

WESAK FESTIVAL IN TAURUS – NEW YORK – APRIL 2016

Living in the Group Aura

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Good evening friends and welcome to the celebration of the Wesak Festival in the sign of Taurus. This is the highpoint of the spiritual year when a planetary alignment of such magnitude occurs that it evokes response from extra-planetary sources; and we play our part in this great Festival by uniting in consciousness as a single beam of light to receive and transmit the Forces of Enlightenment that are seeking contact with humanity at this time.

The Wesak Festival is generally known as the Festival of the Buddha because He is said to make an annual appearance in a secluded valley somewhere in the Himalayas at the time of the full moon of Taurus. He appears for a brief period and enacts a water ceremony before the Christ and a spiritual hierarchy of enlightened adepts of various grades. With this blessing for humanity, the Buddha bestows the imprint of Divine Purpose and the life from which can be drawn spiritual sustenance for the immediate times ahead.

Year after year this Festival of the Buddha provides a portal through which the spiritually minded can reach up towards the forces of enlightenment. And what could be more profoundly stimulating than working consciously in this light and contacting a previously unrealized aspect of the Plan? For it is a fact that each time we celebrate a full moon festival, the quality of the energies is slightly different from the last festival. Worlds within worlds, everything is spiralling onwards into new vistas, and wheels within wheels bring fresh challenges, greater love and unity, and still more light. This vision can inspire us through thick and thin and lift us when we are down; motion is perpetual and everything is progressing with a purpose. Through the united aspirations of our group work, we propagate this wave of energy that carries all of us ever forward, towards the vision.

With this in mind, let's pause for a moment of reflection and conscious integration into one serving group and then say together the Affirmation of the Disciple:

*I am a point of light within a greater Light.
I am a strand of loving energy within the stream of Love divine.
I am a point of sacrificial Fire, focused within the fiery Will of God.
And thus I stand.
I am a way by which men may achieve.
I am a source of strength, enabling them to stand.
I am a beam of light, shining upon their way.
And thus I stand.
And standing thus, revolve
And tread this way, the ways of men,
And know the ways of God.
And thus I stand.
OM*

The Buddha's visible blessing at the time of the Wesak festival engenders great expectancy and spiritual tension in the group assembled with the moment of His approach being characterized by a great Silence, brimming with vitality and significance. For those of us who are not there during this highpoint of the spiritual calendar, our greatest service is preparing spiritually and holding this inner connection in

daily life, visualizing ourselves as a pure channel of light in alignment with the keynote of Taurus: ***I see, and when the eye is opened, all is Light.*** Here the goals of "clear seeing, pure joyful will and the death of personality desire" lie before us; and when these goals are indeed achieved, we will then be living consciously within the aura of the spiritual group to which our soul naturally belongs.

The idea of living in a world of pure light evokes a tantalising vision of soaring forever higher on the energy streaming forth from the mind of God and entering into the heart all love and wisdom. But while this exalted state of spiritual freedom may seem a blissful goal, intense evocation of light eventually leads to a conscious recoiling from it. For just a little of the reflected light of sheer reality is hard to bear and the trade-in involves letting go of the known and familiar that the heart holds dear. It is like scrambling up a tall tree to pluck fruit from the outermost branches when the less supportive limbs sway about and suddenly there is the shock of vertigo and a hasty retreat to the limitations of terra firma.

Rushing into the light is a startling experience – personal identity has been built up over a long period of time and the apparent loss is too daunting. This pursuit of spiritual freedom has to be made steadily, building a new identity along the way and releasing consciousness step by step from the pleasure/pain continuum that qualifies the personality. The image of freedom aspired towards is constricted by the limitations of human imagination and social conditioning. But real freedom is a state of consciousness that characterises another kingdom of nature, and as such it is freedom that is unconditioned by that which has been known – it is the attainment of complete detachment from all that is loved and cherished in the manifested world. Ultimately, it is release from the most subtle forms of selfishness, the personal gravity that ties each of us to the known and familiar. The release from this is at once both freedom's allure and its terror. There is little point in giving up all of what we know and feel ourselves to be unless what we have in sight is more purposeful than the ethereal dream of the mystic. Better to live in the known world with a sense of purpose, even if a selfish one, than suspended in a void, even if a lighted one.

