

Goodwill: The Challenge Before Us

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During the full moon period of Gemini each year, we celebrate the Festival of Goodwill and endeavor to align ourselves with the Spiritual Hierarchy of the planet and the Masters of Wisdom working under the leadership of the Christ. The Festival is dedicated to the expression of love and goodwill within humanity, the divine forces necessary to establish lasting right human relations. Our meditations at this time integrate those energies generated, assimilated, and stored during the two previous Festivals of Easter and Wesak. They serve to unify the appeals of humanity, invoke divine assistance, and contribute to the release of light, love, and the Will-to-Good. These Three Linked Festivals constitute the high point of humanity's concentrated spiritual appeal in the annual cycle, and the Festival of Goodwill is a culminating invocative moment that results in the evocation and distribution of divine energies. Each year offers new opportunities to participate in this work of united service, and each year demands new responses as there is nothing static in the manifested world.

This Festival has many different names, perhaps an indication that humanity, as the world disciple, has yet to consciously and unitedly express its true meaning and significance. Established 2,000 years ago and initially described by the Tibetan as "*Christ's Unique Occasion*,"¹ this ceremony coincides with Christ's own invocation before the assembled Spiritual Hierarchy. Since 1952, it has been celebrated as World Invocation Day.

It seems that there is little to celebrate, however, as with each passing year the crises facing humanity seem to be deepening and the goal of achieving human unity appears ever more elusive. At the end of the Second World War, the Tibetan expressed cautious optimism in light of the "unique and particular opportunity, based on the fact that there has not yet been time for people to slip back into the old ways of thinking or for the setting up of any reactionary structures."² Yet he immediately tempered that statement by acknowledging that the moment of opportunity provided by the Linked Festivals might not be found even in the following year. The tenuous situation led him to forewarn:

You can see therefore how critical, spiritually, are these times, and how urgent is the task which confronts the Spiritual Hierarchy and its workers on Earth. The war may be over in the physical sense, but great issues are still involved and undetermined and can lead either to peace or to a renewal of those conditions in which wars are generated and which, once generated, cannot be avoided.³

On behalf of the Spiritual Hierarchy, the Tibetan expressed the belief "that humanity can and will find its own way out of the world difficulties."⁴ They were confident that the human spirit, "under the influence and inspiration of a regenerated intelligentsia,"⁵ would inaugurate a cycle of restoration, liberate itself from the forces of materialism and emerge from this period of upheaval "into the new era, ready to build the new world and to reorganize all human resources – material, mental and spiritual."⁶

Needless to say, things have not gone as planned or as hoped for. Today, the intelligentsia are diffuse, separative, and uninspiring in providing leadership for the human spirit. The forces of materialism have regained great power, and wars and the threat of new wars are widespread. To some extent, this discord is to be expected during the transition from the Piscean Age to the Aquarian Age. "The tremendous turmoil incident to these transitions affects the individual ... People are submerged in planetary and racial destinies."⁷

We cannot ignore, however, the invocative cries of a suffering humanity. The Tibetan describes three types of invocation available to humanity, the first being "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 people living in the midst of disaster.”⁸ To be sure, many people today exist in similar conditions of disaster. The second type of invocation is found in forms of prayer and worship practiced within organized religious traditions. The third type of invocation, performed by the trained aspirants and disciples of the world, utilizes powerful word formulas provided by the Teachers of humanity.

Over time, the Tibetan offered several invocations to his students and the public, each one formulated for a specific use.⁹ As is well known to students of his work, the final version he provided, the Great Invocation, is a most potent tool and forms a fundamental aspect of our service work, especially on World Invocation Day. Because the Great Invocation is a living expression of divine potencies, the Tibetan requested that, as necessary, the original form be readapted for the widest possible use by the general public “with the wording that will make it acceptable.”¹⁰

In light of the extreme urgency created by our current global crises, what is our responsibility as workers for the Spiritual Hierarchy during this Festival period? As students of the Tibetan’s teachings we understand the fundamental truth that with increased esoteric study and understanding comes increased responsibilities. One of our tasks, and one directly related to World Invocation Day, is to help focus the invocative efforts of the first two groups mentioned above. This effort will require that we deepen our understanding of the Science of Invocation and Evocation and also develop the practical skills necessary for its successful implementation, first within our own lives and increasingly in the growing spheres of our influence.

