

World Religion in a New Era

by Alice A. Bailey

The text of this booklet is adapted from two books by Alice A. Bailey—*The Reappearance of the Christ* and *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, both published by Lucis Publishing Co., New York and Lucis Press Ltd., London. Although these books were published before 1960, the ideas which they encompass, concerning the evolving spirit of humanity as it is expressed through religious institutions and movements, continue to be relevant. Indeed, these ideas have come into sharper focus, as traditional structures have come under increasing strain in the twenty-first century, and in response, people of goodwill in every faith have sought to build bridges to those of other faiths. The booklet was originally published under the title “The New World Religion”. This phrase, which appears a number of times throughout the text, is not intended to describe the emergence of a new institution or organisation, but rather a new, universal approach to the religious spirit, centered around three fundamental truths: the existence of a Spiritual Hierarchy; approaching divinity through the science of invocation and evocation; and that the starry heavens and planets are manifestations of great spiritual lives.

Religion is the name given to the invocative appeal of humanity and the evocative response of the greater Life to that cry.

The truly religious spirit is more fundamentally alive today than at any previous time. Everywhere people are ready for the light and expectant of a new revelation.

Only great and fundamental principles of living can really meet mankind's need. Religion in the new age must be based on truths which are universally accepted. These are:

1. The fact of God, both transcendent and immanent.
2. Humanity's relationship to God; we are all "children of the one father."
3. The fact of immortality and of eternal persistence, arising from humanity's essential divinity.
4. The Continuity of Revelation and the Divine Approaches; God has never left Himself without witness.
5. The fact of our relationship with each other, or of human brotherhood.
6. The fact of the Path to God, trodden down the ages by mystics, occultists and saints of every religious faith.

The source of all the great world religions and philosophies is the spiritual Hierarchy of the planet, whose members are called the custodians of the divine Plan.

Today another great approach of God to Humanity, a new revelation, is possible. Humanity awaits the reappearance of the world teacher, head of the spiritual Hierarchy, known as the Christ in the West and the Lord Maitreya in the East, and recognised by many names—Messiah, Imam Mahdi, Zarathustra—in the different world religions.

The concept of a world religion and the fusion of faiths is now a field of discussion. In the future world all people of spiritual inclination and intention will keep the same holy days, pooling their spiritual resources in a united and simultaneous spiritual invocation.

God works in many ways, through many faiths and religious agencies. The universal platform of the new world religion will be built by emphasising essential doctrines and the unity and fellowship of the spirit.

The New World Religion

Human beings everywhere are searching for spiritual release and truth, and the truly religious spirit is more fundamentally alive than at any previous time. The ferment and conflict in the world has permeated the churches; enlightened religious thinkers are seeking an end to age-old conflicts between differing sects, and are searching for the living reality behind the outer forms. Orthodoxy in the world religions is rapidly falling into the background, while we are undoubtedly approaching nearer to the central spiritual reality.

Some of the questions that are being asked by spiritual people, both within and outside the churches and in all faiths, can be expressed as follows:

- Why has the church been unable to arrest the overpowering expression of evil, as evidenced in the last world war?
- Why has religion proved inadequate to the need of humanity?
- Why have so many leaders of the religious world proved themselves incompetent to aid in the solution of the world problems?
- Why, as exponents of the God of Love, have Christian teachers been unable to arrest the unparalleled growth of hate in the world today?
- Why have eastern religious teachers, custodians of a spiritual psychology and the art of individual unfoldment, been unable to apply this wisdom to raising their peoples from starvation, poverty and degraded living?
- Why do so many young people refuse to go to church and lack interest in accepting the doctrines presented for their belief?
- Why do so many new cults arise and attract the people away from orthodox organisations of a religious nature?
- Why is there a growing emphasis in the West upon the Eastern theologies, upon the various yogas, upon Buddhist teachings and oriental faiths?
- What is wrong with our presentation of the spiritual realities and the truths of the ages?