Without purpose the sense of self is lost, and it is only right to totally exchange the old ways for the new as a greater purpose is found – one that fulfils a sense of universal need and is yet both comprehensible and realistically attainable. Old identities have to be exchanged for new ones progressively – in tandem with a growing sense of spiritual purpose. Incrementally building this greater sense of purpose into humanity is the current aim of the spiritual Hierarchy and its success can be seen in the millions who are awakening to social responsibilities and the need of the greater whole. Vast swathes of the general public are discovering a greater life purpose, taking on more responsibility for others and so demonstrating that individual identity is expanding to include the recognition of oneself in others.

Again the process can be described in terms of the tree, only in this case the analogy of climbing it to pluck fruit for oneself changes to that of becoming the tree itself – not what can be grasped for the self now, but what can be produced for others. The tree of life is depicted with the roots above and the flowering leaves downwards. In the ego's tiny tree of life, the same symbolic presentation holds true – the roots being found on the higher planes where unconditional love permeates the whole kingdom. This love is drawn upon and flowers forth into objectivity, producing fruit on the physical plane through the radiant forces of beauty, goodness and truth.

The tree is a beautiful symbol of spirituality and reflecting on its qualities brings understanding of the nature of impersonal service. In the tree we see strength and beauty, individuality, yet uniformity. Trees have nobility, endurance and stability. The woods and forests of the world are the very lungs of the planet; they purify the atmosphere and give food, shelter and protection from danger. The higher octaves of all these qualities are to be seen in spiritual groups. The disciple's roots are to be found on buddhic levels as part of a spiritual eco-system comprised of soul groups. From here the love, strength and wisdom of divinity is drawn upon and they flow down and flower into expression in the material world.

In the Alice Bailey writings, the symbol of the reversed tree is used to facilitate integration into an Ashram. It is said to promote group feeling...and dissipation of glamour through light. It runs as follows:

"A line of fire between two blazing points. A stream of water blue – again a line – emerging from the earth – and ending in the ocean. A tree with root above and flowers below.

Out of the fire, and always at the midway point, appears the eye of God (Shiva). Upon the stream, between the two extremes, there floats the eye of vision – a thread of light unites the two.

*Deep in the tree, between the root and flowers, the eye again is seen. The eye that knows, the eye that sees, the directing eye – one made of fire, one fluid as the sea, and two which look from here to there. Fire, water and the earth – all need the vital air. The air is life. The air is God."*¹

Steady reflection on this formula produces a group inclusiveness and united group sensitivity. It develops a response outwards to the world of humanity and a response inwards to the Hierarchy

The theme of this formula is *Creation in the Light*, and this is clearly indicated by the references made to the eye. The eye of fire is the organ of Divine Will through whose directed gaze the power flows outward to the created whole. The eye of vision is related to the group sensitivity of the soul, the conscious observer. And the eye that knows refers to the server in the outer world, who works with the energy of love-wisdom as it passes through the right eye, and mental coordinating power as it is transmitted by the left. Creation in the light and the eye of vision is something we associate with Taurus of course. The illumination available in this sign enables the serving chela to stand detached from the last traces of all that subtly feeds the lower ego, and to work instead with loving impersonality in the light of spiritual brotherhood.