The Tibetan states that the training of the masses in the Science of Invocation and Evocation will be undertaken by the spiritually minded people of the world and that this invocative work will be the keynote of a new world religion.¹¹ How can we practically contribute to this work of training the general public in the Science of Invocation and Evocation? One idea suggested by the Tibetan is to create local meditation groups to educate the general public in the work being done by the New Group of World Servers, to make contact with the vision and plans for constructive work, and also to practically access the wisdom and power required to fulfill this work.¹² The practical or exoteric service work of forming public meditation groups will also lead naturally to the formation of study groups, to the wider distribution of the Tibetan’s teachings, and to deeper esoteric understanding. All of these efforts will contribute to the manifestation of new, increasingly widespread, and ever more potent forms of world service.

A related possible task, given our responsibilities as students of the Tibetan’s potent and transformative teachings, may be to help “regenerate the intelligentsia” with the light and wisdom inherent in these teachings. The intelligentsia may then become truly inspiring and influential in activating the forces of goodwill within humanity. In emphasizing the role of the intelligentsia the Tibetan stated,

Their function and the part they play is of supreme importance ... Their responsibility is enormous ... They constitute the most influential unit today, because it is through them that the large middle class is reached, swayed and organized for political, religious and social ends ... Given the assistance of [their] trained minds ... the new order can be firmly established upon Earth.¹³

Over seventy-five years ago, just before the outbreak of the Second World War, the Tibetan stated that the extraordinary levels of economic suffering and widespread illusion were too great to allow the precipitation of new ideas that would be necessary to establish a new era of right human relations.¹⁴ It seems that the same oppressive conditions still prevail and yet we must somehow find practical methods to manifest these ideas.

The important point is that we utilize the opportunities made available at each of the Linked Festivals to register and clarify the work to be done throughout the year. Given the heightened tension in the world and the intensity of the energies available during the Three Linked Festivals we need to avoid being overwhelmed by the perceived enormity of the work lying ahead, which could incapacitate any possible efforts. We also need to avoid being overstimulated by the multitude of forces and energies contacted in meditation and at work in the world of daily living, which could result in the attempt to do too much or to undertake actions that are not truly aligned with our own vocation. Determining our correct vocation or service work is a continuous activity, and the opportunities inherent in the rhythmic group meditation process can help clarify

our understanding of the work to be done, both esoteric and exoteric, and how to adapt our work to changing conditions.

The Tibetan invites us to use our full imagination in the meditation work of the Wesak and Goodwill Festivals, and to participate intelligently in the subjective ceremonies as if we were accepted disciples within, or on the periphery of, some ashram.¹⁵ What might be conveyed during the Festival of Goodwill (also known as the Festival of Humanity) this year, in the context of our current world situation? How will we imagine the work to be done and the next steps to be taken? The Tibetan also asks that during the full moon of Gemini we visualize “the situation that is likely to come about on Earth if and when ... the Spiritual Hierarchy is externalized”¹⁶ but without allowing our creative imaginations to “run riot,” and create interfering thought-forms. Obviously, therefore, our subjective work needs to be undertaken with great care and discrimination, with an achieved balance and wisdom developed in the crucible of lived experience and our ongoing service efforts.

Finally, our work must be undertaken with steadfast will, courage, and a willingness to sacrifice everything. The Tibetan assures us that the will is necessarily evoked through our invocative efforts.

It is this will – aroused by invocation – that must be focused in the light of the Soul, and dedicated to the purposes of light and for the purpose of establishing right human relations, which must be used (in love) to destroy all that is hindering the free flow of human life and that is bringing death (spiritual and real) to humanity. This Will *must* be invoked and evoked [by] the focused consciousness of the men and women of goodwill, whose lives are conditioned by the will to carry forward the divine purposes in love, who seek selflessly to understand those purposes, and who are fearless of death.¹⁷

During the Festival of Goodwill may we strive to invoke and evoke the Light and Love of the Spiritual Hierarchy and the Christ. May we also strive to vision ever more clearly the work to be done throughout the year and to understand our unique responsibilities and opportunities to manifest this work, thereby helping to help establish the right human relations that are so greatly needed at this time.

¹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1957), 445.

² *Ibid.*, 554.

³ *Ibid.*, 552.

⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1960), 555.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 553.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 554.

⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1934), 440.

⁸ Alice A. Bailey, *The Reappearance of the Christ* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1948), 151.

⁹ *Op. cit.*, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 396-397, 488.

¹⁰ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology, Vol. 2*, (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1942), 692-693. See also information available on the websites of both The School for Esoteric Studies (<http://www.esotericstudies.net/invocation.html>) and Lucis Trust (https://www.lucistrust.org/the_great_invocation).

¹¹ *Op. cit.*, *Reappearance of the Christ*, 152.

¹² *Op. cit.*, *Esoteric Psychology, Vol. 2*, 667-668.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 636-637.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 669.

¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, *Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 556-557.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 652-653.

¹⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1951), 584 [italics in the original].