

Winter Solstice 1951

Sherifa Merrell-Wolff
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Friends and Students:

For those of us who are travelling the sunlit way, this season has peculiar advantage. As the Great One, our Lord the Sun, starts on his journey northward seeking in his first efforts to reach the heights, travelling further and further into space taking us with him, we have an opportunity. If we can link our consciousness with the consciousness of the Sun, in ever so small a way, we can sense something of the great power that he is bringing to birth for the spring season of our earth. We know that with the coming of spring everything becomes beautiful. The birds sing and mate and bring forth their young. Man in his normal state would do the same. We can feel the impact of that higher force as it descends and pours into our auras and into our consciousness, and we can feel the pull from above and the pull from below; but, if we can keep our consciousness linked with that of the sun in his upward climb, we can climb. And onward and upward with him, our consciousness will open more and more. And there comes a day when he reaches the zenith and there is a moment of utter and complete silence. At that moment, the gates of the Sun open, and one who has followed the course with him and has reached the zenith with him may enter those gates. That is an opportunity that is before you. It is an opportunity worth working for. It's a glorious opportunity. And after that, when he descends to the nether realms, you remain within. There is no more descent to the nether realms for you. There is attainment. There is victory. There is a power from your high point to reach out with that Love and Light which the Sun bears for all of us—reach out with compassion, with nobility, to all those who move within your environment. Such a time comes to all of us who are faithful.

I wish right here we might sing that song, "Come All Ye Faithful." Do we have it Fay? I think it is something we should all remember and use. You remember many times I have told you that when you stood in the sunlight to put out your hand and feel light. It is the aura of the Sun. It is an actual Sun substance. It isn't just a nothing. It's a vital substance. And as you touch that aura, your consciousness can awaken a response from the Sun and you will know that response when it comes. It's not an illusion. It's a reality. And it comes to all who truly, sincerely, and selflessly give of themselves—give to the Sun, not seeking to receive, but yet remaining open to receive if he chooses to give.

Sherifa: Did you find it Fay?

Fay: Yes.

Sherifa: All right. Will you all rise and we'll sing.

[All sing "Come All Ye Faithful."]

Sherifa: Fine. This, of course, is the season which is observed peculiarly by the Christian Church. And we who think we know the meaning of the Christ, who think we appreciate him, can worship with them and with him. A great Master came to earth to

help the human race. He demonstrated compassion, kindness, friendliness. He demonstrated the fact of life after death. He raised the dead. He reappeared to his students so that they could all see him after the crucifixion, and only a great Master could do those things. They are real things. They are things that we look hopefully toward in our day of time. It has been said that if he returned to earth today he would be worse than crucified. And I say to you, that if his consciousness during this season touches the human race, he must be crucified a thousand times a day.

I have told some of you of a vision I had of the Christ once, and I think I'll tell you again because I'd like you to remember it. I was on an inner plane and I saw a great crowd of people all crowding around some central figure. I went over to see what it was and at the center of this crowd stood the one we call Jesus the Christ. He was looking at them. He would turn his head and look around and smile and smile and smile. I wish you could see that smile—such utter compassion you couldn't imagine. Such utter kindness. Such utter sweetness. And yet, on the outskirts of that crowd were those who were hooting him, hissing at him, sneering at him. Finally one spat at him. And he turned around and just looked at him. And I think he must have saved the man's soul with that look. And then I became aware of another thing that was happening. He was not standing still. He was moving slowly and steadily onward and upward. And as he moved with that slow almost unnoticeable rhythm the whole crowd was drawn onwards and upwards—the good, the bad, and the indifferent. He was leading them onward. And so it is with all the Great Ones. You may not know what they are doing. They may seem to be doing nothing at all. Perhaps just loving you.... And yet if you could see with the inner being, you would find that you were being steadily drawn inward and upward toward that which your soul seeks, toward that only which is worth reaching for.

Sherifa: And now let's have another song. Fay, what would you suggest?

Fay: Well, I thought "White Christmas" might be....

Sherifa: All right, let's have that. I think that would be lovely.

Fay: Do you want the first verse?

Sherifa: I don't know.

Fay: I'll just play.

Sherifa: I'll let you make the selection.

[All sing "White Christmas."]