Many answers can be given. The most important one is that *the presentation of divine truth*, as given by the churches in the West and by the teachers in the East, *has not kept pace with the unfolding intellect of the human spirit*. The same old forms of words and of ideas are still all too often handed out to the enquirer and they do not satisfy their mind nor do they meet practical need in a most difficult world. The enquirer is asked to give unquestioning belief but not to understand, and to accept the interpretations and the affirmations of other human minds who claim that they do understand and that they have the truth. He does not believe that their minds and their interpretations are any better than his.

It is not the evil rampant in the world today which is hindering the revelation and hindering the unfoldment of the spiritual life. It is the failure of the religious organisations throughout the world to preserve the truth in its purity and to avoid the fanatical idea that anyone's individual interpretation of the truth must necessarily be the only and correct one. In the language of Christianity: *The church today is the tomb of the Christ and the stone of theology has been rolled to the door of the sepulchre*.

There is however, no point in attacking Christianity. Christianity cannot rightly be attacked; *it is an expression—in essence, if not yet entirely factual—of the love of God, immanent in His created universe*.

Churchianity has, however, laid itself wide open to attack, and the mass of thinking people are aware of this; unfortunately, these thinking people are still a minority within the churches. Nevertheless, it is this thinking minority which, when it is a majority, will spell the doom of churchianity and endorse the spread of the true teaching of the Christ.

The question arises whether Christ would be at home in the churches if He walked again among men. The rituals and the ceremonies, the pomp and the vestments, the candles and the gold and silver, the graded order of popes, cardinals, archbishops, canons and ordinary rectors, pastors and clergy would seemingly have small interest for the simple Son of God, Who—when on earth—had nowhere to lay His head.

How can the starving children of the world be salvaged when pleas go out for money to build cathedrals and erect more churches when in many parts of the world the existent churches often stand nearly empty? How can the spiritual and intellectual needs of the people be met when the theological seminaries send out young men to guide humanity who are grounded largely in the past interpretations? Is it not possible that the Christ may regard the separative life of the churches and the arrogance of the theologians as wrong and undesirable—dividing (as they have) the world into believer and unbeliever, into Christian and heathen, into the so-called enlightened and the so-called benighted—and as contrary to all that He Himself held and believed when He said, “Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.” (John X:16)

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The presentation of religious truth in the past has blocked the growth of the religious spirit; theology has brought mankind to the very gates of despair; the delicate flower of the Christ life has been stunted and arrested in the dark caves of man’s thinking; fanatical adherence to human interpretations has taken the place of Christian living; millions of books have obliterated the living words of Christ; the arguments and discussions of priests have put out the light which the Buddha brought, and the love of God as revealed by the life of Christ has been forgotten while thinkers have quarrelled over meanings, over phrases and words. In the meantime, people everywhere have agonised, starved, suffered, demanded help and instruction and, unsatisfied, have lost faith.

Today everywhere people are ready for the light; they are expectant of a new revelation and of a new dispensation, and humanity has advanced so far on the way of evolution that these demands and expectations are not couched in terms of material betterment only, but in terms of a spiritual vision, true values and right human relations. They are demanding teaching and spiritual help along with the necessary requests for food,

clothes and the opportunity to work and live in freedom; they face famine in large areas of the world and yet are registering (with equal dismay) the famine of the soul.

We are surely not in error if we conclude that this spiritual dismay and this spiritual demand have assumed a paramount place in the consciousness of the Christ. When He reappears and when His Church, previously invisible, appears with Him, what can They do to meet this demanding cry and this intensified attitude of spiritual perception with which They will be greeted? They see the picture whole. The cry of the Christian for spiritual help, the cry of the Buddhist for spiritual enlightenment, and the cry of the Hindu for spiritual understanding—along with the cries of all those who have faith or have no faith—must be met. The demands of humanity are rising to Their ears and the Christ and His disciples have no sectarian scruples, of that we may be sure. It is impossible to believe that They are interested in the views of the fundamentalists or in the theories of the theologians upon the Virgin Birth, the Vicarious Atonement or the Infallibility of the Pope. Humanity is in desperate need and that need must be met; only great and fundamental principles of living, covering the past and the present and providing a platform for the future, will really meet that human invocation. The Christ and the spiritual Hierarchy will not come to destroy all that humanity has hitherto found “necessary to salvation,” and all that has met its spiritual demand. When the Christ reappears, the non-essentials will surely disappear; the fundamentals of faith will remain, upon which He can build that new world religion for which all wait. That new world religion must be based upon those truths which have stood the test of ages and which have brought assurance and comfort to people everywhere. These surely are:

1. The Fact of God

First and foremost, there must be recognition of the fact of God. That central Reality can be called by any name that may be chosen according to mental or emotional bent, racial tradition and heritage, for it cannot be defined or conditioned by names. Human beings must always use names

in order to express that which they sense, feel and know, both of the phenomenal and also of the intangible. Consciously or unconsciously, all people recognise God Transcendent and God Immanent. They sense God to be the Creator and the Inspiration of all that is.

The Eastern faiths have ever emphasised God Immanent, deep within the human heart, “nearer than hands and feet”, the Self, the One, the Atma, smaller than the small, yet all-comprehensive. The Western faiths have presented God Transcendent, outside His universe, an Onlooker. God transcendent, first of all, conditioned humanity’s concept of Deity, for the action of this transcendent God appeared in the process of nature; later, in the Jewish dispensation, God appeared as the tribal Jehovah, as the soul of a nation. Next, God was seen as a perfected human, and the divine God-man walked the Earth in the Person of Christ. Today we have a rapidly growing emphasis upon God immanent in every human being and in every created form. Today, we should have the churches presenting a synthesis of these two ideas which have been summed up for us in the statement of Shri Krishna in *The Bhagavad Gita*: “Having pervaded this whole universe with a fragment of Myself, I remain.” God, greater than the created whole, yet God present also in the part; God Transcendent guarantees the plan for our world and is the Purpose, conditioning all lives from the minutest atom, up through all the kingdoms of nature, to the human kingdom.

2. Humanity’s Relationship to God

The second truth to which all give allegiance—no matter what the faith—is that of humanity’s essential relationship to God. Inherent in the human consciousness—inchoate often and undefined—is a sense of divinity. “We are all the children of God” (Gal. III:26); “One is our Father, even God,” says the Christ and so say all the world Teachers and Avatars down the ages. “As He is, so are we in this world” (1 John IV:17) is another Biblical statement. “Closer is He than breathing, nearer than hands and feet,” chants the Hindu. “Christ in us, the hope of glory” is the triumphant affirmation of St. Paul.

3. The Fact of Immortality and of Eternal Persistence

Third, is the sense of persistence, of eternal life or of immortality. From this recognition, there seems to be no escape; it is as much a part of humanity's reaction as is the instinct of self-preservation. With that inner conviction, we face death and we know that we shall live again, that we come and we go and that we persist because we are divine and the controllers of our own destiny. We know that we have set ourselves a goal and that the goal is "Life more abundantly"—somewhere, here, there, and eventually everywhere.

The human spirit is undying; it forever endures, progressing from point to point and stage to stage upon the Path of Evolution, unfolding steadily and sequentially the divine attributes and aspects. This truth involves necessarily the recognition of two natural laws; the Law of Rebirth and the Law of Cause and Effect. The churches in the West have refused officially to recognise the Law of Rebirth and have thereby wandered into a theological impasse and into a cul-de-sac from which there is no possible exit. The churches in the East have over-emphasised these laws so that a negative, acquiescent attitude to life and its processes, based on continuously renewed opportunity, controls the people. Christianity has emphasised immortality but has made eternal happiness dependent upon the acceptance of a theological dogma: Be a true professing Christian and live in a somewhat fatuous heaven or refuse to be an accepting Christian, or a negative professional Christian, and go to an impossible hell. Both concepts are today repudiated by all sincere, thinking people. No one of any true reasoning power or with any true belief in a God of love accepts the heaven of religious thinkers or has any desire to go there. Still less do they accept the "lake that burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. XIX :20) or the everlasting torture to which a God of love is supposed to condemn all who do not believe in the theological interpretations of the Middle Ages. The essential truth lies elsewhere. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. VI :7) is a truth which needs re-emphasising. In these words, St. Paul phrases for us the ancient and true teaching of the Law of Cause and Effect, called in the Orient the Law of Karma.

