

WESAK FESTIVAL – TAURUS FULL MOON

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Christine Morgan

Welcome to the celebration of Wesak. For those who are new to these events, our festival meetings are organized according to the rhythm of the full moon, and to the Sun's passage through the astrological signs of the zodiac. The Alice Bailey teachings advise that the Festival of Wesak is held on the day of the full moon when the Sun is in Taurus, which coincides this year with the worldwide Buddhist celebration. The religion of the coming age will be built around periods of the full moon, particularly the approaches made at the time of the Wesak full moon and the full moon of June, as well as during solar or lunar eclipses - a lunar eclipse occurring when the earth comes between the sun and the moon. And we will be experiencing a lunar eclipse shortly before the peak of the full moon – so it's a rather potent experience for us all in the build up to the peak of the full moon.

Let us start by taking a few moments of quiet before sounding the mantram, the Gayatri:

O Thou Who givest sustenance to the universe
From Whom all things proceed,
To Whom all things return.
Unveil to us the face of the true spiritual sun
Hidden by a disc of golden light
That we may know the truth
And do our whole duty
As we journey to Thy sacred Feet.
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At this high point of the spiritual year in a valley in the Himalayas the Buddha is said to act as a divine emissary for the head of our planetary scheme, Sanat Kumara, carrying His divine force to the planetary centre of Love, the Spiritual Hierarchy, and from there on to humanity. This transmission is facilitated by the alignment between sun, earth and moon which provides an open pathway for spiritual energies to permeate human consciousness. At the peak of the full moon, the Buddha hovers overhead before the assembled Hierarchy with Christ receiving the Blessing of Divine Will from the Buddha on behalf of humanity. This close co-operation between the Buddha and the Christ is symbolic of the bridging of East and West and it has led to the Wesak Festival being described as "*the greatest event upon our planet, from the standpoint of the spiritual verities, and the one which has the greatest effect upon the human race*".¹

This profound statement highlights the opportunity before us to strengthen the vital bridge between East and West, as well as the bridge between humanity and divinity, of course. The Festival of the Buddha brings the forces of enlightenment closer to humanity, thereby providing the stimulus for the expression of compassion which characterises those who see life clearly and are therefore able to identify with the suffering of all sentient beings. The sign of Taurus in which the festival is held is also connected with desire and will, which could be said to embody both the

worst and the best of human motives and achievements. For humanity as a whole the default position has been the cultivation of desire, a pleasurable acquiescence in its satisfaction – and the experience of suffering as the inevitable consequence of this unredeemed habit of living.

But Wesak offers us all a reminder that this is only the surface of earthly reality. The deeper truth it holds is the fact of transcendence, of enlightenment and of a life of unlimited empathy motivated by a heart and mind that knows compassion in the deepest and most selfless sense. Our thoughts in recent months have been caught up, or should I say, preoccupied with the invasion of Ukraine, and the terrible suffering that is being experienced there, as well as in the long-standing conflicts in other parts of the world too. Then we have the encroaching issues of the climate change crisis, tensions in international relations and concerns over nuclear proliferation. Through the ever-increasing efficiency of the world communication networks, people around the world have been participating in these crises emotionally and mentally, and we are all watching together with dismay, the sad state of planetary affairs.

It is quite difficult to observe these crises analytically and impartially, for we are dependent on how the information is conveyed to us, from which source and by what media. Often it is filtered through political lenses and distorted by propaganda, but in order to see all this clearly, it is vital to practise detached observation as Buddha taught and being inspired by His teaching, we know that the eye has to see beyond the fray. Through taking this higher stance, it becomes possible to transmit the Light, Love and Will to Good which is so abundantly available, particularly at this most important celebration of the spiritual year.

In this great ceremonial ritual of Wesak, we are reminded that the Great Ones – The Buddha, the Christ, the Lord of the World – have never left humanity alone and unaided, and the promise of a great and glorious future awaits each one of us by dint of these and other exalted spiritual lives who have chosen to remain on earth to serve divine evolutionary purpose. The Buddha and the Christ, the Masters of the Wisdom, initiates, and disciples of all degrees are living examples that the Wesak Festival is above all, a Festival of Compassion and of Divine protection. By Their presence and through the redemptive energies They can wield, They stand ready to irradiate human consciousness wherever and whenever the opportunity arises.

