

# The Full Moon in Gemini

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### The Festival and the Future

The Festival of Goodwill is celebrated at the Full Moon in Gemini. This year's festival, on June 4, 2012, will be the sixtieth in the series (the first was observed in 1952), and the "golden jubilee" adds further significance to an already important occasion.

The other two festivals of the Higher Interlude, the Easter and Wesak Festivals (celebrated, respectively, at the Full Moons in Aries and Taurus) draw upon religious traditions that date back to the dawn of the Piscean Age. Their continued relevance is not in question, but to some degree the focus is on the past. By contrast, the Festival of Goodwill, also known as the Festival of the Christ, Festival of Humanity, or World Invocation Day, looks unambiguously to the future, to the Aquarian Age. It celebrates the increasing presence in the world of the Second Aspect of Deity: the immanent presence of Love-Wisdom, expressed through humanity. The Christ established a link with the center of planetary life known as Shamballa, and the festival offers opportunities to contact levels of reality hitherto beyond our reach.

The Tibetan Master Djwhal Khul announced the new festival shortly after World War II. He explained that the Festival of Goodwill "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 relation.... It will be a day whereon the spiritual and divine nature of humanity will be recognized."<sup>1</sup>

Actually the Festival of Goodwill was new only to humanity. The Tibetan noted that it had long been observed on the inner planes:

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".... 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.<sup>2</sup>

This reference to the Christ and the Buddha places the Festival of Goodwill in relationship to the Easter and the Wesak Festivals and hints that its energy helps synthesize that of the older festivals. Announcement of the Festival of Goodwill came in the context of prophecies of far-reaching importance. The Tibetan Master predicted that the Christ will reappear on Earth, the Hierarchy of Masters will be externalized, the Mysteries will be restored, and a New World Religion will emerge to serve humanity's spiritual needs in the Aquarian Age. No dates were given for these momentous events, and we understand that much depends on our own progress toward establishing right human relations. Whether they will begin in 2012 or 2025 is purely a matter of speculation; some mentioned dates have already passed.

In the spirit of the Festival of Goodwill's future orientation, this talk will focus on the emergence of the New World Religion and the closely related restoration of the mysteries. The new religion, we understand, will grow out of, and eventually replace, the religions of the Piscean Age. It will also embrace some aspects of "Masonic tradition," which perhaps we can interpret to include other expressions of Western esotericism, such as Rosicrucianism and the Golden Dawn. Instead of dividing people, as religions have in the past, the

New World Religion will embrace people of every persuasion and every nation. The Tibetan sketched its broad outlines thus:

Spirituality will supersede theology; living experience will take the place of theological acceptances. The spiritual realities will emerge with increasing clarity, and the form aspect will recede into the background; dynamic, expressive truth will be the keynote of the New World Religion. The living Christ will assume His rightful place in human consciousness and see the fruition of His plans, sacrifice and service, but the hold of the ecclesiastical orders will weaken and disappear. Only those will remain as guides and leaders of the human spirit who speak from living experience, and who know no creedal barriers; they will recognize the onward march of revelation and the new emerging truths.<sup>3</sup>

The Tibetan added that “these truths will be founded on the ancient realities but will be adapted to modern need and will manifest progressively the revelation of the divine nature and quality. God is now known as Intelligence and Love. That the past has given us. He must be known as Will and Purpose, and that the future will reveal.”<sup>4</sup>

Certainly we see evidence of progress toward implementing the New World Religion. Many people today identify themselves as “spiritual” rather than “religious.” They may be disillusioned with organized religion, particularly that of their upbringing, but they feel a strong impulse to respond to higher reality and to express that impulse in ritual, prayer and experiential worship. For their part religious bodies have changed in significant ways since 1949 when the Tibetan’s cycle of writings came to an end. The political power of institutional Christianity continues to decline – though evangelical fundamentalism has achieved strong influence in the United States. Christian denominations are reaching out to one another with increasing ecumenical warmth; mutual respect and understanding are at an all-time high. Also there is much greater emphasis on service, including the healing ministry, which has only recently been restored in the western church after a millennium of neglect.

Nobody would claim that Christianity’s transformation, on the lines envisioned by the Tibetan, is complete, or that universal harmony has been attained across sectarian lines. Separatism remains in every denomination, some more so than others, but real progress has been made. Where much more work is needed is in overcoming mutual suspicion among Christianity, Islam, Judaism and other world religions.

Belief in an original repository of truth, adequate for all time, and notions of infallible, unchangeable dogma are increasingly unpopular both outside and inside organized religion. In medieval times the institutional church was almost the sole center of learning, and it served an illiterate laity content to be told what to believe. Today an educated laity honors its own insights and spiritual experiences. Moreover, people view truth as continually evolving and unfolding; what might once have been satisfactory doctrine may now need to be updated or replaced in the light of new insights. Whether spirituality will actually supersede theology, however, is debatable. We are thinking beings who are unlikely to stop constructing intellectual models of higher reality. Not insignificantly, the domains of theology and esoteric philosophy overlap to a considerable extent.