Sherifa: Probably some don't know the words. Peggy, may we have a few words from you?

Peggy: Mother, Yogi, Fellow Students: We all are especially fond of this Christmas season because it brings out the joy of the inner world into the outer world and we see people making efforts that they don't make all year around because the love touches them and they want to give, they want to forgive their enemies, and they feel that joy in their hearts. So as the year rolls around, may we all retain in our hearts some of this Christmas joy and remember the mistletoe which we can think of for love, and holly and its berries for joy, and the poinsettia for the stars. Thank you.

Sherifa: Thank you, Peggy. That's a beautiful thought: the poinsettia of the star. The star that makes us realize that we all have a star of our own shining in the highest heavens. Have any of you ever looked up at the heavens and felt a drawing from somewhere in that great space toward a certain spot? Perhaps you couldn't even see it, and yet you felt that as those there were a line connecting you with a particular spot with it. Have you all had that? I think that's one of the most interesting experiences. It makes us realize our unity with the cosmos. We're not separate. There is a substance between all the stars in the heavens and us that connects us all and makes a unity of us all. And there's a particular substance between all of the students of this little center which makes us a unit. And if anyone disturbs that substance, we all feel it. If anyone is ill and suffering, we're all aware of it because we are all part of an inner being.

Do you ever think of that when things come to you, and you would have the idea that you may have the idea of doing something that isn't quite noble or perhaps is less than good? Do you ever stop to think that this substance that links us all into a unit will receive that and that everyone will feel it, but they will not know where it comes from or the cause of it. They may have quite a battle to overcome the feeling or the tendency to do something that seems out of the ordinary, something they normally wouldn't care to do. And so remember you're not alone. You are not separate. You are all a unit. And we all suffer when one does wrong. We all suffer when one is ill.

We're all suffering with Katherine—Katherine with her great struggle to master this intermediate plane and to get above things. And she is struggling. She's trying. I don't know, just at present I think she's trying in too positive a way. So when you think of her, think of her as mastering the egoic positiveness and tying it into unity with divinity, and that will help her. Because your thoughts always help or hinder those to whom they are directed.

Sherifa: Walter, may we hear from you?

Walter: Mother.

Sherifa: Walter.

Walter: Yogi, Fellow Students: Well, I had a great opportunity the last two weeks. I spent quite a little time in Lone Pine. And the first time that I have ever seen the mountain ridges white with snow coming over the top—made me feel kind of homesick for the old group to see them up there. And I enjoyed very much when Mother spoke of the sun. I never saw the sun so beautiful as it was up there in the snow. It seemed like the streamers went out in the big cross both ways from the sun as you looked at it. And although I couldn't locate the particular canyon that we were used to going up, but I think I placed it pretty well. I know I remembered Tuttle Creek, but I just noticed that as we passed. So I wondered at the time if we were, as a group, ever going to be up there again. I probably am a little bit pessimistic about myself being there, but I felt kind of blue when I thought that we had missed even one meeting—one year's adventure up there. And I remember wishing and hoping that things would come out so that the group could still continue their activities up on those mountains. I enjoy, of course, the Christmas with all of you. I hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I'll probably be up in there again for the New Year season myself—not quite so far along this time.

Sherifa: Thank you, Walter. I'm sure everyone here echoes that wish. I know the beauty of those white mountains and I should like to see them. Fay, may we hear from you next?

Fay: Mother, Yogi, and Fellow Students: I think the thing I like the best about Christmas is that everybody sort of forgets himself and thinks of other people and what they can do to make others happy. And in that spirit of forgetfulness of the little self, why, everybody seems to expand and feel very happy, and you feel a feeling of love going out from people to each other. And even those people who don't attach too much religious significance to the Christmas time, they still seem to enter into that spirit of forgetting their little self and thinking of others and how to make someone else happy. And in that spirit, I think Christmas touches us all.

Sherifa: Thank you Fay. I think that's the keynote of Christmas—making others happy. Bill, may we hear from you?

Bill: Mother, Yogi, Fellow Students: We're all happy to be here this Christmas season of '51 and we all hope to be here this same time in 1952 plus a lot more new members.

Sherifa: A lot more of us? At least a few.

