistance of those who work and serve on the inner side of life. Also be certain that prayer and meditation correctly motivated and skilfully done are such powerful instruments for good. With the forces of evolution on our side amazing things can be achieved.

One of the hallmarks of the disciple is the empowering presence of the sense of spiritual vision which motivates all that they intuit, think and do. Another is utter fearlessness. All fear, doubt, and worry have to be eliminated, for they tend to close the door to a true perception of what is right and possible. Another thing. It is good to recollect that although a single person achieving success upon the Path of Discipleship may be, in themselves, relatively of small importance, many people achieving this are of tremendous potency. The Tibetan writes: “I tell you at this time for your cheering and encouragement that the numbers of the disciples in the world are greatly increasing. Here and there throughout the world, in

every nation and practically every week, men and women are stepping off the Path of Probation on to the Path of Discipleship. In this lies the hope of the world today.” If this was true of the 1920s, how much more so will it be true today? He explains that Suffering and trouble, apprehension and the processes whereby detachment and dispassion are enforced, have made this possible. So let us bless these difficulties, these obstacles for by them we grow and become more effective, efficient and loving servers.

We are in Virgo, the sign wherein the form nurtures the embryonic soul, preparing it for birth. And, as has been often pointed out, humanity is now at a time when the form is giving birth to the soul on a large scale. Now, anyone who has participated in the birth of a baby will know that the word “labour” is a perfect description of the process. It involves difficulties, struggle, pain and effort. It is interesting to reflect that the muscles of the womb do not relax between contractions but increase the pressure relentlessly until the birth has taken place.

It seems to me that this is a good analogy for what is happening to Humanity as a whole now. All the problems we see are contracting around human consciousness, impinging on us day by day, forcing us to wake up. And the pressure will not let up till the soul is born in many millions of people. The evidence for this will be that large numbers will recognise the magnitude of our current problems and institute the radical changes that are so necessary. These changes need to be on three levels.

Firstly, as is already thankfully beginning to happen, we need to change the way we think. This is crucial. So long the seat of the sense of separateness, the mind is coming under the influence of the soul whose nature is non-separateness. Formerly the slayer of the real, the mind under the influence of wholeness now becomes its revealer. Self-centredness and selfishness will gradually be dissipated by a growing sense of the oneness of all things and a resulting demonstration of a sense of responsibility for all life in the world.

Secondly, there needs to be a radical change to the emotional/desire nature. Material desire and consequent suffering has ruled humanity for aeons. Now is our chance to change this, and it will begin to happen as detachment from the desire is not only desired (what a lovely paradox!) but practised with zest, too. It is probably the most difficult thing anyone on the path of return has to achieve. Again and again we fall flat on our faces, but again and again we get up, dust ourselves off and renew our intentions in this area. Eventually all that is left of our emotional life is a purified vehicle that radiates the light of the compassionate buddhic nature into our environments. For most of us, of course, this is very much a work in progress.

Thirdly, there is the need for radical change to humanity’s attitude and activity towards the etheric/physical dimension This is a personal responsibility we have to our own bodies. But it also and more importantly means, and again this is already beginning to happen, transforming our thoughtless exploitation of the material physical world into one of conscious, protective stewardship. As already pointed out, humanity is being compelled along this path by the constraints, indeed the rebellion of the biosphere. Of course, our ability to do this will be commensurate with our achievements on the mental and emotional levels. So we work away together at this triple task with a joyful will, saying with Christopher Fry:

“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.”

From the perspective of the inner planes, it is surely being noted that we are indeed collectively taking that great stride.

Now let us go into our group meditation.