

The Wesak Festival (The Festival of Taurus)



*"The Wesak festival holds the same value for those of the Buddhist tradition as Easter has for the Christian. For Wesak celebrates the life achievement of Gautama the Buddha, and millions of Buddhists from all around the world as well as increasing numbers of people from other religious traditions use this occasion to focus on the meaning of illumination and wisdom and compassion, and on how the light which the Buddha embodied continues to shine and point the way forward for humanity. The fact that Wesak occurs at the time of the Taurus full moon enhances this point, for the discipleship opportunity of Taurus is the achievement of spiritual illumination as exemplified in its keynote: **"I see and when the eye is opened, all is light"***

The Full Moon of Taurus

The Wesak Festival

The Wesak Festival is connected with an ancient legend which may be to some a mythical story, to others a symbolic narrative, and to quite a large number a state of present fact. The story is connected with the Buddha, and with a happening in His life which left Him in the position wherein (following the dictates of His heart) He determined to return once a year from the high place in which He dwells and works, to bless the world. The two great Sons of God, the Buddha and the Christ, are one the custodian and the other the recipient of this blessing. Both of Them hold it in trust for transmission to a needy world, and both of Them act as transmitters of this spiritual energy to humanity.

This Wesak Festival therefore has been regarded by the Knowers of the world as of paramount importance in world affairs, for through the two Representatives of Deity upon our planet the world of spiritual realities and the world of human affairs can be brought very close together. Today, in this time of crisis, this is needed as never before, and therefore the work of these great Sons of God assumes unusual importance, and the opportunity offered to humanity at this time is of deeper implications than ever before.

In some parts of India the Wesak Festival has for centuries been regarded as a public holiday. It is a day of reunion, of pilgrimage and of rejoicing expectancy. It is a holy day. That the inner significance of the day is recognised by only a handful of the spiritually minded is of course true; that the vast majority know nothing, and care less, about the possible implications is also true. But the same thing might be said about any of the great Christian festivals. To some, they stand as symbols of great spiritual realities; to others they simply mean a holiday, or a day for the giving of gifts or for

the exchanging of visits. But of the spiritual force then released upon the world, of the true significance of those "days of Grace," such as Good Friday, when Deity comes to the aid of humanity, they know relatively nothing. The inner and true relationships lie outside their calculations altogether. And so it is with the Wesak Festival.

There is one thing in connection with this Festival, however, which differentiates it from all others, and sets it apart. The dates of the Christian Festivals are all of them established by past events or by happenings which occurred centuries ago; or they are in commemoration of some great Disciple of the Christ Who in the past served the race, as He did. The Wesak Festival is in recognition of a *present living event*. It takes place (according to the belief of those who keep it) whilst some great and heavenly event is going on, and it is in the nature of a participating ceremony. This heavenly event takes place annually at the time of the full moon of Taurus (often called the "May Full Moon"), and at that event there is released upon Earth (according to the measure of man's demand) the blessing of God Himself, transmitted through the Buddha and His Brother, the Christ.

This happening, however, can and does work out into physical manifestation and has its physical counterpart. Paralleling the subjective and spiritual ceremony, an event of some importance takes place simultaneously in a little valley in Tibet, on the further side of the Himalayas. It is there that the earthly ceremony of blessing is supposed to take place, and to that valley many people in and around the district find their way, as pilgrims towards the light. There, at the time of the full moon, a solemn ritual is performed, which can be as definitely seen and heard as can any ceremonial in any of our great cathedrals.

The dream, the legend, the fact can be de-

scribed as follows: There is a valley, lying at a rather high altitude in the foothills of the Himalayan-Tibet ranges. It is surrounded by high mountains on all sides except towards the northeast, where there is a narrow opening in the mountain ranges. The valley is, therefore, bottle-shaped in contour, with the neck of the bottle to the northeast, and it widens very considerably towards the south. Up towards the northern end, close to the neck of the bottle, there is to be found a huge flat rock. There are no trees or shrubs in the valley, which is covered with a kind of coarse grass, but the sides of the mountains are covered with trees.

