

LABOR XI: Cleansing the Augean Stables Aquarius, January 20 - February 19

Within the Place of Peace the Great Presiding One poured forth the radiance of his exalted thought. The Teacher drew nigh.

"The single flame must light the other forty-nine," the Great Presiding One affirmed. "So be it," the Teacher answered. "Having lit his own lamp Hercules now must bring the Light to others." Not long thereafter, the Teacher summoned Hercules.

"Eleven times the wheel has turned, and now you stand before another Gate. For long you have pursued the light which flickered first uncertainly, then waxed to a steady beacon, and now shines for you like a blazing sun. Turn now your back upon the brightness; reverse your steps; go back to those or whom the light is but a transient point, and help them make it grow. Direct your steps to Augeas whose kingdom must be cleansed of ancient evil. I have spoken."

Forth went Hercules through Gate the eleventh in search of Augeas the king.

When Hercules approached the realm where Augeas was the ruler, a horrid stench that made him faint and weak assailed his nostrils. For years, he learned, King Augeas had never cleared away the dung his cattle left within the royal stables. Then, too, the pastures were so amply dunged, no crops could grow. In consequence, a blighting pestilence was sweeping through the land, wreaking havoc with human lives.

To the palace then went Hercules and sought out Augeas. Formed that Hercules would cleanse the stenchy stables, Augeas displayed distrust and disbelief.

"You say that you will do this mighty task without reward?" the King declared suspiciously. "I have no faith in those who make such boasts. Some cunning plan you have contrived, O Hercules, to take my throne from me. Of men who seek to serve the world without recompense, I have not heard. At this point, though, I'd welcome any fool who sought to help. But a bargain must be struck, lest I be chided as a foolish king. If you, within a single day, shall do what you have promised, one-tenth of my great flock of cattle shall be yours; but if you fail, your life and fortune will be in my hands. Of course, I do not think you can fulfil your boast, but try you may."

Hercules then left the King. He wandered through the blighted place, and saw a cart go by piled high with dead, the victims of the pestilence.

Two rivers, he observed, the Alpheus and the Peneus, flowed quietly nearby. Standing on the banks of one, the answer to his problem flashed upon his mind.

With might and main he labored. By great exertions he succeeded in diverting both these streams from courses they had followed for decades. The Alpheus and the Peneus were made to pour their waters through the dung-filled stables of King Augeas. The rushing torrents swept away the long-accumulated filth. The realm was purged of all its fetid murk. Within a single day the task impossible had been performed.

When Hercules, quite satisfied with this result, returned to Augeas, the latter scowled.

"You have succeeded by a trick," King Augeas cried out in rage. "The rivers did the work, not you. It was a ruse to take from me my cattle, a plot against my throne. Rewards you shall not have. Go, get you hence ere I cut down your stature by a head."

The angry King thus banished Hercules, and bade him nevermore set foot within his realm on penalty of sudden death. Having performed the task assigned, the son of man who also was the Son of God went back to him from whom he came.

"A server of the world you have become," the Teacher said when Hercules drew nigh. "You have gone on by going back; you have come to the House of Light by yet another path; you have spent your light that the light of others might shine. The jewel that the eleventh labor gives is yours forever more."

- F.M.

The Energies of Aquarius (Lecture by A.A.B. 1937)

There is a phrase in the New Testament, "The end of the world". It is just beginning to dawn upon many of us that what was really meant was that the sign Pisces, in which Christ, the Great World Savior, came, would end at a particular date, and we are right in that time now. We are not facing a judgment day in which the sheep and goats will be divided and some go to heaven and others go to hell. Many ridiculous interpretations have been put upon the symbolism of the Bible.

It has been thought that the sheep went to heaven and the goats went to hell. It is the other way round. The goat in Capricorn is the initiate and from a certain esoteric angle the goats do go to heaven because they function in the spiritual kingdom which is heaven; the sheep remain on earth (which after all is the only hell one can possibly predicate) until they are no longer sheep, until they learn to have individual thought, become goats, climb the mountain and exchange the position of follower to that of independent seekers.

Entrance into heaven is entrance into the Aquarian age, begun during the last two hundred years. We are told that about the year two thousand our pole star and another star (Vega) in the heavens will be in conjunction with each other and the Aquarian age will be fully with us, but only fully with us in the sense that we shall be entering it and Piscean forces will be receding rapidly. All that transpires in physical plane expression is due to subjective forces.