Bill: When Fay was speaking about everyone feeling, thinking about the other fellow in the Christmas season, I know she's right. But the other day when I was going home from work and there were so many cars on the road—everybody was trying to go someplace to do some shopping to beat the other fellow there. So, while we are thinking of the other person, we have to also think on the road, I believe, too. Thank you.

Sherifa: That's one thing that's taken me to a realization of the fact that courtesy towards one another should exist when we are in automobiles and driving down the road. So seldom do we find it. Occasionally, you meet one who will stop and let you pass. And if you do, never forget to smile and indicate that you're saying thank you. They can't hear you, but they can see your mouth. Give recognition always to courtesy that you receive on the road.

See, I have to think. I can't see as well as I can think. Carolyn, may we hear from you?

Carolyn: Mother, Yogi, Fellow Students: Well, since this is the time for peace on earth and good will to man, I would like to make one request that has bothered me considerably today. Gene has received a letter from a young man from Korea and he is again entering the combat season and he asked for Gene if he wouldn't pray for him. So I would like to request the students tonight before they go to bed to have a good thought for a young man called Daniel Boone. Thank you.

Sherifa: Thank you. I suggest that we all get quiet and pray for the health and safety of Daniel Boone, and may he enter the Light.

[All pray for Daniel Boone.]

Sherifa: Will whoever's nearest the fireplace, take a look at it and see whether it needs some wood or not? Peter, may we hear from you next?

Peter: Mother, Yogi, and Fellows on the Path: It will be twenty-three years next week, well from Thursday between Christmas and New Year, that I had the privilege and the fortune of meeting Mother and Yogi in Chicago. It seems like it was yesterday, and yet, I have no proof of it, tangible proof, but it seems to me that ever since I've known them for ages. This must have been just a reunion to continue, perhaps, what we left behind before. I was in the prime of my life during those days and I had very high aspirations both materially and spiritually. When I look back now, it seems that I've made very little progress, if any, either materially or spiritually; and yet I would not take all the gold in the world if someone would say to relinquish the little Realization and whatever glimpse of the Light that I've had during these twenty-three years.

This, being a Christmas and symbolizing the birth of the Christ, I hope that the Christ will be not only born in all of us tonight, but the Light will increase in radiance and that we will spend many, many more Christmases together and see each and everyone grow further and further. And now, I wish to extend my greetings for the very Merry Christmas and very Happy New Year to Mother, Yogi, and to all of you.

Sherifa: And the same to you Peter. I was looking back at those days the first time that I visited Peter's home in Kenosha. I've never forgotten what I thought. He had his mother. He had an old aunt that he was taking care of. He had his wife and his family. And there was one other. What was her relation?

Peter: My brother and my sister-in-law.

Sherifa: Your brother and your sister.

Peter: And their children.

Sherifa: And their children. And Peter was the head of the family. And he was a fine head and he always has been. He led that family and he kept in the way he wanted to go. And although he doesn't realize the change that has taken place in himself and in his wife, the change is great—far greater than he knows. Those of us who can look back can see many changes in all of us. We've all changed.

Sherifa: Joseph?

Joseph: Mother, and Yogi, and Brothers and Sisters: First of all I want to thank you for those beautiful words, Mother. Also, I want to wish you all what is called a white Christmas and a white New Year. Not so much the ordinary white Christmas which consists of a sprinkling of white crystals over the ground, but rather that we should become immersed in the white Christic Light to be able to radiate that Light to all the world.

One good feature about an impromptu talk is that one tends to speak from the heart. There's no time to organize a talk with his mind and I think it sounds much better that way. I notice that all of you so far have come up and spoken from the heart without any trepidation at all; for, after all, fear and all its attendant petty worries is not a thing that comes naturally from the heart. We experience them because we try to confine within our heart what's supposed to go out with its spiritual forces in an encirclement of all mankind. We try to cramp that force within our little heart, and as a result we have our petty fears and concerns.