The Buddha's great teaching was, of course, the cessation of suffering by treading the noble eight-fold path. These steps have been translated for us as right belief, right intentions, right speech, right actions, right living, right endeavour, right mindedness and right concentration or contemplation. As with all enduring spiritual truths or wisdom, they can be read and applied at different levels of consciousness, and they indicate courses of action that require lifetimes of practical application for results to be fully achieved. For instance, a different and higher perspective on Compassion is given in *The Voice of Silence*, where it is said to be “no attribute” but is instead “the Law of Laws – eternal Harmony... the law of Love eternal.” In a footnote we are advised that this “compassion” is “an abstract, impersonal law whose nature, being absolute Harmony, is thrown into confusion by discord, suffering and sin”. In this sense compassion then becomes a point of dynamic tension which holds all things in equilibrium.

As the Buddha's compassion for all sentient beings led Him to pursue a path which could end all suffering, so another great sage, Patanjali, saw compassion as a state of feeling which,

together with tenderness and dispassion, enables us to forge a true union with others through one pointed meditation. Through compassion, one enters and suffers with one's brother or sister. By adapting one's vibration to respond to another's need all that is taking place in their heart can be shared. This is done not through an emotional response but through the keying up of one's own vibration to respond to the love nature of the soul. Through that unifying principle all hearts everywhere lie open to us. Through tenderness, compassion is translated into practical expression, while through *dispassion*, we develop a mental quality which leads to inclusiveness and unity with others, free from the desire which binds and imprisons. Patanjali suggests that compassion embraces the physical plane as well as the mental and emotional planes because it leads to the working out into physical manifestation of the two other states. *It is the practical ability to identify oneself with another in all the three world conditions.*²

The quality of compassion and identification with others was demonstrated to the highest degree by the Buddha. Despite being born into royalty, wealth and privilege, he became acutely aware of the suffering all around him and sought to understand the cause. He questioned the transience of life and after entering into meditation and successfully delving into the world of meaning and cause, He gave out to humanity teachings which remain valid to this day. They can be used as a basis for our experimentation, experience and expression until we, too, can touch the plane of buddhi and be released from the sense of separation that characterises the human kingdom. Thousands of years after His incarnation, the great need of our time continues to be one of enlightenment, of the development of the intuition which: “knows instead of knowing about; it knows and without any medium, the oneness of all things, and the cycles of becoming, large and small, by which that Unity, in a vast field of diversity, in some way achieves its own high purposes”.³

The Buddha used His mind as an inner eye to find the truth He was seeking. And the light which irradiated His consciousness revealed simple truths about the human condition. He summarised this into the well-known Four Noble Truths, paraphrased as “Cease to identify yourselves with material things; gain a proper sense of the spiritual values; cease regarding possessions and earthly existence as of major importance; follow the Noble Eight-fold Path which is the path of right relations—right relations to God and to each other—and thus be happy”.⁴ What seems to stand out here is the instruction to cease “to regard earthly existence as of major importance”. Our understanding of reality and identity needs to be reoriented to the universal love, light and purpose which infuse our true Being. Our sense both of Divine compassion and the demonstration of our common humanity leads us to question how we can shape the future so that a reordering in the nature of religious life can take place, one in which the rhythmic approach at the time of the full moon forms part of this foundation.

This brings us to a statement on the significance of the Wesak Festival in *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, where we read that there is an increasing emphasis being given in the West by esotericists to the Full Moon of May, the Festival of the Buddha:

“There have been two main reasons why, since 1900, this effort has been made. One was the desire on the part of the Hierarchy to bring to the attention of the public the fact of the two Avatars, the Buddha and the Christ, both upon the second Ray of Love-Wisdom, Who were the first of our humanity to come forth as human-divine Avatars and to embody in