To stand detached allows us to see and appreciate those around us more fully and to meet at a creative point of tension. Here, communication is at its most powerful and joyful – it is relationship in an atmosphere of love and freedom with ‘no strings attached’. This is the wonder of group work where as detached sparks in the one flame, all travel in the same direction and spiritually sustain one another through the medium of the group aura. The nature of spiritual communication, be it silent or vocal, is in itself joyful. This is because spiritual communication relays the plan of love and light and the energy of vision, which lifts the eyes above the personality to contact the energy of the future. It brings the assurance that, despite the suffering in the world, a glorious future awaits humanity and it is a privilege to participate in materialising it on earth. When this is known beyond all doubt we cannot help but be joyful.

Naturally it is difficult at first to clear the mind sufficiently to be able to receive the light of the intuition radiating throughout the group aura. In daily life the concrete mind seems to rule supreme, and often in meditation, all kinds of weird and wonderful thoughts intrude, circulating in a meaningless array of incidental and self-referencing images. When the fire of the lower, concrete mind burns fiercely, these thoughts can become inflamed and spoil any hope of connecting to any font of wisdom. Yet by linking consciously with others in group work, the combined thoughtform of the group's particular service is so powerful that its light obliterates those private little fires on the lower mental plane. In their place, there are the ideas that carry the energy of the Plan, with the vibration of Love emanating from the group heart holding them intact and available to all within the aura of the group. The greater the absorption in the spirit of the group work is, the greater will be the clarity with which these group ideas are seen.

The line of communication, the group antahkarana, grows in strength through each person's meditation, permitting a two-way traffic of mutual enrichment of both the group and each individual. Precipitating the energy touched in meditation so that it percolates through to the physical brain is not always an immediate process though, as this is determined by the degree of soul alignment that has been

attained, and so the time element enters in and group intuitions may come at a later stage. But with a conscious adoption of group work, the character of meditation starts to change. Fleeting contacts are made with an energy that has a familiar vibration, but not identical to that which has come to be recognised as that of the soul; it seems to be connected to a greater source of which the soul is a part in the same way that a personality forms part of a family group on the physical plane. As a clearer registration of this group impression is sought during meditation, we can imagine the familiar spiritual tones, like a musical chord, suffused in light faintly striking the inner senses to which spiritual sound we discover we are adding our own note, the note of the soul. In time it creates a lighted energy flow and a rhythm of being that prepares the way to direct telepathic rapport. It conditions thinking in a way that provides a glimpse of what true group consciousness will be like.

Despite unification on the higher mental plane, individuality is never lost in group consciousness, for the light of individual experience adds to the pool of wisdom and is a valuable group asset. The time comes however, when knowledge for knowledge's sake is no longer sought because life in form has taught all its lessons and this light of experience has been added to the incoming flow of love from the Hierarchy. The combination of these lights produces wisdom and skill in service and helps the disciple to become receptive to Hierarchical ideas held before the group, to assimilate and then build thoughtforms of service to humanity. Such true ideas are points of energy that carry a transformative charge, often arriving with a rush of energy before entering the mind and keying the consciousness up to a new point of tension. Everything is seen in a slightly different way from thereon. Though each shift in consciousness may be hardly perceptible, a steady succession of these impacts sees the disciple literally renewing himself and therefore the pattern of relationships that he has formed within the three worlds.

Spiritual groups have the capacity to let in specialised energies that can rearrange force patterns within the consciousness of humanity and thus play a major part in creating right human relationships and restoring the Plan on earth. This process is augmented each year at the full moon in Taurus at the time of the Wesak Festival. Through the ceremony and ritual of a host of spiritual beings, a tremendous flood of energy surges throughout the planetary ethers. The Buddha and the Christ work together and pour their blessing out on earth. It is our privilege to work together to help distribute this energy to humanity. In the process these forces of enlightenment will circulate throughout the group aura charging it with the impersonal qualities of goodness, beauty and truth that form our higher identity and connect us to the kingdom of souls. Taurus accelerates progress towards the greater reality that we know lies beyond the human condition and towards which we ardently aspire in group formation. And as the joy of vision that Taurus bestows breaks forth at this time, a steady immovable will is activated that propels us onwards while yet anchoring our service.