

Feet of the Disciple

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The astrological glyph for the sign of Pisces is usually interpreted as representing two fishes, linked by a thread or bar and pulling in opposite directions. The two fishes are said to represent the personality and the soul aspects of an individual, heading in opposite life directions. Since Pisces rules the feet the two fishes of Pisces can also be read as two feet facing in opposite directions – the feet of the ordinary personality, and the feet of the person who responds to the tug or pull of the soul life. It seems appropriate timing to use the period whilst the sun is in the sign of Pisces to apply our attention to the feet, recognising as we do so that “energy follows thought”.

In choosing the title for this exploration today I recognised that in the context of the western world “The Feet of the Disciple” could easily evoke images from a Christian perspective. Here, one prominent image might be that of Jesus washing the feet of his disciples during the Last Supper. But in fact the importance of feet in terms of health and well-being is almost universally recognised, and it is worthwhile to take a look at how this shows up across cultures and time.

Human feet are sensitive, and our concern for protecting our feet from harm led to the almost universal practice of wearing shoes – no other life form on earth does this. It's probably true that for most people in our modern world apart from the very poor or certain athletes such as swimmers and gymnasts, a great part of our daily lives is spent with shoes covering our feet and insulating us from direct contact with the ground. The feet of humanity only occasionally makes direct skin contact with the Earth. We might wonder if in our effort to protect our feet our use of footwear reflects and perhaps supports a general disconnection from nature and a general loss of ability to physically, emotionally and mentally feel the reality of the livingness of our planet. The fact that Pisces rules the feet suggests that there is a great spiritual sensitivity latent in the feet of humanity, a sensitivity that needs to be consciously awakened if humanity as a whole is to move forward on to the Path of Enlightenment.

As is demonstrated in practices such as Reflexology, the feet hold tremendous potential for our overall health and well-being, but they may also hold the secret of progress for humanity as the collective world Disciple. One health website makes the following comment: “The feet are full of the most sensitive nerve endings and body energy centers. All body systems flow through the feet. But when was the last time you took proper care of your feet?” [health4-you.com] Whether partly for commercial profit or purely health reasons, in recent years there has been a trend to encouraging people to walk barefoot on the natural earth. Perhaps this is a positive sign that humanity is beginning to respond to the call of the Path that aligns and re-harmonises us with the Earth that is our home.

We can extract from these thoughts the idea that we can each do something about the nature of our own two feet, and that at a deeper level, this “doing of something” in fact relates to the ability of disciples in the new age to work consciously with light and love and with the grounding of power in world service. Imagine the difference in our planet if the feet of humanity were increasingly becoming the feet of human beings with Bodhisattva Soul consciousness.

So a few questions might come to mind. At the close of the Piscean era, what is the condition of the collective feet of humanity? In which direction are they facing, and can humanity be helped to change the direction in which its feet are pointing? What, if any difference is there between the

collective feet of the world aspirants and disciples on the one hand, and on the other, those of humanity in general? What practices do we personally have that keep our feet attuned to the Path? Can our own feet become better imbued with love and light, and in achieving this, begin to become feet that ground the presence of the Power of the Coming One? To what extent are these feet of disciples in the world today helping to ground the Path of Enlightened living so humanity begins a more conscious journey into its Soul nature – its Bodhisattva nature?

I'm using the term Bodhisattva here is to help bridge our thinking into what is said in Eastern philosophies and belief systems about the connection between the feet and signs of bodhisattva presence or spiritual unfoldment. Pervading Eastern Philosophy and religion for thousands of years, the idea of "lotus feet" is a metaphor for the presence of the divine, of the gods, saints and other exalted spiritual beings. The feet of Vishnu for example are always qualified as being "lotus feet". We encounter ideas such as that "Meditating on His feet gives security and safe protection from all sorts of fear", or that "All spiritual fruits come into being after first blossoming at the soles of His feet".