A school of thought exists which traces all the mysteries, all the teachings that we are now calling the Ageless Wisdom, to a form of animal worship and temple mysteries of a sordid and sexual kind. I shall not go into details, but I want to tell you what I think is of vital interest for us to grasp, because it is something in the Aquarian age which will be emerging in greater fullness right along. It is one thing to be subjected to blind force, it is another to have an intelligent outlook upon what is happening and to understand and look for certain occurrences. Perhaps for the first time in the history of our race there is a sufficient number of intelligent men and women to anticipate happenings with an understanding based on what has transpired in the past, so enabling them to predicate what will happen in the future.

What caused the worship of the bull in Taurus? Not the bestial nature of humanity that took the bull as a symbol of the animal nature and deified it, which is what the average human being who investigates the mysteries says. It is because there were subjective forces playing upon our planet as our sun passed through the sign Taurus. The lesson for man is that under the symbol of the bull he had to wrestle with the animal in himself.

Then our sun passed into Aries, the Ram, and we had the sacrifice of the lamb, showing that the sacrifice of the animal nature was beginning to succeed the concept of wrestling with the animal nature.

Then the sun passed into Pisces, the fishes. The forces that played upon our planet at that time brought into the consciousness of man his essential duality and the link between the two parts of himself, two fishes linked by a band. This consciousness, on a large scale, began to make its impact upon [184] the human being, i.e. that he is soul and body. Christ came in Pisces to demonstrate to us perfectly what would be our ultimate achievement when we had linked those two together, the fish, the symbol of the second person, the fish Avatar, and the fish swimming in matter, the symbol of the human being in incarnation. There you have the story.

Having traced that wonderful, idealistic, evolutionary teaching down the last five to six thousand years as the result of subjective forces playing upon humanity, we are now passing into the sign Aquarius where, through symbolism of water and purification, we shall learn how to be the soul and not the human being. That is what is going to happen in Aquarius.

At the end of the Aquarian age, approximately two thousand five hundred years hence, can you picture what humanity will be like? The animal nature, the emotional nature and the mentality will be secondary, and the soul, the consciousness aspect, that universal urge in each of us that puts us en rapport with God, will have surged to the front. Putting it another way, we shall have left behind the human kingdom and, though we may be inhabiting bodies, our consciousness will be focused in the fifth kingdom of nature, the spiritual kingdom. That is the prophecy, the thing that lies ahead for humanity in two thousand five hundred years' time.

The opposite sign to Aquarius is Leo, the sign of the individual, the man who has found himself as a human being. He stood upon his own feet; he was the center of his universe; the stars revolved around him, everything happened in himself. By that he learned certain great lessons: that it was just possible he was not as important as he thought, and that by subjecting himself to certain training he could find a larger self; and so he passed on into Scorpio, where he was tested to see how much persistence he had. The outstanding characteristic of the aspirant is endurance and the sign that calls for the utmost endurance is Scorpio. He triumphs in Scorpio. and in Sagittarius he becomes the one-pointed disciple who, having [185] put his hand to the plow, cannot turn back; he may want to put he cannot turn back. He goes on, and because he goes on he climbs to the top of the mountain in Capricorn and undergoes the transfiguration.

In Aquarius the disciple becomes the serving master. We shall take up the subject of world saviors in Pisces. In Aquarius the man is a serving master. That is the keynote I want you to hold in your minds. He can be a master because he has learned to serve, and he can serve because he is a master. Those two go together.

The ruler of the first decanate of Aquarius is Saturn. Saturn gives us discipline; Saturn opens for us the door of opportunity. Saturn, through spiritual exercises and trial, strengthens our spiritual muscles and enables us to emerge out of darkness into light.

Hallmarks of the Initiate

Hercules being the initiate is pledged to do three things, which can be summed up as the outstanding characteristics of all true initiates. If they are not present in some measure the man is not an initiate.

1. *Unselfish service.* This is not the service that we render because we are told that service is a way to liberation, but service rendered because our consciousness is no longer self centered. We are no longer interested in ourselves but our consciousness being universal there is nothing for us to do but to assimilate the troubles of our fellowmen and help them. It is no effort for the true Aquarian master to do so.

2. *Group work.* This is something that we know little about as yet. The world is full of organizations and societies, brotherhoods that are happy training grounds for ambitious people. I do not mean to be unkind, but my experience with the average group is that it is a hotbed of jealousies, people trying to impress the others with the amount of their knowledge and the wonder of their self-sacrificing lives. This is not group work.