At the time of the full moon of Taurus, pilgrims from all the surrounding districts begin to gather; the holy men and lamas find their way into the valley and fill the southern and the middle parts, leaving the northeastern end relatively free. There, so the legend runs, there gathers a group of those great Beings Who are the Custodians on Earth of God's Plan for our planet and for humanity. By what name we call these Beings does not greatly matter.



The esotericists of the world may call Them the Masters of the Wisdom, the planetary Hierarchy, Who in Their varied grades are ruled and taught by the Christ, the Master of all Masters, and the Teacher alike of angels and of men. Or we can call Them the Rishis of the Hindu Scriptures, or the Society of Illumined Minds, as in the Tibetan teaching. They are the Great Intuitives and the Great

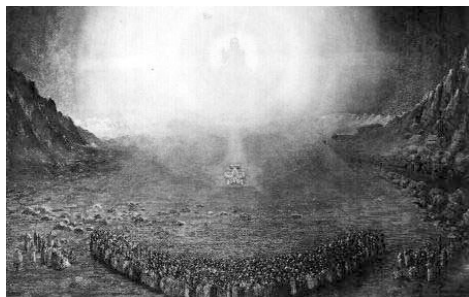
Companions of our more modern presentation, and are the aggregate of perfected humanity who have followed in Christ's steps and have entered for us within the veil, leaving us an example that we should do as They have done. They, with Their wisdom, love and knowledge, stand as a protective wall around our race, and seek to lead us on, step by step (as They Themselves were led in Their time) from darkness to light, from the unreal to the real, and from death to immortality. This group of knowers of divinity are the main participants in the Wesak Festival. They range Themselves in the northeastern end of the valley, and in concentric circles (according to the status and grade of Their initiatory development) prepare Themselves for a great act of service. In front of the rock, looking towards the northeast, stand Those Beings Who are called by Their disciples "the Three Great Lords." These are the Christ, Who stands in the centre; the Lord of living forms, the Manu, Who stands on His right; and the Lord of Civilisation, Who stands on His left. These three face the rock, upon which there rests a great crystal bowl, full of water.

It is an interesting sidelight upon this ceremony and its reality, that all who have dreamt of participating in it are always well aware of the exact position in the lower part of the valley where they themselves stood. One who described it to me spoke of standing well off to one side, close to a tree to which a horse was tethered; and others seemed to know equally well where they found themselves. Some few realised that the place and the position, within the body of onlookers, indicated quite clearly the evolutionary status of the participant.

Behind the grouped Masters, adepts, initiates and senior workers under God's plan, are to be found the world disciples and aspirants in their various grades and groups (either "in the body or out of the body" to quote the words of St. Paul), who constitute at this time the New Group of World Servers.

Those present in their physical bodies have found their way there by ordinary means. Others are present in their spiritual bodies and in the dream state. The "dream" which they later relate--may it not be the physical recognition and the recollection of an inner spiritual happening?

As the hour of the full moon approaches, a stillness settles down upon the crowd, and all look towards the northeast. Certain ritualistic movements take place, in which the grouped Masters and Their disciples of all ranks take up symbolic positions, and form on the floor of the valley such significant symbols as the five-pointed star, with the



Christ standing at the highest point; or a triangle, with the Christ at the apex; or a cross, and other well known formations, all of which have a deep and potent meaning. This is all done to the sound of certain chanted words and esoteric phrases, called mantrams. The expectancy in the waiting, onlooking crowds becomes very great, and the tension is real and increasing. Through the entire body of people there seems to be felt a stimulation or potent vibration which has the effect of awakening the souls of those present, fusing and blending the group into one united whole, and lifting all into a great act of spiritual demand, readiness, and expectancy. It is the climax of the world's aspiration, focussed in this waiting group. These three words--demand, readiness and expectancy--best describe the atmosphere surrounding those present in this secret valley.

