

## 01-01 Reflection 11

### **Developing your talents**

New Year's Eve, the transition from the old year to the new, is celebrated in many cultures and traditions together with family or friends. By preparing special food and fireworks celebrations, the atmosphere is cleansed from old forces to make new developments possible.

The name of the first month of the calendar year, January, is derived from Janus, the Roman god of antiquity. Janus is associated with change, transition and progress and is usually depicted as a head with two faces: one face looking to the left (symbolising the past) and one face looking to the right (symbolising the future).

The turn of the year is a time not only for looking back at the old year to draw the necessary lessons from it, but also a time for previewing the coming year in order to live with new perspectives and new dynamics.

### **Intention and behaviour**

Many people start the year with good intentions. In practice, these plans appear to be pointless because of the yawning gap between our intentions and our behaviour. An intention can change fairly quickly and easily. Changing our behaviour, however, usually requires considerable effort. But once certain desired behaviours do become a habit, it is no longer difficult to persevere.

Integrating desirable habits into your personality will certainly yield fruits. The writer Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803-1882) gave some good advice to help achieve that shift. He wrote:

*Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny.*

From our childhood, we are trained to become individualised personalities and to understand and judge everything as such, to reason and control everything and particularly to stick up for ourselves. Quite a number of seeds are sown in us.

You can truly talk about a spiritual turn of the year when, at some point in your life, you decide to be a disciple of the soul on the basis of a soul consciousness that transcends space and time. The personality then makes itself subservient to the soul, it becomes an instrument for the soul.

### **Old and new**

This transition from Old to New, therefore, forms a difficult phase on the spiritual path. At this turning point, the personality should consciously surrender to inner guidance by the soul. This surrender requires an entirely new attitude toward yourself because you have arrived at this point with everything that you currently are, with everything that has ever been sown in you. And you become aware that from that moment on, you yourself are going to play a different role in your own life.

Having arrived at this point of surrender, you can only say ‘yes’ to what comes your way and be inwardly silent. The outer life goes on – all civic and social obligations are conscientiously fulfilled while deep inside your inner development takes place.

If you experience something of the beneficent power of the new soul within yourself, then you might feel an inclination to focus all your attention on that and to regard that feeling as the goal of the path. But that would cause the inward orientation to slip away. Soon this inward orientation could be extinguished and dissolved by the natural tendency of the personality to be outwardly directed.

It is a classical paradox on the spiritual path that the soul must grow and become more powerful without being encapsulated by a personality that is drunk on itself. The soul can express itself only via the personality, and that, by means of a dynamic mode of life arising from love and inner knowledge. In other words: “Sow a new thought and you reap a new action”.

You can only react to the impulses of the soul insofar as your nature allows. Your reactions should, therefore, be completely authentic. Much of the inner work is done invisibly. If people on the spiritual path use their individual talents cooperatively, then, despite great diversity, they will work together harmoniously from a basis of unity, freedom and love.

### **Unity of all existence**

In chapter 28 of *The Aquarian Gospel*, Jesus the adult man, gives an address to Hindus in Benares, India. He speaks about the importance of being aware of the unity of all existence. He says, among other things:

*The universal God is one, yet he is more than one; all things are God; all things are one. By the sweet breaths of God all life is bound in one; so if you touch a fibre of a living thing you send a thrill from the centre to the outer bounds of life.*

*The God I speak about is everywhere; he cannot be compassed with walls, nor hedged about with bounds of any kind. All people worship God, the One; but all the people see him not alike.*

*A man’s ideal is his God, and so, as man unfolds, his God unfolds. Man’s God today, tomorrow is not God. The nations of the earth see God from different points of view, and so he does not seem the same to everyone.*

*You are, each one, a priest, just for yourself; and sacrifice of blood God does not want. Just give your life in sacrificial service to all of life, and God is pleased.*

Jesus could have spent his entire life in the temple of Jerusalem studying, teaching, meditating and praying. But he did not do so for that would have been in conflict with his mission for the world and humanity. In order to further develop himself, he travelled the world to meet with the greatest sages and thinkers and with representatives of existing religions.

The concept of ‘world’ is a symbol for our personality. There are many stories about Jesus healing the crippled, the lame, the blind and the sick. He argued with priests about the

withered and degenerate aspects of their religion, which was no longer religion in the original sense of the word.

## **Reconnecting**

Religion means 'reconnecting'. True religion, therefore, aims to re-establish the dynamic, living connection between human beings and the divine. This living connection is a universal principle that has been sought in all times and by all peoples.

It is only an intense longing for this restored connection that can facilitate our decision to set this as a new goal in life. This decision, this good intention, heralds New Year's Eve. It is from that moment onward that we give the Other-One-within-us – the Jesus principle – the opportunity to heal the blind, the lame and the crippled aspects of ourselves.

The 'Light of the World', the evolving soul power, attacks our crystallised, religious imagery and discards all distorted images that reside literally in our blood. That letting go and starting over again is sometimes perceived as fireworks popping within ourselves.

It gradually becomes clear that the only truly divine worship is the inner sacrifice of the personality. All seeds that have ever been sown are dug up one by one, because now there is a completely new seed that has germinated.

And wherever the inner Jesus appears, he leaves his footprints behind within us. The inner life is growing. It gradually escapes our comprehension but its presence is felt increasingly as it irradiates our hearts, heads and hands more and more.

## **New Year's wishes**

What do we wish you for the new year?  
Not that no sorrow will come over you,  
not that this year will be a bed of roses,  
not that you'll never shed a tear,  
not that you'll never feel a stab of pain.

No, all this we do not wish you ...  
because tears purify the heart,  
sorrow ennoble the mind,  
pain and distress bring us closer to the Father-Mother  
of the child of Bethlehem within us  
and offer us blissful comfort.

Our wish for you is:  
that the knowledge of the Light may manifest itself in you,  
that you will experience the redeeming Love  
and that you will thereby be emboldened to liberating deeds.