I was thinking today also of the *Sangha*. I found that *Sangha* means purity—purity of thought, act, and purity of the heart. It also means the purity, preserving in that purity the truths of the ancient wisdom religion; and wherever individuals or groups have preserved that purity, they have prospered. And where they have not, they have failed. And so I think as a thought for the coming year that we not only make the coming Christmas day a day of sending forth Christic Love and Light, but that we carry as much as we can that spirit throughout the whole year. I have found in my contact with people that you don't convince them so much by what you say, by your arguments. You convince them more if you show them that the facts of which you speak are backed up in your own life. If you can radiate—and believe me they can feel it in some measure or other whether you radiate it or not—if you radiate Truth, Light, and Love, people will feel it and they will be impressed even though they don't understand it. And so, I would like for all of us as much as possible in the coming year to try to preserve that purity in our contact with others in all the forces that we send out to all the world. Perhaps if we do this with a fair amount of consistence in the coming year, we will become part of the real *Sangha*, which is pure Light and Substance and Love. Thank you very much.

Sherifa: Thank you, Joseph. That's a beautiful thought: purity. Purity of mind. Purity of heart. Purity of body. With your thought positive in the Divine Self, you'll be a little center of Light and Compassion in this world—a center through which the Great Ones can radiate. Who have I missed back in the darkness there?

Murray: Me, Miss Maybelle, and.... This is Murray.

Sherifa: Murray. All right. Murray, will you come and speak to us?

Murray: Mother, Yogi, and Fellow Students: This is a particularly joyous time of the year because not only is it the time of the year, new cycle as it were, but humanity as a whole is thinking fellowship, thinking toward good will, toward the Christ. It gives a particular uplift. And it's a good timepoint to stop and look back. I think we've had a very good year. Yogi has given us a wonderful string of lectures. They've been instructive. They've been inspiring. And I think you all join with me in thanking him very much for the messages we've had. And also, we thank the Mother for her presence, for her words, her love. And I am particularly grateful myself because this is a fine group and I've been enjoying just your presence. And with that Light we have, though we haven't had everything the way we wanted it, we have missed some wonderful things we could have had, we can still plan for the future. We can still have our camp. We can still have everything that's good if we plan that way. At this time I wish to wish you all, Mother, Yogi, and Students, a very Merry Christmas and a spiritually rich and productive New Year.

Sherifa: Thank you, Murray. Spiritually rich and productive New Year. Stop to think what that means for us. May we all have it. Maybelle, may we hear from you?

Maybelle: Mother, Yogi, and Fellow Students: Mark Twain made a remark once that one of the compensations of growing old was the fact that you could do things you wanted to do. If you wanted to stay home at night for your fireplace instead of going out to a banquet, you could do so. One of the compensations of growing old which I have found is that I have discovered how Santa Claus got down the chimney. Maybe childhood years are very long and it seems to me I spent half my life wondering how it was possible

for him to come down the chimney and through that stove pipe and out that small door with that pack on his back without getting covered with soot. Those things bothered me very much. However, another compensation for, I'm going to say growth and not age here, is that I have learned a deeper meaning for Christmas. Several years ago I took part in a candle lighting procession. It was in the evening after dark and there were about fifty of us in the group. One of us started the candle and passed the light all along the line, and it was a beautiful sight to watch that little flame leaping from one to another until the whole fifty candles were alight. And I was thinking today how these candles at Christmas should remind us that that is a way of keeping the Truth alight. As we light our candles, think that we are keeping the Truth alight and helping to pass it on. And now I want to wish everybody a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Sherifa: Thanks, Maybelle. Now, the symbol of the candle is such a beautiful symbol. It is said that once the Light, no matter how much, glows, it lights the hearts of those about them, that this Light that we see in the breast of the Initiate, this Light, if you polarize it, will find itself in your heart. But there has to be the polarization to that higher Light. And when the Light springs forth in the heart of a student, of a disciple, instantly it is seen and recorded in the Great Book. His path henceforth is under full observation. But until that Light springs, the observation is delegated to the lesser ones among us who work and try to help. Sometimes we succeed and sometimes we don't, but we try. ...will you come speak?

Participant: Mother and Yogi: It is my wish that each of you attain that inner peace that will make you invulnerable to all the discord of the world. And when we attain that peace, if we always reflect the Christmas spirit, we become a power for good. And I wish you always to be joyous this year, because there is no power better than joy for changing the ills of the world.