The Master Djwhal Khul hesitated to use the word “doctrine,” but he declared that the New World Religion will incorporate three “major presentations of truth”:

1. The fact of the Spirit of God, both transcendent and immanent, will be demonstrated, and also a similar fact in relation to man. The mode of their approach to each other, via the soul, will be indicated. This aspect of the emerging truth might be called Transcendental Mysticism.
2. The fact of the divine quality of the Forces in nature and in man and the method of their utilization for divine purposes by man. This might be called Transcendental Occultism.

3. The fact, implied in the first, that Humanity as a Whole is an expression of divinity, a complete expression, plus the allied fact of the divine nature and work of the planetary Hierarchy, and the mode of the Approach of these two groups, in group form, to each other. This might be called Transcendental Religion.<sup>5</sup>

The Tibetan's repeated use of the word "transcendental" deserves special attention. He seemed intent to distinguish the three major presentations from mysticism, occultism and religion as they have usually been understood. The distinction may be relatively minor in the first instance; mysticism of a high order can be found in all world religions and now is being embraced increasingly by the masses. The history of occultism, on the other hand, provides many examples of the need for more transcendentalism in that area.

Will and Purpose evidently will receive considerable emphasis in the New World Religion. The Tibetan spoke of the importance to us of the First Aspect of Deity.

We are – if it could be but realized – in process of reinterpreting and rearranging what can be called "the doctrinal structure underlying the relation between knowledge and wisdom." This involves the destruction of old concepts such as the trinity of manifestation, and the assembly of those new and more correct ideas that must inevitably be substituted for the old, as the unfoldment of the first aspect is presented to the initiate upon the Path. This, through certain later activities, will gradually seep downwards into the consciousness of humanity, and the New World Religion will be founded upon a deeper spiritual perception of the Father or Life Aspect, in place of the rapidly crystallizing vision of the Son or consciousness aspect.<sup>6</sup>

Whether or not spirituality supersedes theology, the Tibetan spoke of a New World *Religion*, not a new world spirituality. Religion implies the sharing of spiritual experiences and a collective response to those experiences. It implies common ideals, a sense of communion, and some form of group worship. Indeed the Tibetan reassured us that "prayer, worship and affirmation" will be preserved. But to them will be added "the new religion of Invocation and Evocation ... in which man will begin to use his divine power and come into closer touch with the spiritual sources of all life."<sup>7</sup> That comment may provide clues to what the Tibetan meant by "Transcendental Occultism."

The Great Invocation will play an important role: "This new Invocation, if given widespread distribution, can be to the new world religion what the Lord's Prayer has been to Christianity and the Twenty-Third Psalm has been to the spiritually minded Jew."<sup>8</sup> Many of us, whether or not we personally identify with Christianity or Judaism, would hope that the Lord's Prayer, the Twenty-Third Psalm, and other revered prayers and scriptural passages can be preserved in the liturgy of the new religion and used alongside the Great Invocation.

Like the religions of the past the New World Religion will have its liturgical calendar, and the Festival of Goodwill along with Easter and the Wesak Festival will be major events. The dates of those festivals are governed by a combination of solar and lunar cycles. The Tibetan acknowledged that "many church festivals are fixed by reference to the moon or a zodiacal constellation. Investigation will prove this to be increasingly the case, and when the ritual of the New World Religion is universally established this will be one of the important factors considered."<sup>9</sup> He also predicted that man will

grasp not only his relation to the spiritual Life of our planet, the "One in Whom we live and move and have our being," but will also [gain] 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 solar system as it pursues its orbit in the Heavens (the twelve constellations of the zodiac).<sup>10</sup>

Events in the life of the historical Christ will continue to serve as sources of inspiration in the New World Religion:

Upon the revelation of the risen Christ must the New World Religion take its stand. Christ upon the Cross, as will appear when we study the next great crisis, showed us love and sacrifice carried to their extreme expression; but Christ alive from all time, and vitally alive today, is the keynote of the New Age, and upon this truth must the new presentation of religion be built and, later, the new theology be constructed. The true meaning of the Resurrection and the Ascension has not yet been grasped; as a divine subjective reality those truths still await revelation. The glory of the New Age will be the unveiling of those two mysteries, and our entrance into a fuller understanding of God as life.<sup>11</sup>

Significantly, emphasis on the cross and the suffering Christ is primarily a feature of western Christianity. The Eastern Orthodox churches have always placed more emphasis on Christ's transfiguration, resurrection and ascension: on Christ as the expression of divine glory. The Tibetan did not mention Pentecost, which has Judaic as well as Christian roots. But it falls within a few days of the Festival of Goodwill, and the latter is sometimes referred to as the Pentecost, or Whitsun, Festival.

