

The Great Invocation as a Soul Curriculum

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As many of us know, the Great Invocation is far more than it appears on the surface. In saying this, I do not in the least imply that what it appears to be on the surface is in any way to be disregarded or downplayed. The Great Invocation looks like and is a prayer, and if we take it seriously as a prayer we can actually learn to pray more effectively by using it. We would suppose that there is and must be important differences between Piscean prayer and Aquarian prayer, and of course the Great Invocation is an Aquarian age prayer, intended to be used by humanity for the next two thousand years. I hope this short presentation helps our ongoing work of being ever more effective in the use of this mantric prayer for the inflow of purer light and love, the strengthening of our power of goodwill, and the restoring of humanity's role in the divine Plan on Earth.

In looking at the Great Invocation as it is normally presented I am using the original English version form, but much of what I have to say holds true for adapted versions as well as for translations in other languages. Beginning on the surface, when we read or sound the Invocation from start to end we are usually following a linear process. In this process, word after word, phrase after phrase, we sound the first line, then the second line, the third, etc.

Looking at the written lines of the Invocation as whole we see four groups of three lines followed by a stand-alone line. Anyone familiar with ordinary astrology will probably recognise that four groups of three is a typical way of grouping the zodiac signs. The signs are usually given in sequences of three. Each sequence has a so-called Cardinal sign, a Fixed sign, and a Mutable or Changeable sign. We can line up these sequences of zodiac signs with the lines of the Great Invocation...

There are a number of things which happen or which we begin to notice when we make this association between the GI and the signs of the zodiac, especially if one has some knowledge of esoteric astrology, which is concerned with the evolutionary journey of the soul. In the book *Esoteric Astrology* Alice Bailey gives a short Soul statement or "keynote of the Soul" for each of the twelve signs of the zodiac.

Having already made a simple link between the Invocation and the zodiac based on similarity of number of lines and number of signs, it seems natural to align the lines of the Invocation with the keynotes of the soul for each sign.

This alignment shows several clear similarities between the content of the Invocation and the themes of the keynotes of the soul. This allows us to talk about "the Aries line of the Invocation", or "the Pisces line" or the "Libra line".

But we also recognise that the zodiac is often depicted on a circle or wheel covering the twelve months of the year, which makes sense since we think of the sun as passing through the same twelve signs year after year in an annual cycle. Time is experienced as linear – one day follows another – and it is sometimes defined as a sequence of events. But time is also cyclic – so a limited number of items (four seasons, seven days, 12 months, 12 signs, 24 hours) can be found to give a pattern that repeats over various cycles of time. So, what happens if we see our experience of journeying through the zodiac – our ongoing experience – as governed by the final line of the Great Invocation? And we can carry this further by placing the entire Great Invocation on the zodiac wheel...

Actually, apart from anything else doing this can alter our *time* relationship with the Great Invocation. Usually, as in our Triangles meditation, we sound the Great Invocation in one go, saying all thirteen lines and closing with an OM (or three OMs). By spreading out the Invocation within the

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zodiac on a wheel of the year we can come to a kind of slowing down of the sounding of the Invocation... This slowing down to one line per month can create spaces in our consciousness, spaces through which new insights and deepenings of life energy can emerge. In reading the Great Invocation from a Wheel like this we see not just a linear movement, but instead, travelling at the pace of the sun through the signs each year, we understand that we are tracing a circle that becomes a cycle, spiralling through time and space.

Another thing that can happen is that groups of people – say the three members of a given Triangle, or hundreds or thousands of members of Triangles – can engage in simultaneous attention to this slowed down sounding of the Great Invocation. One effect of this is that the entire year becomes revealed as an opportunity to use the lines of the Great Invocation to turn our consciousness with the sun through the zodiac wheel. Additionally, linking the lines with the signs frees us from over-identification with our own personal birth sign. We join in a collective study of the energies pouring into our planet and impinging on human life in a steady, cyclic rhythm of conscious activity which is translated for us into the words of the Invocation.

The time factor in the Great Invocation is important since we know that it was specifically given for human use as the world prayer appropriate for the time period we think of as the Aquarian age. Aquarius is the eleventh sign and its themes connect with the eleventh line of the Invocation. The implication here is that the zodiacal pressure on and opportunity for humanity in the Aquarian age is for us to join in a common endeavour to “Let the Plan of Love and Light work out”.

The Great Invocation in wheel form also hints to us that our invocative work takes place within and as part of the functioning of a great chakra turning in time and consciousness. This provides us with an experiential situation in the realities of the rhythms of the flow of the greater life in which we live. On the one hand we become part of that aspect of humanity which functions with minds and attention open to spiritual energies associated with the zodiac sign of the current month. And on the other hand we become clearer about the nature of the energies and themes that are most readily available for distribution and application to outer living on our planet, and to the associated challenges and opportunities for service.

It is quite likely that we will discover, experientially, that the steady use of the Invocation in wheel form can lead to greater group sensitivity to spiritual teachings being rhythmically released for humanity from Soul levels, and usually peaking at the times of the full moons. If, year after year, we keep a record of our month-long studies of each line in turn it is inevitable that our sense of the depth of meaning of the Invocation will increase over time. Sharing from our insights with our Triangles co-workers, we may find that we are together following a curriculum of spiritual learning that helps unfold the higher dimensions of who we can best be, in this space, and in this time. Apparently simple phrases with their obvious meanings can suddenly shift, revealing dimensions of energy which point us in our needed direction of Soul growth and work. The Great Wheel of the Great Invocation begins to set our higher chakras into a new motion, a new vibrancy, a new frequency that gives new understanding of the word “Invocation”. We are taken far from the clamour of the noises of the world, into the silent place of deep joy from which to re-engage with our Soul Work with greater love and understanding. Deep silence changes our relationship to each other in time, and it is in fact only a matter of time before we begin to externalise the timeless Joy that comes with this new, Aquarian relationship.