Group work is standing alone spiritually in the handling of one's own affairs with complete forgetting of one's own self and affairs in the welfare of the particular section of humanity with which we are associated. It negates ambition; it negates the progress upward in any lodge or organization; it negates all assuming of official prerogatives. I do not think the new groups will have any officials but will work automatically because of the intuitional spiritual interplay between the minds of the units in the groups. We do not know anything about it yet.

Can you think of a group so united on spiritual levels that letters, pamphlets, books, etc., can be done away with; that the inter-communication between the minds of the members of the group is perfect? That is the Aquarian group and it is not with us yet.

3. *Self-sacrifice.* The meaning of self-sacrifice is making the self holy. That deals with the self of the group and the self of the individual; that is the work of the initiate.

From the top of the mountain in Capricorn, Hercules has to come down literally into material filth and clean the Augean stables. I want to give you an idea of his psychology. He had climbed up to the top of the mountain. He had passed all the great tests, passed from Capricorn into the spiritual kingdom and knew somewhat the significance of mystical ecstasy, and in that highly spiritual state he received word to go down and clean the stables. What an anti-climax. No great world work, but to clean stables.

The object of the test can be summed up in this way: Hercules had to aid in the cleansing of the world by the right direction of the forces of life through it. You appreciate that we are entering into the Aquarian age where materialism, as we know it, will have completely died out at the close and when the whole life will be interpreted in terms of energies. We are dealing entirely with forces. We shall probably have a new language, the symbolic language of energy itself. We shall all be practical occultists, the occultist who lives and works in a world of forces and who begins with the forces within himself. You

will get a little understanding of what is meant by the wielding of forces if you watch your speech. Why do you raise your voice when emoting? Because the energy sweeping through you has an effect upon your vocal apparatus. You are dealing with energies and you are misusing energies. Watch yourself and begin to work in the world of forces within yourself.

This sign inaugurates the school of world saviors. It is almost a "John the Baptist" sign, a sign of preparation for what the next Piscean age is going to bring in.

Aquarius is depicted as a man holding an inverted vase. The man inverts the vase and out of it come two streams of water, the river of life and the river of love, and those two words, life and love, are the two words that embody the technique of the Aquarian age; not form, not mind, but life and love. Two words we use constantly but which, back of them, do not bear any adequate concept.

Decanates, Rulers and Constellations

Aquarius, like other signs, is divided into three decanates. We are now entering the first decanate governed by Saturn, hence our present difficulties, our political upheaval, the dividing of the world stage into great groups, with people who are national, patriotic, and those who are beginning to vision the international spirit. In the churches, in the religious field, division again, between those who are getting a picture of the universality of the love of God, and those who bow to authority and dogma.

In the field of economics a tremendous turmoil is brought about by Saturn, between those who bow to material things and those who are letting them go in order to get the better things; between those who grab possessions for themselves, those who hoard and keep, and those who let go in order to acquire what Christ calls "treasures in heaven". In almost any field of thought we find these two compelling forces because of the impact of Piscean and Aquarian energies. There are two diverse groups: those who are tied to the past and to the material aspect, and those who are getting the vision and are seeing the life, the consciousness, the purpose and the plan emerging through the medium of them all.

The wonderful thing, if you study the world intuitively, if you keep apace with what is going on in this and other sections of humanity, is that you will see that, in spite of superficial disturbances and dire happenings, the spirit of man is sound and pure, is rising to the occasion and we are coming through, but don't think it will be in a week or a year! We may get better conditions, improvements here, there and everywhere. It is up to us how fast we learn the lesson of how to let go, in order that the Piscean age of materialism and of authority, possession and mentality can be superseded by the age of spirituality, of intuition, and of universal consciousness.

The second decanate of Aquarius is governed by Mercury, and out of the present time will come illumination. The illumination that came in Leo, the opposite of Aquarius, was "I am the self", the illumination we call self consciousness. Illumination coming, in Aquarius is "I am That", I am group conscious. My self consciousness has dropped away, my individuality is of no importance, my personality is only a mechanism, and my consciousness is one with all that is.

In the third decanate, governed by Venus, we have the emergence of inclusive love. About two thousand years from now we may really express brotherly love. It will be, must be, a manifested fact before humanity as a whole can pass into Capricorn. They will enter that sign in a loving spirit. The individual aspirant cannot take initiation until he has learned to love disinterestedly, to love not only those who think as he does and act as he desires.

The Lawgivers

There are two lawgivers in the Zodiac, *Regulus* and *Kefus*. In Leo we have one of the four royal stars, *Regulus*, the lawgiver, the law for the individual, the law of selfishness, if you like, the law of competition, the law that sets every man against his fellowman, the law that makes him grab and grasp, the law under which we live, the law of competition.

