

Wesak Festival in Taurus, London, April 2018

Wesak, the Path of Love

Simon Marlow

Good afternoon dear friends, and welcome to our discipline of consecrated group thought that will culminate in our Wesak meditation together today for the full moon in Taurus. This of course is only a partial culmination, for in reality the climax of this spiritual opportunity will occur at the time of the full moon early tomorrow morning (at two minutes to two BST). This is when all active members of the world esoteric group and the spiritual hierarchy both on the external material planes as well as on the inner abstract dimensions of divine will and divine love, fuse together in one gigantic effort of love-inspired will-directed service. What a privilege we have in being able to participate consciously in this annual planetary act of supreme service – and what a responsibility too!

There are several ways in which we can get an idea of the spiritual significance of the Wesak Festival. The first is to realise that it embodies perhaps the greatest tradition of the Buddhist Path. For this festival has been annually celebrated for well over 2000 years as a conscious commemoration of Gautama the Buddha's birth, his enlightenment at the age of 33, his life's work of spreading the teachings which sprang from his unique spiritual insights, and his death in old age when it is believed he passed into the state of Nirvana, having shattered the chains of desire and broken the wheel of rebirth.

Another way is for us to note how vitally important the Tibetan considered the Wesak opportunity to be. Over the years when he was communicating through Alice Bailey, he wrote several letters to his group of disciples in which he goes into great detail about the unique opportunities of Wesak and of the ways in which they could participate consciously and meaningfully in the process.

For example in his Wesak message of 1940, he wrote: "Many people the world over have for years been trained to recognise ... the importance of the Wesak Festival..., because it not only objectively links the major Eastern religion with the major Western faith, but because it esoterically provides the key to the open door between Shamballa and the Hierarchy, between the purpose of God (still unidentified by man, owing to his relatively low stage of evolution which makes it beyond human comprehension at present) and the method of God, which is love; it provides also the link between the Buddha, temporarily embodying will-wisdom, and the Christ, embodying love-wisdom, and also between humanity, focussed in consciousness through the Christ, and the Hierarchy, focussed in consciousness through the Buddha."[\[1\]](#)

Later in 1946 he writes: "This is an intensely practical message and calls for your renewed pledge to serve humanity and to find your way into an Ashram where that service may be directed. It calls for sacrifice until it hurts, and where it touches you the most; it calls for a joyous sense of unity with that station of power and light which we call the Hierarchy

and which stands ready – as never before – to share with humanity that power and that light to the limit of human capacity to use it.”[\[2\]](#)

The third method is the way of straight knowledge, the way of the intuition, which is a completely reliable identifier of truth. Through the awakened intuition we can directly experience the reality of what the Tibetan was describing in words. Until this awakening happens though, this method is not open to us and we have to rely on the testimony of others as it evokes our intellectual assent, as it rings ever louder with truth in our hearts and minds, and as it begins to throw light upon the mysteries of the human condition and the opportunities for planetary transformation which our present time offers. We learn in particular to acknowledge the Buddha’s great insight that incorrect desire is the cause of all suffering, and that the way to end suffering is embodied in his noble eightfold path of right belief, right intentions, right speech, right actions, right living, right endeavour, right-mindedness and right concentration. In our own time, this has been wonderfully synthesised for us by the Tibetan into the science of Right Human Relationships, which as everyone can see is vital for a world of creativity, progress and peace.

So let us pause now for a few moments of silent reflection and then we will say together the keynote for the disciple in the sign of Taurus:

I see, and when the eye is opened all is light

This seed thought has many layers of meaning, but it is worth pointing out how it is particularly indicative of the unfolding intuition. As souls physically incarnating in the material world of the great dualities we need two physical eyes to be able to see and navigate our way around safely and with purpose. But the intuition operates beyond the material worlds of duality and the single eye of the opened intuition reveals the truth. As the Tibetan expresses it: “The light of the intuition unfolds before the vision of the soul within the personality, the nature of God and the unity of the Whole.”[\[3\]](#) Elsewhere he writes that: “Intuition is light itself, and when it is functioning, the world is seen as light and the light bodies of all forms become gradually apparent. This brings with it the ability to contact the light centre in all forms, and thus again an essential relationship is established and the sense of superiority and separateness recedes into the background.”[\[4\]](#) So we can see that one of the underlying purposes of the Wesak festival is to bring this reality of the oneness of all life increasingly to human attention. Indeed, much that has happened in the life of humanity in the past one hundred years or so can actually be seen as an externalisation of this profound sense of unity. And this has been made more obvious by the obstacles which have been thrown into its process of manifestation.

