

*To whose temple the Arch is starlit,
In whose temple the Sun is the image of gold,
To whose temple the Moon goes every month
And brings the message out every Full-Moon,
And whose message the Moon sings as a word of sixteen letters,
His religion I belong to, His temple I visit,
His name I utter, His glory I live in.
To Him I offer the lotus of my day,
To Him I offer the lotus of my night.*

These seed thoughts from the Spiritual Psychology meditations of Dr. Ekkirala Krishnamacharya give the note for the Lunar Messenger of the Circle of Good Will. The moon is the reflective principle and symbol of the mind. When pure and calm, it reflects impressions from higher circles. Especially the time of the full moon is conducive for higher alignment, if we are poised enough. The alignment of the sun, moon and earth in the sky helps experience the magic of the light of the soul and its manifestation down to the physical.

The Lunar Messenger is published every month in time for the full moon. It contains thoughts from the teachings of eternal wisdom. Its purpose is to inspire us to put them into practical life.

VISTAS OF WISDOM 60: RITUALS

Imitating the Plan

There are certain structures with every creation. These structures happen out of habit. Just as we have developed certain habits, there are basic patterns in creation, such as the first triangle of time, nature and impulse, the triangle of cosmic qualities, or the fivefold manifestation of nature. The entire creation is a great ritual, for a ritual is work done in accordance with the ancient patterns. The dawn of man itself is the result of an organized ritual of the unseen forces of nature ever at work. Hence, the dawn of the science of rituals can be traced to the dawn of man on this earth.

In a ritual we imitate. "As above so below" is the work of the ritualist. When we imitate the work of nature in a ritual, we focus on the greater whole and enter into a relationship with the greater system. We receive the related energy and then pass it on to our environment. Thus, we coordinate our own system with the rhythms of the smaller and greater surrounding systems.

The Moon moves around the earth in a precise rhythm, so we know precisely when the full moon happens and when the new moon happens. The movement of the Sun and the planets is also highly rhythmic. If we connect to it every day, we connect to the Plan as it exists in higher circles. This ritual imitates the Plan. We should regularly look at the daily chart to know the placement of the Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and the moon nodes. The next step is to know the meaning of the respective combinations. We align ourselves with the planetary combination to receive the message as it comes from the sun and the planets. Then we can try to manifest.

The ritualists of the past could adapt themselves to the larger rhythms of the solar system, the zodiac, and even

the groups of solar systems such as the Great Bear, the Pleiades, and Sirius, without using astronomical instruments. Purely through rhythmic and ritualistic orientation, their consciousness penetrated to the great systems and they obtained profound information from the planes of the impersonal wisdom of the universe.

Also on our planet there is a great rhythm with the five elements, the minerals, plants and animals. Only man was given the free will. We too can follow the rhythm by which we can live free. Then we would gain the magnetic vibrations from the rhythm of nature and the related electrical functioning of our brain.

The original form of the ancient rituals will be re-established under the guidance of the Masters of Wisdom. The hierarchical teachings speak of a fresh incoming of the energy of the seventh ray of ritual and ceremonial order. Master Djwhal Khul says, "The seventh ray can bring in surprising and magical results." When we work rhythmically, we get into a relationship with the magical power of the seventh ray. It gives us great strength when we do something for a long time with continued interest. Without keen interest, the activity becomes a dead routine. A rhythmic life, however, leads to the ritual and to the secrets hidden in matter, the Light of Truth.

Sacred Commitment

A ritual requires a periodically repetitive approach in which we do the same thing at the same time for many years and always approach freshly. The freshness breaks the monotony and allows a continuity of purpose that arouses the will. When we decide to do a ritual, we should set the periodicity - daily, weekly, monthly, etc. We should then follow that periodicity and we should adapt to the rhythm in time. We thus consecrate our-

selves to the ritual and remain with a constant vibration. A ritualist is rhythmic, stable and completely consecrated to the ritual. He does not deviate from the ritual and does not break the periodicity. When a ritual is stable, the seventh ray arranges and systematizes us. It anchors powerful energies in us and in the place. Thus, the places are energetically prepared and the ritualist as well as the ones participating in the ritual are transformed. Therefore, it does not work if we do not follow the rhythm and participate in some rituals and not in other rituals.

