

A Universal Spiritual Renaissance has Already Begun: Let the Spirit of Resurrection Flow.

**Festival of Aries
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Welcome friends to this meditation meeting for world service at the Aries full moon celebrating Easter, the first of the Three Spiritual Festivals.

Every month, during the full moon period, we meet together, co-workers from all over the world, as a group on the mental plane. Our assembly hall, if we think of it like this, is a field of mind. We enter that field each time we work with a full moon meditation outline and during those precious moments of alignment at sunrise, noon, 5 PM, and sunset on the five days of the full moon cycle. For generations, since the early decades of the twentieth century, this special assembly hall has been built by the regularity of the rhythm of subjective focus: month after month, year after year, and decade after decade.

One of the keys to the full moon work is the recognition that the Assembly Hall, the field of mind we are entering into during the meditation, embraces levels of mind, stretching from the human to the superhuman and beyond. We are not meditating in a vacuum — we are not alone. The Group Mind of the Communion of Saints, Rishis, Masters of Compassion and Wisdom on the Inner Side of Life is very much a part of the Assembly Hall. To enter this Assembly Hall is to enter another dimension.

As a group of human beings a major part of our work during the meditation is to imaginatively link with these Great Ones, recognizing that we are sharing with them in One Work, One Common Endeavor. The Christ is said to use the rhythm of the full moons in His work of awakening the spirit in the minds and hearts of people everywhere. We should never forget this, for the Christ leads the meditation and His Radiations permeate the Assembly Hall. This is not the Christ as a Christian figure or as the focus of the Christian religion. This is the living, present Christ, who lives within the heart of every human being regardless of faith. This Universal Christ stands now, in human form, in an isolated region of the earth, as the Great Master of all that is Good, Beautiful and True in the world of humanity and in the world of the Angels.

To say that the radiations of the Christ, the radiations particularly of the mind that is in Christ, permeate the Subtle Assembly Hall where our group meditations are located is not to say that the Christ is holding our particular group mind in the light. The divine potencies of the mind of the Christ and His closest disciples in Hierarchy use the invocative tension of our group meditation as a lens through which energies can be radiated out and into the mind of humanity. Our work in these meditations is to stand as a group of human beings, united on the mental plane — to stand with humanity, in alignment with all the assembled Forces of Light, and aligned especially with the Christ. The group mind that we create each month then acts as a channel or a lens through which the higher energies can flow.

To be a group channel is very different from channeling. Our work is to use the mind and the imagination positively, purposefully. Instead of being passive or negative we seek to Be in alignment with the purposes and principles of the Divine Plan in so far as we can comprehend this Plan. Our goal is to be useful, helpful, in the working out of the Plan. We achieve this goal to the extent that we are absorbed by humanity's need for light, love and spiritual purpose.

The human need for these beneficent energies can be understood as the need for alignment with the Ashrams of Enlightened Potencies on the Inner Side of Life, the sources of light, love and spiritual power. These enlightened potencies know what it is to be human — they know about the veils of illusion, glamour and maya obstructing our understanding of what is real. After all they have themselves been subjected to these veils until they finally dissipated them and broke through into the light of true understanding. As such they

are the Initiated Ones who have passed through lifetimes of experience and now stand as our Guides and Mentors.

There is a yearning amongst people all over the world to be living deeper, more meaningful, spiritually rich lives — a yearning for a hopeful, positive view of the future — a yearning for true community and right relations. In esoteric terms this can be understood as a yearning for a more lighted and holistic understanding of what is real; for a more loving and selfless way of being; and for a life that is purposefully engaged in the process of transforming separateness into synthesis. Light, Love and Spiritual Power are the substances, spiritualized substances, which transform mind, heart and will.

Standing opposed to these Forces of Light that are both arising from within human beings and pouring into humanity from the Ashrams of Saints and Rishis are forces of materialism. Those individuals, groups and corporate interests that have consciously identified their lives with the purpose of strengthening separateness, materialism, selfishness and greed - and are investing resources into these goals - they represent the forces that resist the universal inclusive spirit of Aquarius. We don't need to give them too much attention but we most certainly need to recognize their presence and to know that their culture belongs to the past and not to the future.

At the heart of all the great issues of our time: climate change, ending extreme poverty, multi-faith understanding and cooperation, right relations between ethnic and racial groups, gross national happiness, right relations between women and men, sustainable development, sharing resources equitably within nations and amongst nations — at the heart of all of these issues is a call for light, love and spiritual power to flow into consciousness, empowering a resurrection of the human spirit — a resurrection that will ultimately disarm the forces of separateness.

