

Group Service: Invocation and Evocation

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The last of the Three Linked Festivals is the Festival of Goodwill. It is also known by other names,¹ including *World Invocation Day*. During this Festival many spiritual groups around the world unite in sounding the Great Invocation, invoking the forces of Light, Love and Purpose to illumine humanity's choices and undergird right human relations on Earth. Our group activity using the Great Invocation during this Festival draws on the Science of Invocation and Evocation and must be accompanied by right action so that the energies invoked can be anchored on Earth.

Why is the group invocative activity so important at this time? Of the three Linked Festivals, one characteristic that makes this one special is that it has only recently been brought to the attention of public consciousness. In fact, while the Festival of Goodwill has been celebrated for two thousand years on the inner or subjective planes, it has become widely known in the external world only since the second half of the twentieth century, in conjunction with the instigation of the New Group of World Servers (NGWS). During the Festival of Goodwill the esoteric community employs the Great Invocation as a powerful invocative mantra, with efforts being made to spread its use in the world. Anticipating this development, the Tibetan wrote: "When the work of the Invocation reaches a high stage of development ... it will then be wise to bring to the attention of the general public, and on a worldwide scale, the factual nature of the New Group of World Servers."²

As we consider the activity of the New Group of World Servers, one of the tasks we are charged with is the expansion of the group *idea* and the anchoring of this *idea* in human consciousness: "The *growth of the group idea* with a consequent general emphasis upon group good, group understanding, group interrelation, and group goodwill. These four are the ideals of that subjective group, working on the physical plane, which we call the New Group of World Servers."³ The Festival of Goodwill provides an excellent context to reflect on these four ideals for group work, and apply them. Interestingly, the Tibetan tells us that the result of this work will vary "according to the measure of understanding and the dynamic tension displayed by the invoking element"⁴ which can be read as a reminder that it is our role to make the adjustments and provide the conditions for right relationships in the world.

If the attention of the higher is to be evoked by the point of tension of the lower,⁵ the focus that we achieve through our working consciously as a group is crucial. Our conscious invocative work is a heightened vibration, lifting the unconscious needs of humanity to the Spiritual Hierarchy. This, in turn, and through the Christ and the Buddha, will invoke the force of Shamballa. This force is "available for right usage but the power to express it lies in its understanding (as far as may be possible at this midway point in human evolution) and its *group use*."⁶ The spiritual energy is in fact available, but the change in world conditions will only take place as we, as members of the NGWS, step it down with a clear focus and into action, initiating or supporting active initiatives generating goodwill in our communities and immediate circles. This in turn will model the use of goodwill in humanity, similarly to what has been described in physics as the "butterfly effect." Thus the invocative process of this Festival links humanity, the New Group of World Servers and the Spiritual Hierarchy within a reciprocal invocative/evocative process. The more aware we are of the process and of the subjective reality of the invocative group, the more effective our group work shall be: "Unconscious invocation proceeds all the time; when it becomes conscious, it becomes exceedingly powerful."⁷

Aspects of the Invocative Process

The four ideals for the *growth of the group idea* in the world – group understanding, group interrelation, group goodwill and group good – can be related to the invocative demands in the stanzas of the Great Invocation, each of which will help dissolve different aspects of the illusion of separateness:

1. *Understanding* – We invoke Light in the first stanza of the Great Invocation. Light brings about comprehension; it is the primordial power that cleanses away the distortions and confusions on our mental plane. Without Light it would be impossible to see and difficult to comprehend the next evolutionary steps and get ready to act. “When aspirants pray in the [Great] Invocation: ‘Let Light descend on Earth’ they are invoking something that humanity will have to learn to handle; this is one of the things for which the disciples of the world must begin to prepare [humanity].”⁸ As issues that had been in the shadow emerge into the Light of consciousness, there is a chance for them to be recognized and worked on. This is never an easy process, but hopefully we can use our past experience to make new sound decisions and support any ongoing constructive work being done on behalf of humanity.
2. *Interrelation* – We invoke that *Love streams forth into human hearts*, that Love displaces the illusion of separateness that so often veils the real and distorts it with the glamor of fear (the basic astral evil) and self-centeredness. The energy of Love relates and is thus invoked to establish right and inclusive relationships. Let us be reminded that the group (and not the self) is the emanating point of right human relations.⁹ In origin, the energy of Love is not subject to the glamor and distortions on our astral plane: “The cosmic astral plane is a reservoir of love energy, pouring into two of our planes which constitute part of the cosmic etheric body – the monadic plane and the buddhic plane.”¹⁰
3. *Goodwill* – In the third stanza we say: *From the center where the Will of God is known, Let purpose guide all little human wills*. The energy of goodwill is the lower reflection, on the physical plane, of the divine Will. This energy of goodwill focuses our little wills on the working out of constructive purposes, encourages people everywhere to overcome the obstacles encountered in the successive stages of any act of will. It is the energy of goodwill in practice in our immediate fields of service, and is based on the free will to participate consciously in world change: “There are many people today who find an alibi for themselves in the present world situation, and a consequent release from definite action and responsibility by saying that what is today happening is simply karma or the working out of cause and effect, and that there is nothing, therefore, that they can do about it... In so doing they overlook the third aspect of this same law, to which we have given the name of *free will*... In some way they must learn participation, because the present situation has in it the seeds of release for humanity.”¹¹
4. *The Common Good* – “*Let the Plan of Love and Light work out*” is a call to humanity to work for the common good, to restore the Plan on our planet, as far as we can understand and participate in its unfolding today. We collaborate in the task of closing the door to evil, support humanity’s struggle to choose to move toward the future instead of yielding to the retrogressive forces.

The Great Invocation expresses the quest for freedom from the unreal that keeps humanity captive physically, emotionally or mentally. It has been the quest of all times, and the Path from the unreal to the real has been taught by all the great Souls. The Tibetan indicates the continuity of the teaching that extends from the Buddha’s four noble truths to the teaching of the Christ. Isn’t it our task to continue that work?

When the Buddha was on Earth and achieved illumination, He ‘let in’ a flood of light upon the world problem through His enunciation of the Four Noble Truths. His body of disciples ... – by the power of collective thought – has greatly helped in the attack upon the world illusion. Today the Christ is carrying forward the same great task... Only the intuition can dispel illusion and hence the need of training intuitives. Hence the service you can render to this general cause by offering yourselves for this training. If you can overcome glamour in your own lives and if you can, therefore, comprehend the nature of illusion you will help in:

- a. The destruction of the dweller on the threshold,
- b. The devitalizing of the general maya,
- c. The dissipation of glamour,
- d. The dispelling of illusion.

This you have to do in your own lives and in the group relation. Then your more general contribution will help in the wider human issues.¹²

The Tibetan mentions that the four aspects of the unreal must be confronted individually and in our group work, and that such work will in turn influence the world of human affairs. This reflects the reciprocal process established through the Science of Invocation and Evocation:

Destruction of the dweller on the threshold	Spiritual Will
Devitalizing of maya	Goodwill
Dissipation of glamour	Love
Dispelling of illusion	Light

Conclusion

During this Festival of Goodwill, the Festival of Humanity, extensive use of this solar mantra will be central to our esoteric group work. Humanity is facing the four aspects of the Dweller on the Threshold, the unreal. The invocative process calls forth great divine potencies that can help evoke in humanity the will to move forward on the Path, to conform to the divine Will and to express right relations in everyday life. But this can only happen if we get involved.

[The Festival of Goodwill] will be a day whereon the spiritual and divine nature of humanity will be recognized. On this festival, for two thousand years, the Christ has represented humanity and has stood before the Spiritual Hierarchy and in the sight of Shamballa... Each year at that time He has preached the last sermon of the Buddha before the assembled Spiritual 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.¹³

¹ Other names given to this Festival are: The Festival of Humanity, and The Festival of the Christ.

² Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 2* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1955), 203-204.

³ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Psychology, Vol. 2* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1942), 654.

⁴ Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1960), 35.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 494.

⁶ Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1951), 581.

⁷ Alice A. Bailey, *Telepathy and the Etheric Vehicle* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 81.

⁸ *op. cit.*, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 2*, 327.

⁹ Alice A. Bailey, *Discipleship in the New Age, Vol. 1* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1944), 377.

¹⁰ *op. cit.*, *The Rays and the Initiations*, 377.

¹¹ Alice A. Bailey, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1957), 252-253.

¹² Alice A. Bailey, *Glamour: A World Problem* (New York: Lucis Publishing, 1950), 23-24.

¹³ *op. cit.*, *The Externalisation of the Hierarchy*, 421.