Consecration is also called 'sacred commitment'. People who do not have commitment are like dry leaves that move with the wind. Many enthusiastic students in occult wisdom are with many things, they collect many books and they go here and there. They spend lot of energy in this but they have no consecration of committing themselves to a particular path of life and a task with devotion. You can commit to one path and also do additional things, but see that you progress on a regular basis so that you really are on the path.

We do not have to perform rituals, but if we have an aversion to rhythms, this will put us away from the work of the seventh ray. Some cultures were so ritualistic that people got fed up with rituals. Today, there is much revolt against rituals, and many well-meaning people regard themselves as having outgrown them. However, they forget that rituals and ceremonies have their place and that they teach values when they are used to reveal and not to obscure. When the meaning of a ritual is not realized, ritual is experienced as formal and dead. But when we imitate tuning up with the spirit, not just relating to the form, we see that rituals and organized ceremonies are a constructive force that lead to the experience of God.

Rhythm of Rituals

Someone once asked Master EK why in the Aquarian Age rituals should be done at all, where Master CVV, with his prayer, has simplified realising oneself. Master EK explained that the valuable things of the past should not be put off on account of the incoming new energy, which adds splendour to the path of yoga: "The Vedic tradition has a value in it, and it helps the unfoldment of awareness." Master EK was also once asked: "Can't we just do a ritual in our mind instead of all the physical efforts?" He said, "Yes, you can, but then you also start eating only in your mind." The soul takes to a body to make experiences on the physical plane.

In the path of yoga of Master CVV, the rhythm of the regular morning and evening prayer is pivotal. Other rituals such as fire ritual and water ritual can also be understood as part of this path and picked up according to one's inclination, but they are not meant for a compulsory use in the groups. No one should feel obliged to do certain

hymns or rituals done in the East, like touching the feet of the Master. Learning Sanskrit hymns or rituals is not easy, and when done, it should be done properly.

Some rituals are rather complicated and the tradition has added many insignificant things. Master KPK has therefore simplified rituals particularly for the West by removing excessive and complicated procedures and working out the essentials. The core of all rituals is to relate to the light and to invoke it.

When performing rituals, we should visualise that we are sitting in the heart and are performing the ritual. When we look to a paper and read the hymns during the ritual, we are still below the mental plane. Before we perform a ritual, we should know it by heart and be able to utter the sounds. Then we can totally focus on the ritual. It depends on our devotion; only the divine experience makes the ritual fruitful.

All prayers, meditations, and rituals have the goal of tuning to the fundamental unity of existence. When we do a ritual in the proper manner, it continues in the mind the whole day, and thus, every act becomes a sacrifice for the Divine - eating, working, sleeping, etc. Thus, we are naturally in a state of liberation. If we forget to see the Lord in all and to connect with him, it is useless to do many exercises.

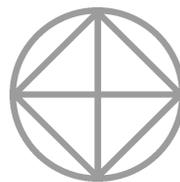
Rituals and Giving

Some try to earn money with rituals by suggesting to perform certain rituals and exploiting the desires of the people. If the intent is wrong, it is better not to attend.

Whether we attend a ritual or not should depend on the purity and dedication of the person doing it. It is not wrong to give something for a ritual. Donating money or things belonged to every conclusion of a Vedic ritual. Regular donative rituals were regarded as a key to relax the inner grip over the material. The more we act in a selfless manner, the more the coils of karma loosen.

Some people think that the more money they spend on rituals to please the Lord, the better fruits they would get. That's not the case. It is useless to carry out rituals to fulfil one's own desires; such rituals bind us. You are worshipping God when you have a desire or a problem, and you forget him once that is fulfilled. When we just worship the Lord and strive to serve our fellow beings with the aspiration to remain connected with the Divine, then we are purified and slowly we recognize our true identity.

Sources used: K.P. Kumar: Healer's Handbook. Notes from seminars. Dr. E. Krishnamacharya: Book of Rituals. The World Teacher Trust - Dhanishta, Visakhapatnam, India (www.worldteachertrust.org)



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