Indian art depicts certain "auspicious marks" on the sole of the feet of divine beings, eg conch, flag, fish, half moon, flower, creeper (plant), plough. These marks provide symbols for meditative attention.

It is useful to recognise of course that the differentiation between ordinary human feet, the feet of the disciple, the feet of the Bodhisattva, and onward, implies a graded process of spiritualisation of the feet. Attention to our physical feet is a turning of the energy of thought into the feet. The feet become not only symbols for where and how we stand, but for our moral, ethical, and spiritual standing in the world. A person's psychological feet may be dominated by physical realities, emotional experience or mental life. The awakening of buddhi or soul energy in the feet is rare but possible, and in our Triangles work each Monday we affirm the possibility of learning to stand not only in light and love but "in the centre where the will of God is known".

There appear to be two basic actions that disciples of all grades perform with their feet. The first is standing, or planting their feet on the earth, and the second is walking on the Path. These two functions of the feet in relation to the Tao or Path are summed up in the famous quotation from the *Tao Te Ching* of Lao Tsu: "A journey of a thousand li begins beneath the **feet**", often translated as "A journey of a thousand miles begins with the first step". In the books of Alice Bailey students of the soul life are often encouraged to stand, and to stand in different ways and psychological locations. Here are a few examples.

Stand steady and know that you are not alone.

Stand steady, therefore, and permit no thoughts of hatred and fear to find lodging in [669] your mind.

Stand firmly for good, looking for it in all peoples and races and thus seek to swell the rising tide of those who aspire to right human relations

...to **stand steady in the light**, to rest in pure being, and to become the true Observer. These qualities of steadiness with the intent to reflect light, of centralisation of the self, and of right observation are essential [317] to this group. [DNA I]

... And thus **I stand**... (Quotes from DNA I and II)

Symbolically, once humanity has taken that first conscious step on to the Path of enlightenment, we are following in the 108 steps that lead to Buddhahood. In the Great Invocation the 108th word is Power. It is interesting to consider how standing in this 108th position we can choose to attune our

feet to the downflow of the Power of the spiritual Hierarchy, and so find ourselves increasingly serving as disciples empowered to help restore the Plan on Earth with appropriate activities in current world conditions. If the feet of disciples are imbued with the Power of the Bodhisattva, they become feet that vibrate differently on the Earth. There is an amazing quality of vibration that results from the conscious tuning of the feet so that the energy from the highest centre, Shamballa, finds a path of intentional grounding in the Earth through humanity. Perhaps this possibility can encourage a deepening of our use of the affirmation of the Will: "In the centre of the Will of God I stand". We can see emerging a future humanity which has learned to stand between heaven and earth so to speak, rightly aligned to and in tune with divine purpose. The feet of disciples today can collectively affirm this direction of progress for humanity as a whole.

To achieve such feet we have many tools at our disposal, amongst which is the joyful discipline of standing in Triangles formation as a worldwide group of people committed to the life of Soul service. Perhaps we can visualise our Triangles co-workers consciously standing with us, our three pairs of feet acting as physicalised declarations of the presence of disciples on Earth, forerunners of the time when humanity as a whole will effectively function as the World Disciple. Standing in this way, the feedback resonance from the Earth would lend power to the radiation of the given Triangle unit that can take up this "Tai Qi" stance, a power that would unite with the resonance of the Triangles network as a whole and augment the vibratory notes of light and love in humanity. So, standing as we are now with the sun in Pisces, we can grasp the thought that the streaming of light into human minds and of love into human hearts is intended to find a grounding outlet through the feet of humanity, and we have the joy of being able to help in making this possibility a reality.

I'd like to close with by drawing attention to the words of that ancient sacred prayer known as the Gayatri:

*O Thou Who givest sustenance to the universe
From Whom all things proceed, and to Whom all things return
Unveil to us the face of the true spiritual sun, veiled by a disk of golden light
So that we may know the truth and do our whole duty
As we journey to thy sacred feet*