One of the aspects of Wesak that has come to the fore in our present time is the primary reality of the relationship between the Buddha and the Christ. These two great individualities, these two great elder brothers of humanity, are united together in service not just to humanity, not just to all life in the biosphere, but also to those multitudes of lives of the different hierarchies about which we read in, for example, Alice Bailey’s “A Treatise on Cosmic Fire” and about which most of us have not yet developed the slightest

experience. Yet in their totality, all these different groups of lives make up the body of manifestation of our planetary Logos and are all subject in one way or another to the evolutionary impulse to manifest light to an ever greater degree. Let us remember that it is the destiny of the human kingdom, to become a great station of light that “will serve not only the planet, and not only our particular solar system, but the seven systems of which ours is one.”^[5] The exploration of space and the search for exo-planets is perhaps the first glimmer of the materialising of this underlying planetary purpose.

One of the most heartening things that has happened over the last couple of centuries is how the religious outer expressions that are the legacy of these two great beings – Buddhism and Christianity – have progressed from a crystallised position of non-comprehending suspicion to a state of great mutual respect and a recognition of the integrity of their different philosophies. And it is a mark of the success of this planned confluence that increasing numbers of people are now coming to see them as complementary and no longer mutually exclusive descriptors of reality.

So what can we do to prepare ourselves to participate consciously in this great festival? Perhaps we have already been preparing in our hearts and minds over the last few days, creating that condition of spiritual tranquillity in the midst of the difficulties and challenges of our personal lives and the chaotic kaleidoscope of global events in our present time. The state of compassionate detachment is so important, for it enables consciousness to reach upward towards the abstract worlds of the spiritual triad and intuit the immediate requirements of the Plan. This is a vital prerequisite for formulating those initiatives in the outer worlds that are in line with and therefore empowered by that great energy of evolution which we call the Plan.

On the subject of the Plan it is interesting to note that in the past it was said, and rightly so I believe, that Roosevelt’s great spiritual insight which he called the Four Freedoms – a real example of the intuition at work, by the way – embodied the highest understanding of the Plan that humanity is capable of achieving. Let us remind ourselves how Roosevelt formulated these four freedoms in 1941 in the darkest days of the 2nd world war. He said:

“In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression – everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way – everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want – which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants – everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear – which, translated into world terms, means a worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbour—anywhere in the world.

Straight away we can see that these are still aspirational statements. The freedoms of religion, of speech and assembly are still being seriously trampled on in many parts of the world. Fear is still a prevalently powerful emotion, not just because of the continued existence of excessive armaments and the competing personalities of powerful nations, not just because of the unresolved problems of the Middle East, not just because of the new reality of cyber warfare and the real threat of the militarisation of space, but more generally as an insidious and debilitating fear of what the future might bring. I am sure we have all experienced how this can suffocate joy and stifle initiative.

Freedom from want is perhaps the one with the greatest success record. A paper published online in 'Our world in Data' titled "Global Extreme Poverty"[\[6\]](#) by Max Roser and Esteban Ortiz-Ospina show conclusively how levels of absolute poverty are declining. They write:

"The available long-run evidence shows that in the past, only a small elite enjoyed living conditions that would not be described as 'extreme poverty' today. But with the onset of industrialization and rising productivity, the share of people living in extreme poverty started to decrease. Accordingly, the share of people in extreme poverty has decreased continuously over the course of the last two centuries. This is surely one of the most remarkable achievements of humankind.

"Closely linked to this improvement in material living conditions is the improvement of global health and the expansion of global education that we have seen over these last two centuries...

"During the first half of the last century, the growth of the world population caused the absolute number of poor people in the world to increase, even though the share of people in poverty was going down. After around 1970, the decrease in poverty rates became so steep that the absolute number of people living in extreme poverty started falling as well. This trend of decreasing poverty – both in absolute numbers and as a share of the world population – has been a constant during the last three decades."

I believe this is just one among very many good counters to the pessimistic view of humanity's future that quite a number seem to share these days.

Even though these Four Freedoms are not yet grounded realities for the human race, the tireless work of various United Nations organisations, dedicated international statesmen, and many NGOs continue to hold them as visionary goals before the eyes of humanity – and more importantly continue to work for their implementation wherever opportunity arises.

Yet wonderfully though, this laudable intuition of the Plan is now being augmented by the current understanding of the importance of the integrity and health of the natural world. It seems to me that humanity's growing sense of responsibility is showing a deeper understanding of the Plan, widening beyond the issues of human welfare to now include the needs of the entire biosphere and the myriad of life forms which it sustains. This is a most encouraging sign and, even though there is a large measure of self-interest present, it indicates that humanity is taking a major step on the path of a global responsibility and ceasing to be quite so anthropocentric about it all.

