

2002 and the Incoming Seventh Ray Energy

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The Seven Rays

The ultimate Godhead, the *Brahman* of Hinduism and the *Ain Soph* of the Kabbalah, is infinite, eternal, unknown, and unknowable. The Godhead contains the potential for creation on every level of reality. However, we can only know God through its—and an impersonal pronoun is inappropriate here—lower manifestations. The divine potential is manifest, or actualized, as a trinity and then as a septenary—as Three and then as Seven. We are all familiar with the trinity, which we anthropomorphize as the Father, Son, and Mother; Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma; Osiris, Horus, and Isis; or Chokmah, Daath, and Binah.

We are less familiar with the septenary. It is hinted at in the seven Elohim of Genesis, the seven Spirits before the Throne, and the seven lower sephiroth of the Kabbalah. But definitive teachings on this level of manifestation were not revealed until the late 19th and early 20th centuries. We now know that, below the level of the trinity, the divine essence manifests through the seven rays. These rays, in a very real sense, color the levels of creation which they permeate. People, races, kingdoms of nature, planets, and stars all express some combination of rays, giving them their particular quality.

Cyclical Ray Manifestation

The strength of the rays, permeating the Earth, varies cyclically in time. Each ray comes into manifestation, rises to peak intensity, wanes, and then passes out of manifestation—to await its reemergence in the next cycle. The cyclical manifestation of the rays mirrors the periodic birth, death, and rebirth of all life.

At any given time some of the rays are in manifestation, while others are not. The cyclical period of each ray is different, so the planet is bathed in a continually changing mix of manifesting rays, which in turn plays out through the history of the planet.

Recent history has been dominated by interplay between two rays, the 6th and 7th. The 6th ray of Devotion and Idealism has exerted a strong influence for many centuries, but it is now passing out of manifestation. We saw the character of the 6th ray most conspicuously in the world religions—particularly Christianity and Islam—and the various political and social movements. The 6th ray fosters the search for perfection and devotion to causes, and it can raise strong emotions among those causes' adherents. But over time the 6th ray can also foster narrowness and intolerance.

The rays are neither good nor bad in themselves. They are neutral expressions of energy, and the effects they have on human affairs depend, at least in part, on humanity's response to

them. Typically, the positive aspects of a ray are most apparent when the ray is waxing, and the negative aspects when it is waning. The religious and political fundamentalism, which we see in the world today, is a classic stereotype of the declining 6th ray. The forms, which nurtured this ray during its vibrant phase of manifestation, have now become outworn and inflexible—even fossilized—and the indwelling life must escape into new forms more suitable to its continued unfoldment.

This is true of all forms. They are necessary for the expression of life, but unless they retain the flexibility to adapt, they must eventually be destroyed. For the evolving life of the soul, physical death is as necessary as birth.

The Seventh Ray

As the 6th ray passes out of manifestation, the 7th ray is coming into manifestation. We know quite a lot about the rays, but the 7th ray is perhaps the most difficult to characterize, because it encompasses such a broad range of phenomena.

The name often given to this ray, “Ceremonial Magic,” conveys little to the modern mind, or may suggest that it has no relevance to our times. An alternative name, “Ceremonial Order,” may convey nothing at all. “Ceremonial” suggests meaningless or irritating “bowing and scraping,” the kinds of activity that were buried with monarchies and perhaps should be buried in institutions like the military.

“Magic” suggests a primitive belief in supernatural powers, whose only modern successor is the deliberate deception of stage magic. Alternatively, in some people’s minds, magic is something that may have validity, but is intrinsically evil—the work of the Devil.

The 7th ray governs ritual. Again, people tend to dismiss ritual as an outworn component of religious practice; the term “empty ritual” sums up a common reaction to high-church religion. But, interestingly, the very people who scorn religious ritual may eagerly watch football games and professional wrestling, or participate in political rallies and sales meetings. Ritual, of whatever form, is choreographed symbolism that captures a particular kind of energy and makes it available for an intended purpose.

Finally, the 7th ray is said to be the ray of organization. Whether we are talking about forming an organization, or organizing our lives or closets, the purpose is to impose structure on something that would otherwise be chaotic. The intent is to enhance esthetics, improve efficiency, or simply make something work better.

Descent of Divine Force

In its broadest sense the 7th ray expresses the descent of force—divine or human—to the physical plane. On the Kabalistic Tree of Life it corresponds to the path from the highest sephiroth all the way down to the lowest sephirah, *Malkuth*, the Kingdom. The physical plane is just as “divine” as the planes above it. To bring divine force down to the physical level—the purpose of magic—is not something evil; it is the means by which we can make the world a better place.

The 7th ray proceeds from the 3rd Aspect of God, which Eastern Orthodox theologians anthropomorphize as Sophia, or Wisdom. Sophia is the link between the Godhead and creation, and this link has an obvious feminine flavor

For reasons that we do not fully understand, the Creator saw fit to arrange that all life periodically descend into physical manifestation before ascending, once more, to nonphysical levels. This is true of universes, stars, planets, kingdoms, races, and people. We are “born” into the physical world and stay here for a while before we “die” and return to nonphysical planes. While we are here on the physical plane, we form relationships, face challenges, gain experience, and hopefully leave a little further along the path of conscious evolution than when we started.