Implementation of the New World Religion will require action on multiple levels. The Tibetan identified ten "focal points of energy in the human family through which certain energies can flow into the entire race." The sixth of those focal points, consisting of "workers in the Field of Religion," will bear the major responsibility:

Their work is to formulate the universal platform of the New World Religion. It is a work of loving synthesis and it will emphasize the unity and the fellowship of the spirit. This group is, in a pronounced sense, a channel for the activity of the Second Ray of Love-Wisdom, that of the World Teacher – an office held at present by the Christ. The platform of the New World Religion will be built by the many groups, working under the inspiration of the Christ and the influence of the Second Ray and these – in their totality – will constitute this sixth group.<sup>12</sup>

Interaction will also be necessary between humanity and the Hierarchy of Masters. It "will take the form of a conscious unified group approach to the world of spiritual values, evoking ... reciprocal action from Those Who are the citizens of that world – the planetary Hierarchy and affiliated groups."<sup>13</sup> When the necessary groundwork has been laid, two senior members of the Hierarchy will take decisive action:

The Master Jesus will take certain initial steps towards reassuming control of His Church; the Buddha will send two trained disciples to reform Buddhism; other steps will also be taken in this department of religions and of education, over which the Christ rules, and He will move to restore the ancient spiritual landmarks, to eliminate that which is nonessential, and to reorganize the entire religious field.<sup>14</sup>

The Master Jesus' plans to "reassume control of His Church" would seem to refute suggestions that Christianity has run its course and will soon pass out of existence as a relic of the Piscean Age. Indeed it would seem that Christianity will play a significant role in the New World Religion. We shall see shortly that its role may be larger than would have been expected.

Involvement by high-level members of the Hierarchy will make way for the restoration of the Mysteries, which "will unify all faiths."<sup>15</sup> The mysteries, we understand,

will be restored to outer expression through the medium of the Church and the Masonic Fraternity, if those groups leave off being organizations with material purpose, and become organisms with living objectives. When the Great One comes with His disciples and initiates we shall have (after a period of intensive work on the physical plane beginning around the year 1940) the restoration of the Mysteries and their exoteric presentation, as a consequence of the first initiation. Why can this be so? Because the Christ, as you know, is the Hierophant of the first and second initiations and He will, if the preparatory work is faithfully and well done, administer the first initiation in the inner sanctuaries of those two bodies.<sup>16</sup>

Several statements in this passage merit attention. First, the reference to 1940 may raise eyebrows. For example, one wonders how long a “period of intensive work on the physical plane” will be needed – presumably more than the seven decades that have elapsed since then. Second, the Tibetan’s statement that the restored mysteries will be expressed through “the Church and the Masonic Fraternity” is highly significant. Certainly we can see how the Masonic tradition, which draws upon the ancient mysteries, will be a useful ingredient. But reference to “the Church” suggests that Christianity may be the only religion to play a major role. To be sure, Christianity has a strong tradition of sacramental ritual, and it is worth noting that in the Eastern Orthodox Churches the sacraments have always been referred to as “the mysteries.” But it is unclear at this time how the mysteries “will unify all faiths” if age-old rituals of other world religions are not included. Finally, since the Christ is the hierophant of the first two initiations, it would seem that full restoration of the mysteries on the physical plane will not occur before his reappearance. Perhaps the restoration will come relatively late in the timeframe of the Tibetan’s prophecies.

The anticipated involvement of senior members of the Hierarchy in establishing the New World Religion and restoring the mysteries might suggest that the rest of us can sit back and watch developments from the sidelines. But the Tibetan was emphatic that action is required from all of us and that there is no time to waste:

It is necessary for you to understand the immediate spiritual possibilities that confront humanity if those of you who have vision and love humanity are to measure up to the immediate opportunity. It is necessary that you should grasp the immediate preparatory steps that you can take in relation to those possibilities and should also have a vision of the principles that must govern the New World Religion, with its outstanding points of focus.<sup>17</sup>

The Tibetan assured us that nobody is to be coerced into helping to implement the new religion: “I only seek to give you information, leaving you to make due application under the urge of your own souls.”<sup>18</sup> Whether or not we belong to a church or a Masonic order, there is much we can do. Perhaps, as we prepare for the Festival of Goodwill, the Festival of the Christ – and as we hold the vision of the New World Religion – we shall find that the urge of our own Souls is more powerful than any external coercion might be.

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<sup>1</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, New York: Lucis, 1957, 421.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 55-56.

<sup>6</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, New York: Lucis, 1966, 403.

<sup>7</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 401.

<sup>8</sup> Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age II*, 164-165.

<sup>9</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 419.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* Parenthesis in original.

<sup>11</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *From Bethlehem to Calvary*, New York: Lucis, 1937, 163.

<sup>12</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age I*, New York: Lucis, 1944, 38.

<sup>13</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Education in the New Age*, New York: Lucis, 1954, 122-123.

<sup>14</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 573.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 573.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 514-515. Elsewhere the Tibetan commented that the mysteries will also be restored in the sciences. See for example Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ*, New York: Lucis, 1948, 122.

<sup>17</sup> Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 393.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*