There is a tendency to regard these problems, opportunities and issues as if they are solely our responsibility, and it is down to the human family to resolve them. How we respond, the modern mind tends to believe, is down to us. While we may be creatures of heart and mind we are rarely understood to be also creatures of spirit and soul — creatures capable of magic. But if we allow our vision to be transformed by the Light and Love that flood into consciousness with particular abundance during the time of the full moon - we see things differently. We still see that it is down to us to awaken and develop and mature our natural human capacity for goodwill — this continues to be a matter that we are responsible for — BUT we also see that there are massive Angelic Forces and Spiritual Potencies that are actively present in the world and part of the drama. We see that in the depths of the human the universe shimmers with wonder, as the cosmologist Brian Swimme has commented — or, in the words of Brother David Steindl-Rast, the human Spirit is more than human, because the human heart is unfathomable. It is this realization that there are unfathomable depths and heights in the human where the Universe is experienced as shimmering Life and Fiery Energy that is the core to recognition of the reality of a Hierarchy of Being. It is recognition of the Presence of Hierarchy, a Hierarchy of Light and Love that is most needed at this time — particularly amongst intelligent, thinking people of goodwill.

A universal spiritual renaissance is needed. Easter, the Aries full moon, is a perfect time for us to visualize this happening and to be open to impression about what this might mean. How might such a renaissance, sweeping through the cultures and civilization of our time change things? How might it effect negotiations and planning in the halls of the United Nations? How might it impact on investment patterns in local, national and global economies? How would a spiritual renaissance affect the religions of the world, and what impact would it have on education, science and the arts? Another way of looking at this — a way that is perhaps more true to reality — is to change our perspective: recognizing that a spiritual renaissance has already begun in human affairs, visualize a tide of lighted energy flowing through that renaissance so that we (you and I) can see future opportunities more clearly, and therefore become more intelligently positive in our sense of the future. Know too, that as this wave of love flows outwards, people of goodwill all over the world will begin to see future opportunities more clearly, and will become more positive in their sense of the future.

A spiritual renaissance is, after all, an intellectual and cultural wave of creativity that touches the whole spectrum of human affairs. It reaches wide and deep into the spiritual lives of individuals, into family lives (everywhere on the planet) and into professional and career lives. During this Aries full moon, Easter, we need to lift the tension of our expectation about the immediate future as well as the long-term future. Raise the tension — deepen our imaginative sense that the Hierarchy is releasing a radiation of Love during this full moon, and that this radiation will spread out through the whole wide field of human consciousness ultimately changing the dynamics of what it is to be human.

Can we pause for a moment of complete silence, after which we will say together that most ancient of prayers, 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.

Students of Alice Bailey will be familiar with a remarkable series of papers presented during the period of the Easter and Wesak full moon in the year 1945. This was a period leading to the defeat of German forces during the Second World War (Germany surrendered on May 8 1945) and only a few months before the surrender of Japan following the dropping of the atomic bombs (in August 1945). It is difficult for us now to put ourselves into the atmosphere of this dramatic period in human affairs.

As the Second World War unfolded, hundreds of millions of families from every part of the globe became involved in a deadly battle for and against freedom. The death toll has been estimated at between 62 - 78 million, over 2.5% of the entire human population. Many people alive at the time, from all parts of the world, lost family members as a result of the War. Think of the depth of the grief, exhaustion, and deprivation — so many people in Europe and elsewhere had lost everything in the War. And think too of the desperate wish to get back to normal living. Thinking of this, and thinking back to dramatic events in recent times, like the 9:11 attacks in New York, we begin to understand something of the transparent invocation to divinity that arises from people of goodwill during periods of extreme crisis. Wherever in the world people were living during 9:11 in 2001 — there was this sense of shock and grief that led people to want to go to churches, mosques, places of silence so that they could be with others and deeply cry out, together as a community, for understanding, healing and some sense that the Christ, or the Buddhas, Manjushri or Krishna were truly hearing their cry.

In 1945 those fighting for freedom triumphed, and the Tibetan's Easter and Wesak messages in March and April 1945 spoke of the massive concentration by Forces of Light including Beings of unbelievable potency — the Avatar of Synthesis, the Spirit of Peace, the Lord Buddha, the Christ. These Hierarchical forces were focused on what was essentially the birthing of a New Civilization and a New World. First, at Easter 1945, there was a flow of energies of Restoration — to help exhausted and bereaved human beings heal and restore their faith in the future. Then during the Wesak Festival the Buddha focused a release of Forces of Enlightenment to empower the new vision of the Oneness of Life. And finally during the Christ's Festival in Gemini forces of Reconstruction were released to help the work of building new structures, new containers for governance, economics and so on.

In our post-modern world we easily forget the extraordinary series of events that followed the ending of the War in 1945. A new world and a new era in human affairs began with great drama. On a weekly basis there

were huge banner headlines in newspapers across the globe: the Cycle of Conferences which began in San Francisco in April, when governments sat down to plan, bargain and negotiate for a better world; the Marshall Plan poured economic and human resources into the work of reconstructing Europe; conquered states began to acquire their independence from colonial powers and took the first steps on their path towards becoming modern nation-states; the United Nations was born with goals to encourage independent nation states to harmonize their actions for the promotion of social progress, better standards of life for all, and respect for the dignity of the human person; the Declaration of Human Rights was signed.