Themselves certain cosmic Principles and give them form. The Buddha embodied the Principle of Light, and because of this illumination, humanity was enabled to recognise Christ, Who embodied the still greater Principle of Love. The Buddha demonstrated the consummation of substance-matter as the medium of Light, hence His title of the 'Illumined One.' Christ embodied the underlying energy of Consciousness...and these two together present one perfect Whole. The second reason was to initiate... the theme of the new world religion. We are given a vision of this future religion as one which "will eventually underlie all religious observances, colour all approaches to the divine centre of spiritual life, give the clue to all healing processes, and—using light scientifically—govern all techniques for bringing about conscious unity and relationship between a man and his soul, and between humanity and the Hierarchy."⁵

Working in the influences of the sign of Taurus, perhaps we can see this vision slowly materialising. The selfish will of humanity, symbolised in this sign by the Bull rushing recklessly forward, is tempered by those who work unceasingly for increased enlightenment in all departments of human endeavour. If we are to counteract the selfish will which leads to destruction and disintegration, whether national or individual, we need to mobilise the Will which is based on altruism, and which can only safely be wielded by those who Love. Human suffering caused by the "bull of desire" has to be consciously re-directed into a fiery aspiration and to a spiritual will – a will that leads to "the mountain of vision and initiation" in a new era of goodwill.

We work towards this new era by invoking the Light bearers – the Masters of the Wisdom who, in turn, invoke "the Lights which carry out the Will of God". These spiritual lives stand ready for a great "act of evocation" to temporarily work more closely with humanity until "a powerful earthly Hierarchy will factually, externally and in reality hold sway on Earth".⁶ As part of the invocation-evocation process of the Wesak ceremony, it is said that when the Buddha reaches the site of the ritual, a great mantram, used only once a year, at the Festival, is intoned by the Christ... This Invocation sets up a great vibration or thought current which is of such potency that it reaches up from the group of aspirants, disciples or initiates who employ it, to God Himself. It marks the supreme moment of intensive spiritual effort throughout the entire year, and the spiritual vitalisation of humanity and the spiritual effects last throughout the succeeding months.

The New Group of World Servers, who are responsive *as souls* in varying degrees to these higher influences, collectively act as an organ of vision for humanity and upon them the illuminating rays of Taurus constantly shine. Taurus is said to hide the entire secret of divine purpose and reveals it by touching and opening the eye of light in those who are ready to use that which it conveys for the greater good. The group is symbolized by the bull of Taurus rushing forward towards divinity and leaving a trail of light in its wake to illumine the way for those who follow. Together this group of servers, like their elder brothers, are "agents of revelation" and all who serve and love their fellowmen *as souls* are part of this group process.

As the time of the full moon approaches, the registration of the Wesak energies usher in a mounting spiritual tension. This period is a "waiting activity" – reflecting a process that takes place in the Centre where the Will of God is known – a silent gathering of power that occurs as purpose is concentrated prior to transmission. On our own level, we repeat the process, contemplating the

latent power to be released through the alignment between ourselves and the spiritual Hierarchy, the Christ, the Buddha and the Lord of the World. During this gathering process, we can reflect on the divine power that will be circulated and visualize the heart centres of millions of people awakening and coming into alignment with the planetary heart centre, and the beauty and order that will unfold in human civilization as a result. To materialize this vision of the future and help make of it a reality, we have to act whole-heartedly in the present without calculation or reservation, making sure that the only light that guides our vision is the light of compassion and unity.

So, now it is time to go into meditation, making a conscious approach to the higher sources of truth and tapping into the bountiful, redeeming light of the inner planes. Holding our minds open to these forces of enlightenment, we work to spiritually rejuvenate our world. We visualize the energies of Wesak growing and the Christ and the Buddha preparing to transmit those potencies that will condition the planet throughout the year ahead. As brothers of revelation their work continues to lift a ravaged world up towards the realm of truth and beauty. Our co-operation in meditation forms an essential part of the hierarchical chain, and through transmuted desire and a silent, fiery aspiration, the light of Wesak is shed abroad, in our hearts through our group, and throughout the world.

We'll use the keynote for the disciple in the sign of Taurus, *I see and when the eye is opened, all is Light.*

References:

- 1 Wesak : Techniques of Spiritual Contact:
- 2 The Light of the Soul, p.288
- 3 Studies in the Middle Way. C. Humphries.
- 4 The Externalisation of the Hierarchy, p.463
- 5 Ibid. p347/8
- 6 The Rays and the Initiations p136.