The chanting and the rhythmic weaving

grows stronger, and all the participants and the watching crowd raise their eyes towards the sky in the direction of the narrow part of the valley. Just a few minutes before the exact time of the full moon, in the far distance, a tiny speck can be seen in the sky. It comes nearer and nearer, and grows in clarity and definiteness of outline, until the form of the Buddha can be seen, seated in the cross-legged Buddha position, clad in His saffron-coloured robe, bathed in light and colour, and with His hand extended in blessing. When He arrives at a point exactly over the great rock, hovering there in the air over the heads of the three Great Lords, a great mantram, used only once a year, at the Festival, is intoned by the Christ, and the entire group of people in the valley fall upon their faces. This Invocation sets up a great vibration or thought current which is of such potency that it reaches up from the group of aspirants, disciples or initiates who employ it, to God Himself. It marks the supreme moment of intensive spiritual effort throughout the entire year, and the spiritual vitalisation of humanity and the spiritual effects last throughout the succeeding months. The effect of this great Invocation is universal or cosmic, and serves to link us up with that cosmic centre of spiritual force from which all created beings have come. The blessing is poured forth, and the Christ--as the Representative of humanity--receives it in trust, for distribution.

Thus, so the legend runs, the Buddha returns once a year to bless the world, transmitting through the Christ renewed spiritual life. Slowly then the Buddha recedes into the distance, until again only a faint speck can be seen in the sky, and this eventually disappears. The whole ceremonial blessing, from the time of the first appearance in the distance until the moment the Buddha fades out of view, takes just eight minutes. The Buddha's annual sacrifice for humanity (for He comes back only at great cost) is over, and He returns again to that high place where He works and waits. Year after year

He comes back in blessing; year after year the same ceremony has taken place. Year after year He and His great Brother, the Christ, work in the closest cooperation for the spiritual benefit of humanity. In these two great Sons of God have been focussed two aspects of divine life, and They act together as Custodians of the highest type of spiritual force to which our humanity can respond. Through the Buddha, the wisdom of God is poured forth. Through the Christ, the love of God is manifested to humanity; and it is this wisdom and this love which pour forth upon mankind each "May" full moon.

So runs the ancient story; such is the legend which lies behind this popular holiday in the East. Such is the fact, if we can dare believe it and have minds open enough to recognise its possibility. It is, for the West, a somewhat new idea, and calls for the readjusting of some of our cherished beliefs. But, if it can be grasped and understood, there will emerge into our consciousness a new vision and the possibility of the race consciously tapping *today* a new source of supply and a new centre of spiritual force.

To some living people (in the world today) this Festival stands for certain most definite and clearly marked ideas, and for a great proffered opportunity. The ideas for which it stands might be enumerated as follows:

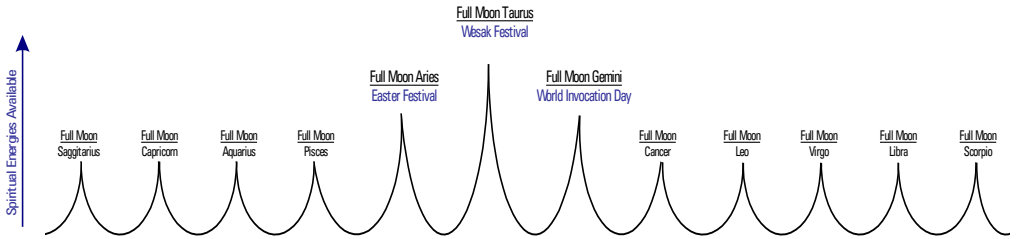
First, this Festival links the past with the present in a way that no other festival, connected with any of the great world religions, has ever done. It stands for a living truth, and for a present opportunity. In their mutual service to the race, the Buddha and the Christ bring about this linking; They also blend the East with the West, and unite in one whole the Christian tradition, the Buddhist and the Hindu faiths, and the aspiration of all believers in the world today, orthodox and unorthodox. Religious distinctions disappear.

Secondly, this Festival marks the high-water mark of spiritual blessing in the world. It is a time of an unusual inflow of life and of spiritual stimulation, and serves to vitalise the aspiration of all humanity.