What we tend to forget now is how successful this period of reconstruction immediately following the War was. A new era was initiated. The reason we tend to forget the achievements made then is that we are now so very aware, rightly and appropriately aware, of how much work remains still to be done to build the foundations for right relations. Violence, all forms of violence, structural violence, violence against women, violence against minorities has steadily declined in the world since 1945 — Steven Pinker provides all the evidence we could need to show that this is so in his book, *The Better Angels of our Nature*. Perhaps the greatest sign of the development of goodwill that has taken place since 1945 is the things that were still, at least to some extent, culturally acceptable in 1945 that are now way beyond the pale of acceptability. In this country, the United States, this includes the attitudes of people and in many cases institutions of the law towards racial violence including lynching; and globally it includes sexual violence against women and children.

Legal and cultural respect for the dignities, rights and capabilities of human beings - for the inherent sacredness of each individual — has seen massive progress in all societies in the world since 1945. Just consider the ferment that now exists in every single society on the globe around the issue of the relation between women and men. It is not that we are even near a situation of right relations between the sexes but there is a dynamic that is leading in this direction — and it exists in every culture and every part of the world. The same thing applies to relations between the human, animal and plant kingdoms. While the structural violence of what is euphemistically called a 'free market' in many countries continues to be built into economic systems and this is driving climate change and is hugely damaging to the environment — the changes that have taken place in recent decades have been phenomenal. National and international regulations to protect the ozone layer from damaging chemicals causing acid rain have been largely successful; alternative energy technologies that were never even dreamt of in 1945 are now well established and, in some countries, and in some states of the United States, are becoming major sources of electricity; laws protecting animals and governing agricultural practices are constantly being tightened. It is now possible to envisage a future when laws will guarantee certain basic rights to animals — and efforts in the United Nations to develop a Declaration of Animal Rights, while still in the early stages, are bound to grow and will inevitably attract increasing support from governments.

As was predicted by DK in his messages in 1945 those human forces (organizational and individual) opposing the rise of Aquarian principles of universality and protection for the rights and dignities of individuals and minorities are of course still very much with us. They still need to be opposed by the people of goodwill who are building the new. Hierarchy chose to move forward slowly with the inflow of energies to enhance and empower goodness, beauty and truth — so that the resurrection of the human spirit would be sound and would persist. It is our human sense of time that hinders our vision of what has been achieved and of what can now be done when all of the goodwill muscle that has been developed through the post-war generations is targeted, focused and held at a right point of tension.

Yet the message given by the Tibetan in Easter 1945 about Forces of Restoration and, more importantly, about the role to be played by the Spirit of Resurrection are needed now — almost as urgently as they were needed as the war was winding down. We need a positive sense of the future; we need to be hopeful in realistic and human ways, aware of what can be achieved — all goodwill networks need this, including meditating groups. We need to see more clearly that forces opposing the tide of the new life are not in control, in spite of the power they are still able to wield in politics, religion and economics. Without in any

way denying the power of those who seek consciously to resist Aquarius, we need to recognize that those who work with goodwill (led, inevitably by those who wield the power of the will to good) are the dominant force. Events since 1945 have been moving in the direction of the vision released then - the vision of the four freedoms and of the charter of the United Nations or the Declaration of Human Rights.

So let us think of this year in terms of accomplishment by the Christ and the Hierarchy as their impact on public consciousness builds. Remember, the three major festivals of Easter, Wesak and the Christ this year mark the beginning of a twelve-month cycle when the keynote of Emergence and Impact on Public Consciousness will have a potent impact. And let us think of the new group of world servers, spiritually inclined men and women, and the vast masses of people of goodwill being overshadowed throughout this year. Let us imagine that through a combination of their own human talents, will, creativity and love, enhanced by radiant Forces of Light flowing through them, there will be accomplishments and achievements in the world that we will later look back on and marvel at. It is no accident that as we are about to enter this cycle, following on from the massive outpouring of energy during the Festival Week, we have a new Pope leading the Roman Catholic Church (the largest civil society organization in the world) — a Pope whose life and energy is dedicated to standing with the poor and down-trodden, and a Pope who, when speaking with representatives of the news media, pointed out that the Roman Catholic Church seeks to be guided by the Holy Spirit in fulfilling its purpose of promoting truth, goodness and beauty. Recognizing that the journalists before him came from all religions and philosophies Pope Francis gave this blessing — a blessing which surely echoes the true spirit of the living, universal Christ: *I give this blessing from my heart, in silence, to each one of you, respecting the conscience of each one of you, but knowing that each one of you is a child of God.*

The keynote for Aries, which we will be using as the keynote in our meditation is: *I come forth and from the plane of mind, I rule.*