The immortality of the human soul, and the innate ability of the spiritual, inner person to work out their own salvation under the Law of Rebirth, in response to the Law of Cause and Effect, are the underlying factors governing all human conduct and all human aspiration. These two laws no-one can evade. They operate at all times until the achievement of the desired and the designed perfection, leading to the manifestation on earth of a rightly functioning child of God.

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4. The Continuity of Revelation and the Divine Approaches

A fourth essential truth and one which clarifies all the planned work of the Christ is tied in with spiritual revelation and the need of humanity for God and of God for humanity. Never has Deity left Itself at any time without witness. Never has humanity demanded light that the light has not been forthcoming. Never has there been a time, cycle or world period when there was not the giving out of the teaching and spiritual help which human need demanded. Never did the hearts and minds of humanity go out towards God, but that divinity itself came nearer. The history of humanity is, in reality, the history of the demand for light and for contact with God, and then the giving of light and the approach of God to humanity. Always the Saviour, the Avatar or the World Teacher issued forth from the secret place of the Most High and brought to humanity fresh revelation, fresh hope and a fresh incentive towards fuller spiritual living.

Some of these Approaches have been of a major nature, affecting humanity as a whole and some of them are of less importance, affecting only a relatively small part of humanity—a nation or a group. Those Who come as the Revealers of the love of God come from that spiritual centre to which the Christ gave the name “the Kingdom of God” (Matt. VI.33). Here dwelt the “spirits of just men made perfect” (Heb. XII:23); here the spiritual

Guides of the race are to be found and here the spiritual Executives of God's plan live and work and oversee human and planetary affairs. It is called by many names by many people. It is spoken of as the Spiritual Hierarchy, as the Abode of Light, as the Centre where the Masters of the Wisdom are to be found, as the Great White Lodge. From it come those who act as Messengers of the Wisdom of God, Custodians of the truth as it is in Christ, and Those Whose task is to save the world, to impart the next revelation, and to demonstrate divinity.

A new definition of God was given us when the Buddha taught that God was Light and showed us the way of illumination, and when Christ revealed to us that God was Love through His life and service on earth. Today the knowledge aspect of illumination is being comprehended, but the inner meaning of love is only now dimly sensed. Yet light and love have been revealed to the world by two great Sons of God in two Approaches.

All the world Scriptures bear witness to the existence of this centre of spiritual energy. This spiritual Hierarchy has been steadily drawing nearer to humanity as people have become more conscious of divinity and more fitted for contact with the divine.

5. The Fact of Our Relationship with Each Other

This fifth essential truth is as much a foundational spiritual fact as is God Himself, because it is linked with our knowledge of Him as Father.

This relationship we call "brotherhood" and it expresses itself, or it will eventually express itself, through human fellowship and right human relations. For this we work, and humanity is moving towards that relationship.

6. The Fact of the Path of God

Awareness of this has been preserved for us down the ages by those who knew God and whom the world called mystics, occultists and saints. Opening out before aspirants stretches the Way. The history of the human soul is the history of the search for that Way and its discovery by the

persistent. This is the sixth of the basic realities and truths which have conditioned the masses of humanity for aeons.

In every race and nation, in every climate and part of the world, and throughout the endless reaches of time itself, back into the limitless past, human beings have found the Path to God; they have trodden it and accepted its conditions, endured its disciplines, rested back in confidence upon its realities, received its rewards and found their goal. Arrived there, they have “entered the joy of the Lord”, participated in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, dwelt in the glory of the divine Presence, and then returned to the world, to serve. The testimony to the existence of this Path is the priceless treasure of all the great religions and its witnesses are those who have transcended all forms and all theologies, and have penetrated into the world of meaning which all symbols veil.

