

Cancer: From Mass Consciousness to Group Consciousness

By Joy Gates

Once a month we have the opportunity to gather together as one group unit in a global companionship, seen and unseen, to invoke greater light and love for humanity's use in serving our planet. At this Full Moon time the channel of communication and rapport with the Spiritual Hierarchy is fully available and open so that we can receive the downflowing spiritual force with maximum clarity. This can vivify our service, intensify our spiritual life, and help the Hierarchy to draw nearer to us all, as we invoke them through our focused and inspired approach. We can each become more aware of how we can serve the Plan in our own unique environment and what we can be and do to externalize and manifest our highest vision right here and now.

In order to help us take advantage of this opportunity, we will consider the keynote of the type of energy that is especially available – that of the sign Cancer, in which the full moon is now shining. This sign of the Zodiac, Cancer, is called the crab. The crab is a shy creature, sheltered by its protective shell, yet venturing from ocean waters onto the open shore nonetheless. This can be seen, symbolically, as the innate drive to separate oneself from the vast collective unconscious, and as the beginning of the journey from mass consciousness to group consciousness.

We'll start with a quote from *The Labours of Hercules*, pp. 83 and 92.

The sign which we are now studying is predominantly the sign of instinct; but the sublimation of instinct is the intuition.... Instinct demonstrates as intellect in a human being as he develops self-consciousness and emerges from the purely animal stage until the time comes when, having progressed around and around the zodiac, the aspirant finds himself again in Cancer, faced with the problem of finding that elusive, sensitive and deeply hidden spiritual intuition which will guide him in his now lonely journey. The aspirant is no longer identified and lost in the mass; he is no longer one of the sheep, safely guarded in the sheepfold..., but has emerged out of the mass and has started on the lonely way of all disciples. Then he treads the path of tribulation, of test and trial, wrestling by himself as an individual ... until the time comes when, with the aid of instinct, intellect and intuition, and driven by the urge of the Christ life, he again merges himself with the mass and becomes identified with the group. He then becomes the world server in Aquarius and has no sense of separateness.

As Alan Oken says in *Soul Centered Astrology*, "the illusion of separateness eventually gives way to the illumination of universality." Before that illumination, however, there is a journey through the darkness. "There are no bright stars in the constellation Cancer, no conspicuous or brilliant star, because Cancer is a sign of hiding, or retreat behind that which has been constructed," it is said in *The Labours of Hercules*. "In the very center of the constellation there is a cluster of stars ... called by modern astronomers 'the beehive.' This is a marvelous symbol of the collective organization of the human family, and is one of the reasons why this is regarded as a mass sign. It represents the subconscious mind, hereditary instinct, and the collective imagination."

Thus we can see that, as the mother of all forms, Cancer represents the archetypal collective level that underlies the individual level.

If we are immersed in the mass consciousness, what does it take to begin to bring us out of the masses, along the path of individuation, integration, and fusion with the Soul? Most often, it is a crisis.

But leave the collective we must, whether by our own choosing or by outside force; we must journey from our limited, comfortable, protective surroundings into the flux of challenging events. This is the journey of the hero of a thousand faces of which Joseph Campbell writes.

Yet we can choose this way for ourselves, without being driven by pain or crisis. We can choose to cooperate voluntarily with the evolutionary forces, to create, explore and be open to higher and more evolved ways of perceiving and being. We can cultivate all that is best within us by choosing the esoteric or transpersonal way of meditation, growth and service. We can actively seek to *know ourselves* and willingly and joyfully travel the journey of transformation.

Cancer is called “the Gate, or Door, to Incarnation.” As Alan Oken states, “an incarnation in Cancer indicates that this is the first cohesive anchoring of the Soul in a physical body for a particular cycle of unfoldment.” So we thus begin our lonely way from the known and secure and established onto a higher turn of the spiral, to unfold our new wings as the butterfly does when it emerges from the cocoon. At such times it is good to hear words of instruction and encouragement.

We can build our morale for the new effort with this message from the Tibetan (*A Treatise on White Magic*, pp. 348-350):

Everything depends upon the ability to grasp the inner meaning of all events. One’s entire progress upon the Path rests upon the attitude of making the teaching one’s own. It is only as we transmute the lessons on the inner planes into practical knowledge that they become part of our own experience and are no longer theoretical. Expansion of consciousness should be an ever-increasing practical experience. Theories are of no value until we have changed them into fact. Hence the value of meditating on an ideal. In the meditation our thoughts vibrate temporarily to the measure of the conception, and in time that vibration becomes permanent.