Aquarian Age

In addition to experiencing the transition from 6th-ray to 7th-ray energy, we are also moving from the Piscean to the Aquarian Age. The four fixed signs in the zodiac have always been associated with the lion, the bull, the eagle, and the man. Aquarius corresponds to the man—to humanity. The concurrent change of ray influence and astrological age makes the present time especially significant—with a strong focus on the empowerment of humanity.

The precise dates when these cycles began are not known; nor are they of any real consequence. There is enough inertia, both in the planet and in that vast complex of activity we call civilization, that we do not notice the changes from one day to the next. But—just as we notice the turning of the tide when the sea level is already rising or falling—the time comes when the effects of changing planetary energy become unmistakable.

Over the last few decades—and perhaps in 2002 in particular—we can see a new quality in human affairs. And there is every reason to expect that the changes will accelerate for some time to come. Importantly, since the 7th ray is waxing in intensity, the effects are mostly positive in nature.

Influx of 7th Ray Energy

The influx of 7th ray energy has profound implications for the spiritual path. When the 6th ray held sway, the emphasis was on individual devotion and worship, but emphasis is now shifting to much more practical forms of spirituality. Spiritual growth is becoming active, rather than passive; and it is also becoming more of a group, or collective process. Humanity is coming of age and is shouldering greater responsibility for its own destiny and that of the Earth.

No longer is it sufficient to “become as little children,” “surrender to the will of God,” and pray for divine intervention to solve humanity’s problems. Now, we ourselves must get involved, and demonstrate a willingness to do our part. Service will constitute an increasing part of our spiritual work.

There development did not take place by chance. For many centuries the Hierarchy of Masters orchestrated the life of the planet without active participation on our part. However, as human consciousness expanded it became possible for the race to play a more active role. In 1925 the Hierarchy made the momentous decision to solicit humanity’s assistance in implementing the Divine Plan. This did not mean just a few senior disciples, but millions of people in all walks of life.

A word here might be in order to clarify the nature of the Masters and the Hierarchy. Masters are our older brothers. They are members of the human race who have reached that great

milestone in the unfoldment of consciousness that we call the 5th initiation. They have reached a level of human perfection that no longer requires them to reincarnate in physical bodies. After the 5th initiation, most individuals leave the planet to serve elsewhere, but the Masters have chosen to stay here to guide the planetary evolution.

The Masters are organized in a Hierarchy, not unlike a large corporation, with increasing levels of authority and responsibility. In the most senior positions are individuals who have attained the 6th and higher initiations.

The Masters communicate with their disciples in physical incarnation, and, within the constraints of our free will, try to influence world affairs in the direction of evolutionary progress. They have called upon us to help bring about a new world order based on right human relations.

But in responding to their call, we are not restricted to the tools at our disposal in everyday life. We also have the ability to invoke higher energies and bring them to bear on the problems at hand. This is the province of invocatory magic.

Magic is the control over physical phenomena by nonphysical means. Magic extends to the whole range of endeavors that involve “mind over matter.”

We need to overcome the notion that magic is somehow in conflict with religion. In the Middle Ages, the church accepted the reality of magic and distinguished “good” from “bad magic”—or what, today, we would call “white” and “black magic.” Good or white magic benefits other people, while bad or black magic harms people.

The great Renaissance theologian, Cornelius Agrippa (1486—1535), asserted that magic is the best means to know God and nature. Today, we are seeing the reemergence of magic as an important element in spirituality, and particularly in service.

At the time of the Renaissance, mathematics was considered a branch of magic, and so was the invention of mechanical devices like clocks. The saying “It works like magic” had literal meaning.

Many modern technologies also fit the description of magic, and in fact technology is one of the areas of human endeavor governed by the 7th ray; finance is another. And it is no accident that the explosion of technology and the expansion of economic and financial activity are taking place during an influx of 7th ray energy.

Perhaps the most obvious form of magic practiced today is healing. In fact, all of the healing arts are applications of magic, and perhaps if we realize this we can become better practitioners.

All rituals are tools in magic, and if we realize that we will become more aware of its religious importance. For centuries religious rituals were performed to maintain the cosmic order and to ensure harmony in the world. Certainly there is a need for order and harmony in the world today.

In summary, magic is the application of spiritual forces in a broad range of activities, from the raising of human consciousness to the solution of problems in everyday life.

Post-9/11 Era

2002 is the first year after the terrible events of September 11—events that, as many commentators have said, changed the world we live in. In his acceptance speech for Nobel Peace Prize, in December 2001, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan commented that “We have entered the third millennium through a gate of fire.”

On the one hand, there is a new sense of vulnerability and heightened anxiety. People feel less safe than before. Terrorism is no longer something that happens in far-away places, but something that can happen, and has happened, “right here at home.” Similar events could happen in the future, and the fact that we do not know specifically what kinds of events or when they will occur increases the pervasive climate of stress.