So the question again arises for us today: In what way can we contribute and participate in the continuing work of the gradual enlightenment of humanity, of helping it to understand the simple message of the Buddha about the necessity to transmute desire?

Perhaps the answer comes most succinctly and powerfully in the Tibetan's words, that we should: "love more than you have ever believed was possible"[\[7\]](#). This is such an arresting statement. For how can we 'love more' when love is infinite? A moment's reflection will tell us that it refers not to love itself, but to all the issues of hindrances and obstacles in the personality which slow down, block even, the flow of love from the soul out into our environments. So it would be good to end by exploring what this means for us today.

Well firstly, perhaps the best display of practical love we can know and participate in is embodied in the work of a dedicated group, such as we are today, where the integrity of group consciousness, group purpose, group activity and group service can pave the way for miraculous results. I've often thought that the example of a symphony orchestra preparing to perform is a more homely illustration of the profundity and necessity of group work. The different players are chattering away, or practising a difficult passage or sending text messages or arguing. It is chaotic. Yet when the conductor, the magician with his white wand, brings them together, there is a complete change. Order appears, group purpose, group beauty replaces the previous personality chaos. Yet the people are the same. But this time each contributes to the group enterprise to the best of their ability, not losing any sense of individuality or of their own worth, utilising to the full their personal talents, yet willingly subordinating their personal will to the group will, and finding true fulfilment in doing so.

On a more personal level, we have to look at how love flows through our own vehicles. The responsibility of letting this happen is our own and nobody else's. We have to deal with our personalities, sometimes compliant – and often rebellious! We have to transmute our vices into virtues, and our desires into selfless love.

The different aspects of the personality each require attention. The intellect – that wonderful instrument of discrimination – can also be a cruel agent of the sense of separateness. We perhaps normally think in terms of the heart as the seat of love and the mind as the agent of thought. Perhaps we can get a better perspective of the ideal state if we can teach ourselves to think with the heart and love with the mind. This apparent reversal of roles will automatically create inclusive attitudes, and prevent any sense of separateness from invading our consciousness.

The emotions are a major problem for all humanity being the seat of desire, and the responsibility of those of us on the path to deal with them promptly and properly is obvious. For well done it will create a way of light for increasing numbers of people to tread towards the soul. Badly done or not done at all, we simply add to the problem. Swept this way and that by desires we eventually discover the desire to be desireless. This can only eventuate as we grow in selflessness. The effort to achieve this – a supreme effort, indeed – reveals that desire is actually embryonic Will, and that Will is 'essential, perfect love'.

Finally of course, all this redemptive work has to be grounded in the physical body whose practical activity and gradually growing radiance will touch and lift all lives in our environment.

I came across a beautiful piece of advice about how to tread the path of love in Aldous Huxley's great book "The Perennial Philosophy". Here he tells the story of Jean Pierre Camus asking the Bishop of Geneva what we must do to attain perfection. "You must love God with all your heart," he answered, "and your neighbour as yourself." "I did not ask wherein perfection lies," Camus rejoined, "but how to attain it." "Charity," he said again, "that is both the means and the end, the only way by which we can reach that perfection which is, after all, but Charity itself. . . . Just as the soul is the life of the body, so charity is the life of the soul."

"I know all that," I said. "But I want to know how one is to love God with all one's heart and one's neighbour as oneself." But again he answered, "We must love God with all our hearts, and our neighbour as ourselves." "I am no further than I was," I replied. "Tell me how to acquire such love." "The best way, the shortest and easiest way of loving God with all one's heart is to love Him wholly and heartily!"

He would give no other answer. At last, however, the Bishop said, "There are many besides you who want me to tell them of methods and systems and secret ways of becoming perfect, and I can only tell them that the sole secret is a hearty love of God, and the only way of attaining that love is by loving.

"You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working; and just so you learn to love God and man by loving. All those who think to learn in any other way deceive themselves. If you want to love God, go on loving Him more and more. Begin as a mere apprentice, and the very power of love will lead you on to become a master in the art. Those who have made most progress will continually press on, never believing themselves to have reached their end; for charity should go on increasing until we draw our last breath."

So now let us give practical expression to the idea of thinking with the heart and loving with the mind as we go into our meditation together.

[1] [The Externalisation of the Hierarchy](#), p. 227

[2] [Ibid.](#), p. 557

[3] [Glamour: A World Problem](#), p. 206

[4] [Ibid.](#), p. 3

[5] [Esoteric Psychology II](#), p. 217

[6] [Our World in data](#)

[7] [Discipleship in the New Age I](#), p. 100