Those who, with open eyes, enter on spiritual training need indeed to count the cost. The reward at the end is great, but the path is rough and the true occultist walks it alone.

Those of us who watch and guide on the inner side of life ... watch with tenderness all of you, who ... struggle, work, fight, fail, continue and serve. Not one hour of service..., not one day’s labor ... is allowed to pass unnoticed. We know and we care, yet we may do naught that you, struggling in the field of the world, can do of that which is needed. The world’s karma engulfs each of you at this epoch. If you could but realize it, the time is short, and rest, joy and peace are on their way.... Take comfort in the assurance that love rules all; take courage from the realization that the Hierarchy stands.

Thus do we continue on our journey, heartened by the sensed presence of our traveling companions, the Great Ones.

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Cancer is also known as the sign of cyclic impulse, of reincarnation. The Soul, that spark of consciousness that is brought forth as spirit, externalizes and relates to matter and chooses to clothe itself in form to help evolution along. We embark on a cycle of lives in which we work to develop a particular quality, or to accomplish a certain work. However, what we do as individuals is also part of the flow of our time, country, group, and family and contributes to that greater group as well. We are in context with others who are also seeking, by the type of focus of its members, to aid in the evolution of humanity and the planet.

For instance, because of our presence here and now, we are part of a group that is seeking to plant the seed of a new method of drawing near to God. Perhaps, in larger context, we may be part of another major reincarnating group who is establishing new methods of education, or healing, or science. We are helping as members of our group, into which as a Soul we chose to reincarnate, to carry forward the development of humanity and, ultimately, of all life on our planet. We prepare the way for the great Teachers to come to our aid and instruction, and for the Christ to return and complete His task of anchoring Love in the human heart.

The Tibetan states in *Esoteric Astrology*, p. 343, that “in the Words given for this sign, the Word of the Soul indicates the objective of the Cancer experience and the purpose for which incarnation has been taken: *I build a lighted house and therein dwell.*”

This sign can carry deep meaning to all. You are in process of incarnation; you are following your chosen way. Is the house we are building yet lit? Is it a lighted house, or is it a dark prison? If it is a lighted house, you will attract to its light and warmth all who are around you, and the magnetic pull of your soul, whose nature is light and love, will save many. If you are still an isolated soul, you will have to pass through the horrors of a more complete isolation and loneliness, treading alone the dark way of the Soul. Yet this isolation, this loneliness and this separation in the dark night are all part of the Great Illusion. It is, however, an illusion into which the whole of humanity is now precipitated in preparation for unity, freedom and release. Some are lost in the illusion and know not what is reality and truth. Others walk free in the world of illusion for the purposes of saving and lifting their brothers, and if you cannot do this, you will have to learn so to walk.

And as we learn so to walk, in companionship with our group brothers and sisters along the way of service, our lighted house can become a place of shared resources and progressive free education in a world of flourishing rain forests, pure soft rains, and equitable distribution of resources. Eastern and western hemispheres alike can be creative, diversified meeting places for the sharing of ideas and the implementation of right human relations under the auspices of a perfected United Nations. As Nicolai Berdayev, Russian philosopher, says in *Freedom and the Spirit*, “spiritual people should not remain proudly on the summits, separating themselves from the material world, but sacrificially serve the spiritualization of the material world and be mindful to lift it to a higher level.” This indicates the new relationship that the spiritual person has with the form world, and with the mass of humanity: to lift or raise the form and its lesser lives to a higher life, and so to redeem them. Thus can the Hierarchy and the Christ work through and with us, and our planet can shine like a blue jewel upon the breast of the Solar Logos. The vision is radiant before us.

We can look forward to a distant future, as we carry our thought of group conscious beyond humanity in its present form, toward what we yet may become. Though we may evolve beyond human form, still will we be linked by our many lives of service within our group. Just as we have served our Planetary Logos as humanity, and aided the animal, plant, and mineral kingdoms of Earth, still will we serve One Who is greater than ourselves, and seek to aid those who are lesser than ourselves. Though we may ultimately become rulers of planets ourselves, serving our great Solar Logos, Who serves yet another greater than Itself, these links or bonds of love and service shall endure throughout eternity.

And so we have journeyed from mass consciousness through individuality to group consciousness along the turnings of the upward spiral. We have seen that love and service underlie all life and give sanctity to the forms that we use. This includes the bodies that are our tools of expression in the material world as well as every emotion and thought, each having its own form in its own realm. Let us make our forms – individual, national, international – clear and transparent, so that the lighted beingness we truly are, and know ourselves to be in our highest moments of realization, may shine forth. Then, indeed, “we build a lighted house and therein dwell.”