These truths are part of all that the past gives to humanity. They are our eternal heritage, and connected with them there is no new revelation but only participation and understanding. These are the facts which the World Teachers have brought to us, suited to our need and capacity at any given time. They are the inner structure of the One Truth upon which all the world theologies have been built, including the Christian doctrines and dogmas built around the Person of Christ and His teaching.

Another great Approach of divinity and another spiritual revelation are now possible. A new revelation is hovering over mankind and the One Who will bring it and implement it is drawing steadily nearer to us. What this great approach will bring to humanity, we do not yet know. It will surely bring us as definite results as did all the earlier revelations and the missions of Those Who came in response to humanity’s earlier demands. A new heaven and a new earth are on their way. What does the orthodox theologian and churchman mean when he uses the words “a new heaven”? May these words not signify something entirely new and a new conception as to the world of spiritual realities? May not the Coming One bring us a new revelation as to the very nature of God Himself? Do we yet know all that can be known about God? If so, God is very limited. May it not be possible that our present ideas of God, as the Universal Mind, as Love and as Will may be enriched by some new

idea or quality for which we have as yet no name or word, and of which we have no slightest understanding. Each of the three present concepts of divinity—of the Trinity—were entirely new when first sequentially presented to the human mind or consciousness.

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For some years now the spiritual Hierarchy of our planet has been drawing nearer to humanity and its approach is responsible for the great concepts of freedom which are so close to human hearts everywhere. The dream of brotherhood, of fellowship, of world cooperation and of a peace based on right human relations, is becoming clearer in our minds. We are also visioning a new and vital world religion, a universal faith which will have its roots in the past, but which will make clear the new dawning beauty and the coming vital revelation.

Of one thing we can be sure, this approach will, in some way—deeply spiritual, yet wholly factual—prove the truth of the immanence of God. The churches have emphasised and exploited the extra-territoriality of deity and have posited the presence of a God Who is creating, sustaining and creatively active, but at the same time outside creation—an inscrutable onlooker. This type of transcendent Creator must be shown to be false and this doctrine must be countered by the manifestation of God in the human being, the hope of glory. It is this surely that the expected Approach will demonstrate; it will prove also the close relationship between God Transcendent and that “in Him we live and move and have our being,” because, “having pervaded this entire Universe with a fragment of Himself, He remains.” God is immanent in the forms of all created things; the glory which shall be revealed is the expression of that innate divinity in all its attributes and aspects, its qualities and powers, through the medium of humanity.

On the fact of God and of humanity’s relation to the divine, on the fact of immortality and of the continuity of divine revelation, and upon the fact of the constant emergence of Messengers from the divine centre, the new

world religion will be based. To these facts must be added humanity's assured, instinctive knowledge of the existence of the Path to God and of his ability to tread it, when the evolutionary process has brought him to the point of a fresh orientation to divinity and to the acceptance of the fact of God Transcendent and of God Immanent within every form of life.

As we look ahead into the world of tomorrow and begin to question what structure the faith of humanity should assume and what building the skill of the knowers will erect to house the religious spirit of humanity, three more fundamental truths appear to be emerging as necessary adjuncts to the revealed body of truth:

- i. The demonstrated existence of a Spiritual Hierarchy, the life-purpose of which is the good of humanity. The Members of the Hierarchy are seen to be the Custodians of the divine Plan and expressions of the Love of God.
- ii. The development of the Science of Invocation and Evocation as a means and method of approach to divinity.
- iii. The realisation that the starry heavens, the solar system and the planetary spheres are all of them the manifestations of great spiritual Lives and that the interrelation between these embodied Lives is as real and effectual as is the relation between members of the human family.

Invocation and Evocation

These are the foundational truths upon which the world religion of the future will rest. Its keynote will be Divine Approach. “Draw near to Him and He will draw near to you” (James IV:8) is the great injunction, emanating in new and clear tones from Christ and the spiritual Hierarchy at this time.