On the other hand, we have been swept up in a mass response that includes new patriotism, restatement of traditional values, and a sense that we need to stand together to meet a common threat. As the sages are fond of saying, crises are times of opportunity.

Mass response to the events of 9/11—terrible as they were—has not all been negative. There was a very real possibility that the terrorist attacks would increase separatism; in particular that they would turn Americans against Islam or people of Middle-Eastern origin. There were instances of separatist feelings, perverted nationalism. But there has also been a widespread recognition that separatism caused the destruction and that it must be overcome. The events of 9/11 and the tragedy unfolding in the Middle East leave us in no doubt what future we face if hatred is allowed to continue.

There are signs of the beginning of a new era in which the world is perceived as a smaller place, and humanity is seen as a family sharing common concerns. The events of 9/11 and the ongoing Middle-East conflict throw into sharper contrast the promises of Light and the reaction of darkness. However, they also demonstrate the power of human response, when channeled for good.

A new civilization is emerging that embraces all people—regardless of race, nation or creed—and is founded on the recognition of common humanity and right human relations. We must mold this new civilization according to our ideals, not those of materialism and indifference.

New Age

It has become trite to speak of a new age, and all kinds of radical trends are attributed to it. However, real changes are occurring in human consciousness. Groups are springing up around world to meditate for peace, many of them using the Great Invocation, the universal prayer for the Aquarian Age that was revealed in 1945. Through instruments such as the Great Invocation, new power can be brought down to the plane of human affairs.

Invocation is essentially different from traditional prayer. Whereas prayer is addressed to an external savior or arbiter, through invocation we access higher energy directly. Invocation is a science—one that will become increasingly important as humanity matures in consciousness.

Spirituality is broader than religion, but religion will continue to play a major role in human affairs and offers great hope for the future. As the forms of Piscean-Age religion become

outworn, new religious forms are needed that will embrace people from all nations, cultures, and traditions. Instead of being sectarian and divisive, religion must become a force for unity—a way to express our common humanity with common ideals and aspirations.

The Planetary Hierarchy has long planned the emergence of new world religion. It will bring together different religious traditions and rituals—Western and Eastern. Traditional, mainstream religion must also merge with esoteric traditions, such as the Rosicrucians and Masons, and incorporate their rituals. The challenges will be great, but the potential for renewed spiritual expression is great enough to warrant all the effort it will take.

The new world religion will be built on the science of invocation and on the observance of certain rituals during the year.

Three Full-Moon festivals will play a major role in its annual cycle. Last month, we celebrated the festival of the full moon in Aries, which honors the Risen Christ. Two days ago (4/26), at the full moon in Taurus, we celebrated the Wesak Festival when the Buddha appears to his followers in the Himalayas. Next month we celebrate the full moon in Gemini, which is becoming known as World Invocation Day.

These three festivals invoke the power of the Buddha, Lord of Light; the Christ, Light of the World; and humanity, the new world savior. Through the efforts of people willing to collaborate with the Masters, Light, Love, and Power can flow into the hearts and minds of people everywhere.

The notion that higher energy can flow into our hearts and minds is not new. It was the whole purpose of sacramental ritual, as performed throughout the ages. The difference is that we now know more about how it works.

What Must We Do?

The rays cycle into and out of manifestation, each bathing the planet—and ourselves—in its special radiance. The rays influence our individual and collective lives, relationships, and endeavors. But, with humanity's expanding consciousness, we are not totally passive with respect to the rays' effects. As our knowledge of the rays increases, we find ourselves able to interact with them to exploit the beneficial qualities and minimize less desirable qualities.

This interaction is particularly significant in the case of the incoming 7th ray, because, as we have seen, this ray governs the descent of divine power to the plane of everyday affairs. We are rooted in the physical plane, and we have special opportunities—and corresponding responsibility—to capture this divine power and make it work for the benefit, not only of ourselves, but also for all the kingdoms of nature.

Humanity has reached a point in the unfoldment of consciousness when we are, not only capable, but also responsible, for participating in the spiritual economy of the planet.

Thus the notion of magic takes on special meaning. Whatever we choose to call it, we shall increasingly play the role of magi, invoking, receiving, manipulating, and distributing energy. Seventh ray energy manifests through technology, through the use of money, through the healing arts, and through sacramental ritual. This energy is available to us, and we shall be held accountable for the way we use it.

Will we utilize the energy wisely? Our choices and decisions must be governed by group, not individual, consciousness. Too often, when given new energy in the past, we have succumbed, in its use, to selfishness and separatism. If we fail again, we shall face serious karmic consequences. Never forget that the karma that we generate, positive or negative, is proportional to the power we exert. We must accept the guidance, both of our own souls, and the Masters of Wisdom in this great collaborative effort. The Masters have solicited our help, and we can scarcely refuse.

In conclusion, we look forward with enthusiasm to the rest of 2002 and the years to come. This is a truly exciting period in the history of the planet. We give thanks for being in physical incarnation at this time, and we give thanks for the opportunity to work with the Masters to make the world a better place and a more sacred place. The planet Earth is destined, one day, to become a sacred planet; we can help bring forward that auspicious achievement