Thirdly, at the time of the Festival and through the united effort of the Christ and the Buddha, working in the closest cooperation, there is opened a channel of communication between humanity and God, down which the love and wisdom of God himself can pour to a waiting and needy world. Speaking symbolically, and remembering that symbols always veil a truth, it might be stated that, at the time of the full moon, it is as if a door were suddenly opened wide, which at other times stands closed. Through that door, aspirants and disciples can contact energies which are otherwise not easily available. Through that door, approach can be made to Those Who guide the race and to truth and reality, which at other times is not possible. Of this, all who stand on either side of the door can avail themselves, and this will be so increasingly. At the time of the full moon of Taurus, it is as if a door "into Heaven" were opened (still speaking symbolically) so that contact can be then made with those still greater Lives Who are to our planetary Hierarchy what It is to humanity. Once this is recognised, it will be possible to develop a Science of Approach to the deeper truths and forces of life which are as yet hidden behind a veil. This the New Age will reveal. It is part of the true emerging technique of the Path, and of spiritual progress. Again, at this time great expansions of consciousness become possible which are not possible at other times. Disciples and initiates everywhere can be aided and stimulated spiritually to take those great steps which we call initiations, and which enable humanity to penetrate a little more deeply and consciously into the mysteries of the kingdom of God. They reveal clearly the wonder of divinity, the beauty of the divine in every

The Wesak Festival

- the high point of the Spiritual Calendar



individual and a little of the Plan to which humanity is conforming and with which humanity can cooperate.

To return to the drama in the Himalayas: When the Buddha has again disappeared the crowd rise to their feet; the water in the bowl is distributed in tiny portions to the Masters, initiates and disciples, and They then go Their way to the place of service. The crowd, who have all brought their little cups and vessels of water, drink of them, and share with others. In this beautiful "water ceremony of communion" we have presented for us, in symbol, an indication of the New Age which is today upon us, the Aquarian Age, the age of the Water Carrier. It is the age of the "man bearing a pitcher of water," as Christ said in that episode preceding the communion service which He initiated. In this ceremony is perpetuated for us the story of the universality of God's love, the need for our individual purification, and the opportunity to share with each other that which belongs to all. The water, which has been magnetised by the presence of the Buddha and of the Christ, carries certain properties and virtues of a healing and helpful nature. Thus blessed, the crowd silently disperses; the Masters and the disciples return with renewed strength, to undertake another year of world service.

Today this legend, or this relation of a true and vital spiritual happening, is slowly find-

ing its way into the West; there it evokes recognition, or curiosity, wonder or questioning, on the part of many. It seems to some Occidental aspirants that the time has now come when Occident and Orient can gather together spiritually in one great Festival and communion of souls. In unison with each other, and under the guidance of the Buddha Who came to bring light to the East, and of the Christ Who came to bring light to the West, they can demand and evoke such a blessing and spiritual revelation that the immediate future can demonstrate what is so sorely needed--"peace on earth, good will to men." Thus we can usher in an era of brotherhood and understanding which will enable each individual to have more time, free from fear, to find God for him or herself.

Thus the greatest event upon our planet, from the standpoint of the spiritual verities, and the one which has the greatest effect upon the human race, is therefore the Wesak Festival. Its influence has been there always, but unknown to the majority. Now its influence is to be recognised and consciously utilised.

Full Moon Meetings - Taurus -

We encourage you to link in with the Full Moon Meeting being streamed live via Zoom.

Meeting broadcast from London on **Mon 12th May**

Silent Link Up - **5:45** pm

Meditation Meeting begins - **6:00** pm

Please use this link to access the London broadcast.

<https://www.lucistrust.org/broadcast>

If for any reason you are unable to access the broadcast from London, simply link in subjectively to the meditation at the same date and time.

The purpose of this meeting is group meditation as an act of co-operation with the Plan of Hierarchy for humanity. At the time of each full moon Festival, energy qualified by the constellation influencing the period flows into the range of human awareness, establishing the divine attributes in human consciousness. This spiritual inflow can be channelled in meditation into the minds and hearts of men and women everywhere. The technique of meditation governs all expansions of consciousness, all registration of Plan and Purpose and the entire process of evolutionary unfoldment.

Keynote : *“I see and when the eye is opened, all is light”*

The **Taurus** full moon occurs on Mon 12th May at **5:56 pm**

A selection of Alice Bailey Books are available in the following bookshops

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