The great *theme* of the new world religion will be the recognition of the many divine approaches and the continuity of revelation which each of them conveyed; the *task* ahead of the spiritually minded people of the world today is to prepare humanity for the imminent and (perhaps) the greatest of all the Approaches. The *method* employed will be the scientific and intelligent use of Invocation and Evocation and the recognition of their tremendous potency.

Humanity invokes divine Approach in various ways: by means of the inchoate, voiceless appeal or invocative cry of the masses and also by the planned, defined invocation of the spiritually oriented aspirants, the intelligently convinced worker, disciple and initiate—by all, in fact, who form what has been called “The New Group of World Servers”, that subjectively linked group which is leading humanity towards a new and better civilisation.

The Science of invocation and evocation will take the place of what we now call “prayer” and “worship”. We need not be disturbed by the use of the word “science”. It is not the cold and heartless intellectual thing so oft depicted. It is in reality the intelligent organisation of spiritual energy and of the forces of love, and these, when effective, will evoke the response of spiritual Beings Who can again walk openly among us, and thus establish a close relation and a constant communication between humanity and the spiritual Hierarchy.

In order to clarify, it might be said that Invocation is of three kinds: there is, as stated above, the massed demand unconsciously voiced, and the crying appeal, wrung from human hearts in all times of crisis such as the present. This invocative cry rises ceaselessly from all living in the midst

of disaster; it is addressed to that power outside themselves which they feel can and should come to their help in their moment of extremity. This great and wordless invocation is rising everywhere today. Then there is the invocational spirit, evidenced by sincere men and women as they participate in the rites of their religion and take advantage of the opportunity of united worship and prayer to lay their demands for help before God. This group, added to the masses, creates a huge body of invocative applicants and at this time, their massed intent is in great evidence and their invocation is rising to the Most High. Then, lastly there are the trained disciples and aspirants of the world who use certain forms of words, certain carefully defined invocations and who, as they do this, focus the invocative cry and the invocative appeal of the other two groups, giving it right direction and power. All these three groups are, consciously or unconsciously, swinging into activity at this time and their united effort guarantees a resultant evocation.

This new invocative work will be the keynote of the coming world religion and will fall into two parts. There will be the invocative work of the masses of the people everywhere, trained by the spiritually minded people of the world (working in the churches whenever possible under an enlightened clergy) to accept the fact of the approaching spiritual energies, focussed through Christ and His spiritual Hierarchy, and trained also to voice their demand for light, liberation and understanding. There will also be the skilled work of invocation as practised by those who have trained their minds through right meditation, who know the potency of formulas, mantrams and invocations and who work consciously. They will increasingly use certain great formulas of words which will later be given to the race, just as the Lord's Prayer was given by the Christ, and as "The Great Invocation" has been given out for use at this time by the Hierarchy.

This new religious science for which prayer, meditation and ritual have prepared humanity, will train its people to present—at stated periods throughout the year—the voiced demand of the people of the world for relationship with God and for a closer spiritual relation to each other. This work, when rightly carried forward, will evoke response from the

waiting Hierarchy and from its Head, the Christ. Through this response, the belief of the masses will gradually be changed into the conviction of the knowers. In this way, the mass of people everywhere will be transformed and spiritualised, and the two great divine centres of energy or groups—the Hierarchy and Humanity itself—will begin to work in complete at-one-ment and unity. Then the Kingdom of God will indeed and in truth be functioning on earth.