Regulus, the law of the individual, has to give place to *Kefus*, the law of Aquarius, where we shall have a new law based on suffering, illumination and love. It would be interesting to see how far you yourself can grasp what those types of law will be, based upon the suffering of the individual that has led him to lose interest in himself. When you have suffered enough you do not care about yourself any more.

You find that the only way to happiness is not to be free from suffering but to lose yourself in something outside yourself.

The Aquarian law is based on spiritual illumination, on intuitive perception and brotherly love which is identification with every form in every kingdom in nature. A tremendous future lies ahead; two thousand five hundred years will have been consummated. We are on our way.

Remember, the more rarefied the forms through which the life is acting, the more rapid the reaction. That is why we have this tremendous speed in every department of life, why we are all so strung up. We have Piscean bodies and we are trying to vibrate to the Aquarian age. *We are not Aquarians yet*; there are no true Aquarians; we are not yet equipped. For that age some of the children coming in have the earmarks, but even they are few and far between.

The Aquarian age is going to manifest over the whole world; there will be Aquarians born everywhere because there is the working out of the subjective spirit in every part of the planet. It is possible that in America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa there will be focal points of the energy, but what will really happen is the coming into incarnation all over the world in every kingdom of nature of those human beings and other forms of life, all merging under the new Aquarian influence. A marvellous thing is taking place; let us get the world ready so that our children, and children's children, can see it all happen.

Christ sounded the note "for the time of the end" when he said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another." The eleventh commandment, eleventh sign. It is only now we are discovering what a marvellous astrologer Christ was. He knew that the cycle he inaugurated would pass away, that a new method of work would have to emerge whereby the Masters would employ a new mode of reaching humanity, but he prepared the way for his own later work.

There are three constellations in Aquarius. The Southern Fish, *Pisces Australes*, picturing in connection with Aquarius the coming world saviors. Note that here, in the culmination of Pisces, we have one fish, the avatar, not the two fishes banded together. The second constellation is *Pegasus*, the winged horse, ever the inspiring symbol of the higher mind, love, spurning the earth, at home in the air. On a lower level we are reminded of the winged feet of Mercury, ever wings of the mind remembering also that one definition of love is "the cold, clear light of reason". The third constellation takes yet a further flight, for we have *Cygnus*, the Swan, flying in mid-heaven. The swan of eternity, flying in time and space, is the symbol of Life itself, the cleansing, purifying "living waters" of Aquarius.

(Interpolated)

Interpretation of the Test

Augeas, the son of Neptune, the god of the waters and the sun, kept herds of animals and for thirty years the stables had not been cleared so that the filth had accumulated. Hercules was told to do something about it; many people had attempted to clean the stables and failed; it was always beyond them.

Hercules being an initiate and having much common sense, which real initiates always have, went down from the mountain top and contemplated the problem; he studied the stables.

First he broke down the wall that surrounded the stables, then he made two great holes in its opposite sides, and turned two rivers through them. He did not try to sweep and clean, as others had, but he broke down barriers by using two rivers. Without effort on his part the stables were cleaned.

Very pleased with himself Hercules rushed off to Augeas and shouted, "I have cleaned the stables. They are perfectly clean." And we read that Augeas turned his back on him, refused to recognize what he had done, and said it was a trick.

It might be said that the emotional desire nature of that great Life in Whom we live and move and have our being, also keeps herds of animals that answer to the name of human beings!

To my mind, the word God, three little letters, is just a symbol. I do not pretend to know what it is a symbol of, but I know it stands for me as a symbol of a life that is immanent in all forms and transcendent also. I am one of the herd animals that has been kept by Augeas, and the stables in which the animals

dwelt have not been cleaned for 30 years, 3 multiplied by 10, and 3 is the number of the personality and 10 is the number of completion.

What if I told you that now, in your day and mine, for the first time humanity is a coordinated complete unit with mind, emotional nature and physical body functioning as one, and that the stables have not been cleaned for 30 years?

What are the two things that Hercules did? He broke down the barriers. That is the first thing that has to happen in the Aquarian age. We are just beginning to do it. We are just beginning to think in broad terms, to leave off being exclusive. Emerging in the world are groups of men and women everywhere who are wrestling with themselves in order to be inclusive in their thought, because in the Aquarian age nations as we know them now will have to go; nations fighting for themselves and for what they want, nation against nation, the cultivation of patriotism which is frequently the cultivation of hatred. We have to teach people that they are human beings with certain responsibilities, yes, but we can begin to get a larger picture, develop the consciousness of humanity as a whole. As Browning says:

*"Mankind made up of all the single men
In such a unity the picture ends."*

That is going to happen in Aquarius, that is what lies ahead, that is what the United Nations, movements for international peace and other groups in religious, political and economic fields are working for; the breaking down of prejudice and learning to think in general terms, in wholes. The breaking down of barriers on a large scale has to be brought about by public opinion, and this is of slow growth and largely emotional; that is the trouble.

In the Aquarian age, especially in the second decanate, when Mercury the messenger from the soul to the brain via the mind is ruling, we will have public opinion moulded by thought and not by emotion, and we shall have the world full of thinkers. The function of those who write and think along these lines, and there are thousands everywhere in the world, is to begin to think constructively along right lines so that the foundations will be well laid for the force pouring in; we build for the future.

Inclusive consciousness does not mean humanly conscious; it is more, you must become time conscious. The time is coming in Aquarius when past, present and future will pass out altogether and you will always have the eternal present that will include every sphere and aspect of consciousness which we can call strictly human. That is the position of the humanist, as I interpret it; he takes the position "Let us be truly human" before we attempt to be superhuman. We are now only emotional, watery, fluidic creatures that are as yet unilluminated, struggling with separateness. We are not able to be world conscious, to be en rapport with every phase of human thought. We shall be some day.

Let me ask a question. Are you able to enter intelligently, sympathetically and understandingly into the consciousness of the immediate members of your family and know why they think as they do, understanding why they act in a particular way under a particular condition? Cultivate the Aquarian spirit of leaving people free, cultivate the capacity of trust. Cut out distrust of all with whom you associate, believe in them and they will not let you down. Impute wrong motives and they will let you down and it will be your own fault. Let us be as fair as we can with the light we have. Let us cultivate the Aquarian spirit of non-separateness, love, understanding, intelligence, free from authority, drawing out of every human being we meet the best that is in them. And if you do not draw out of them the best in them, blame yourself and not them. That is the truth. If a person misinterprets you, it is because you are not clear. Self reference is always necessary for the Aquarian, but not that self-consciousness that we find now.

When we have broken down barriers of separateness, then we let in the two rivers, the water of life and the river of love. I cannot talk, about those two rivers because I do not know what they are. Many talk about life and love; they use words. I do not know what life is yet, and we certainly do not know what love is.

It is interesting to try to express to yourself what you understand by the river of life and the river of love which, by breaking down the walls, flow through the human family. We are entering increasingly into the age of energy, entering into the age of love. Do you appreciate that a great hole was made in walls during the war, and that since the war, life and energy have come to mean something more than they did before?

When you have done all you can to break down the walls and to express life and love, aided by your own soul whose nature is love-wisdom, do not look for recognition; you won't get it. The hard task of the pioneer in any field of thought, of any person who is endeavoring to express the new ideals, is always non-recognition and sometimes worse. You won't be praised, you won't be pitied, you will have a difficult time, but remember, you are hewing the path so that in the future, hatred and separation may die out.

I like to think of Aquarius as the "John the Baptist sign" in terms of the initiate. We are leaving Pisces in one respect and we are headed toward a Piscean era in another respect when the World Savior will come. And as we look upon the Aquarian age as a John the Baptist sign, so we can look upon ourselves in our own fields wherever we may be. In view of the cosmic picture, doing all we can do at this particular time, we are fulfilling the function of John the Baptist and preparing the way for that extraordinary happening that is going to take place individually when the World Savior will again emerge and humanity will learn the next great truth and step forward and up.

Alice Bailey

- *The Labours of Hercules An Astrological Interpretation*, Alice A. Bailey p. 180 –195

Aquarius:	the Water Carrier
Element:	Air sign (as are Gemini and Libra)
Quality:	Will to serve, first the lower self, then the higher self. World service. Individual consciousness transmuted into group consciousness.
Polar Opposite:	Leo, a fire sign (individual awareness, urge toward self-knowledge, eventual self-mastery preparatory to selfless service).
Rulers:	Exoteric, Uranus, Esoteric, Jupiter.
Keywords:	
From the form angle:	Let desire in form be the rule.
From the soul angle:	Water of life am I, poured forth for thirsty men.
The Lesson:	Hercules cleaned the Augean Stables by turning a river through them. They had not been cleaned for many years. Thus did he symbolically pour out the cleansing waters in service to man. This is the important sign into which we are now entering; the most menial of all the labors falls in this, next to the culminating labor of all. One may think with reverence of Jesus the Christ washing the feet of his disciples, after following the man with the water pitcher on his shoulder into the upper room.