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It will be apparent that it is only possible to indicate the broad general outlines of the new world religion. The expansion of the human consciousness which will take place as a result of the coming Great Approach will enable humanity to grasp not only its relation to the spiritual life of our planet, the “One in Whom we live and move and have our being,” but will also give a glimpse of the relation of our planet to the circle of planetary lives, moving within the orbit of the Sun and the still greater circle of spiritual influences which contact our system as it pursues its orbit in the Heavens (the twelve constellations of the zodiac). Astronomical and astrological investigations have demonstrated this relationship and the influences exerted but there is still speculation and much foolish claiming and interpretation. Yet the churches have ever recognised this and the Bible has testified to it. “The stars in their courses fought against Sisera” (Judges V:20). “Who can withstand the sweet influences of the Pleiades?” (Job XXXVIII:31). Many other passages bear out this contention of the Knowers. Many church festivals are fixed by reference to the moon or a zodiacal constellation. Investigation will prove this to be the case and when the ritual of the new world religion is universally established, this will be one of the important factors considered.

Spiritual Festivals

The establishing of certain major festivals in relation to the moon and in a lesser degree to the zodiac will bring about a strengthening of the spirit of invocation and the resultant inflow of evoked influences. The truth lying behind all invocation is based upon the power of thought, particularly in its telepathic nature, rapport and aspect. The unified, invocative thought of the masses and the focussed, directed thought of the New Group of World Servers constitute an outgoing stream of energy. This will reach telepathically those spiritual Beings Who are sensitive and responsive to such impacts. Their evoked response, sent out as spiritual energy, will in turn reach humanity after having been stepped down into thought energy and in that form will make its due impact upon human minds, convincing them and carrying inspiration and revelation. Thus has it ever been in the history of the spiritual unfoldment of the world and the procedure followed in writing the world Scriptures.

Secondly, the establishing of a certain uniformity in the world's religious rituals will aid people everywhere to strengthen each other's work and enhance powerfully the thought currents directed to the waiting spiritual Lives. At present, the Christian religion has its great festivals, the Buddhist keeps a different set of spiritual events, and the Hindu has still another list of holy days. In the future world all people of spiritual inclination and intention everywhere will keep the same holy days. This will bring about a pooling of spiritual resources, and a united spiritual effort, plus a simultaneous spiritual invocation. The potency of this will be apparent.

There will be three such major Festivals each year, concentrated in three consecutive months and leading, therefore, to a prolonged annual spiritual effort which will affect the remainder of the year. These will be:

1. The Festival of Easter

This is the Festival of the risen living Christ, the Teacher of all humanity and the Head of the Spiritual Hierarchy. He is the Expression of the love of God. On this day the spiritual Hierarchy, which He guides and directs, will be recognised and the nature of God's love will be emphasised. This

Festival is determined always by the date of the Full Moon of spring and is the great Western and Christian Festival.

2. The Festival of Wesak

This is the Festival of the Buddha, the spiritual Intermediary between the highest spiritual centre, Shamballa, and the Hierarchy. The Buddha is the expression of the wisdom of God, the Embodiment of Light and the Indicator of the divine purpose. This will be fixed annually in relation to the Full Moon of May, as is at present the case. It is the great Eastern Festival.

3. The Festival of Goodwill

This will be the Festival of the spirit of humanity—aspiring towards God, seeking conformity with the will of God and dedicated to the expression of right human relations. This will be fixed annually in relation to the Full Moon of June. It will be a day whereon the spiritual and divine nature of humanity will be recognised. On this Festival for two thousand years the Christ has represented humanity and has stood before the Hierarchy and in the sight of Shamballa as the God-Man, the leader of His people and “the Eldest in a great family of brothers” (Romans VIII:29). Each year at that time He has preached the last sermon of the Buddha, before the assembled Hierarchy. This will, therefore, be a festival of deep invocation and appeal, of a basic aspiration towards fellowship, of human and spiritual unity, and will represent the effect in the human consciousness of the work of the Buddha and of the Christ.

These three Festivals are a part of the unified spiritual Approach of humanity, although they are not as yet related to each other. The time is coming when all three Festivals will be kept throughout the world and by their means a great spiritual unity will be achieved and the effects of the Great Approach, so close to us at this time, will be stabilised by the united invocation of humanity throughout the planet.

The remaining full moons will constitute lesser festivals but will be recognised to be also of vital importance. They will establish the divine attributes in human consciousness, just as the major festivals establish

the three divine aspects. These aspects and qualities will be arrived at and determined by a close study of the nature of a particular constellation or constellations influencing those months. For instance, Capricorn will call attention to the first initiation, the birth of the Christ in the cave of the heart, and indicate the training needed to bring about that great spiritual event in the life of the individual. This one instance indicates the possibilities for spiritual unfoldment that could be given through an understanding of these influences, and helps to revivify the ancient faiths by expanding them into their larger undying relationships.

Thus, the twelve annual festivals will constitute a revelation of divinity. They will present a means of bringing about relationship, first of all, during three months with the three great spiritual Centres, the three expressions of the divine Trinity. The minor festivals will emphasise the inter-relation of the Whole, thus lifting the divine presentation out of the individual and the personal, into that of the universal divine Purpose; the relationship of the Whole to the part and of the part to that Whole will be thereby fully expressed.

Humanity will, therefore, invoke the spiritual power of the Kingdom of God, the Hierarchy; the Hierarchy will respond, and God's plans will then be worked out on earth. The Hierarchy, on a higher turn of the spiral will invoke the "Centre where the Will of God is known," thus invoking the Purpose of God. Thus will the Will of God be implemented by Love and manifested intelligently; for this humanity is ready, and for this the Earth waits. Thus the new world religion will be built on the basis of the fundamental truth already recognised.

God works in many ways, through many faiths and religious agencies.

The New World Religion

The definition of religion which will in the future prove of greater accuracy than any yet formulated by the theologians might be expressed as follows: *Religion is the name given to the invocative appeal of humanity and the evocative response of the greater Life to that cry.*

It is, in fact, the recognition by the part of its relationship to the Whole, plus a constantly growing demand for increased awareness of that relation; it draws forth the recognition of the Whole that the demand has been made. It is the impact of the vibration of humanity—oriented specifically to the Great Life of which it feels itself a part—upon that Life and the responsive impact of that “All-surrounding Love” upon the lesser vibration. Religion, the science of invocation and evocation as far as humanity is concerned, is the approach (in the coming New Age) of a mentally polarised humanity. In the past, religion has had an entirely emotional appeal. It concerned the relation of the individual to the world of reality, of the seeking aspirant to the sought-for divinity. Its technique was the process of fitting oneself for the revelation of that divinity, of achieving a perfection which would warrant that revelation, and of developing a sensitivity and a loving response to the ideal Human, summarised, for present day humanity, in the Christ. Christ came to end the cycle of this emotional approach which had existed since Atlantean days. He demonstrated in Himself the visioned perfection and then presented to humanity an example—in full manifestation—of every possibility latent in humanity up to that time. The achieving of the perfection of the Christ-consciousness became the emphasised goal of humanity.

Today, slowly, the concept of a new world religion and the need for its emergence are widely desired and worked for. The fusion of faiths is now a field of discussion. Workers in the field of religion will formulate the universal platform of the new world religion. It is a work of loving synthesis and will emphasise the unity and the fellowship of the spirit. This group is, in a pronounced sense, a channel for the activities of the Christ, the world Teacher. The platform of the new world religion will be built by many groups, working under the inspiration of the Christ.

The clergy need to remember that the human spirit is greater than all the churches and greater than their teaching. In the long run, that human spirit will defeat them and proceed triumphantly into the Kingdom of God, leaving them far behind unless they enter as a humble part of the masses. Nothing under heaven can arrest the progress of the human soul on its long pilgrimage from darkness to light, from the unreal to the real, from death to immortality and from ignorance to wisdom. If the great organised religious groups of churches in every land, comprising all faiths, do not offer spiritual guidance and help, humanity will find another way. Nothing can keep the human spirit from God.

God works in many ways, through many faiths and religious agencies; this is one reason for the elimination of non-essential doctrines. By the emphasising of the essential doctrines and in their union will the fullness of truth be revealed. This, the new world religion will do and its implementation will proceed apace, after the reappearance of the Christ.

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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