Sherifa: I think that's an important thing: joy. You know, I think we get too serious. I think that we should laugh and that we should find that joy in life that all of nature seems to know and reflect. I don't think that the divine being wants us to be solemn all the time. He has made this world, it is said, as a *lila*, that is, as a playground for his forces, for his thoughts, for himself. And if that is true, we shouldn't be afraid to play. We shouldn't be afraid to be joyous. We should carry it through everything with us. And if we will turn in, we will find that underlying joy. Even when you are in the deepest pain, that joy is there. You can find it if you try. And as you find it, it gains power and strength.

And now may we hear from our teacher Dr. Merrell-Wolff? My husband.

Franklin: I didn't know I was going to be an orator tonight. I guess I thought I was to have the novel experience of listening and recording and not speaking, but it seems that I am fated to carry on in the same old pattern of speech. There was, however, one thing I was thinking of as you were speaking and also as I listened to certain things said over the radio by the regular group of entertainers—a special statement with respect to Christmas. There seemed to be for the time a special thought that was altruistic, that was reaching out beyond oneself or one's ordinary activities. That is probably as important an office as Christmas carries is this return to one's basic motive and a raising of that motive of the best in us into some degree of expression. But there was a further thought: that our

aim should be not simply feeling sincere, feeling beyond ourselves on one occasion, or on two or three occasions in the year, but rather to strive to keep this sentiment alive at all times in the same spirit, that one aims to practice the surrender to the Divine at all times. In other words, the effort is to render permanent certain qualities and certain attitudes instead of entertaining them on special occasions. Of course, this is not easy. The point is to aim at it and never give up so long as one has not achieved that aim. One must be willing to witness failure after failure and yet keep on trying and trying until automatically and naturally he maintains these attitudes and the spirit of surrender to the Divine without let up. That's the one thought I think I will leave. Thank you.

Sherifa: Thank you, doctor. I apologize. I forgot all about the singing.

Fay: Maybe it's just as well.

Sherifa: May we have a song Fay?

Fay: Would you like something familiar?

Sherifa: Something we all know the words of? Yes, I think so.

Fay: "It Came upon a Midnight Clear" or "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"?

Sherifa: Which do you know the words of?

Fay: Or "Joy to the World"?

Sherifa: All right. If you don't know the words, hum it loudly.

[All sing "Joy to the World."]

Sherifa: That was very nice. Now, is there anything impromptu that anyone would like to say tonight? Anything particular? Or have you all said all you want to say? Silence.

Fay: I'll say something.

Sherifa: All right Fay. Right over here, honey.

Fay: Well, what I'm impressed with is the things that people say that really give you a keynote to what they are. And one person will speak so that you know that they're unselfish. They're thinking of someone else. And another one will speak from his heart. And to me it's intensely interesting to really hear what people have to say. You get an insight into their character.

Sherifa: Yes. In fact, that is very true. Of course, when we're talking before each other, we're all giving thoughts of our best, and that we all.... There are two of us you know. There's always the one that carries the brunt of life on the physical plane. That one gets very tired sometimes and perhaps impatient. But the other one never does. The real one, which I hope you all have found, that one is always patient and always loving and more or less wise according to her or his evolution. And of course, those of us who are trying to go beyond mind are having a little difficulty because to polarize to the Supermind, to that new super-race that is beginning to come into manifestation here on earth, means that for a period you are going to have a little trouble to express yourself. The only way you really can express yourself at such times is, shall we say, intuitively or inspirationally and sincerely. I hope we all make the new race, the supramental race. It's going to be a wonderful race. When we get the power to penetrate through, then we

should be able to talk. Then we shall be able to use our minds clearly and forcefully as well as to fill our thoughts with the inspiration of that higher realm.

Yogi was reading to me tonight a chapter on the Mother from *Savitri*. And it is the most beautiful thing that you've listened to. And no one has ever expressed himself so exquisitely as Aurobindo. It has a sort of feeling of inner delight in the way he forms his thoughts into sentences. And the things he writes can become an initiation. If you let your consciousness flow into it you come to something that strikes the chord in here and you are one with it. Well, you'll find that it's much more than words, that there is a definite reality corresponding to them. I hope you all get *Savitri* and study it because if you like things expressed in a mystical language that is utterly perfect in its formation, you'll love *Savitri*.

Sherifa: Well, shall we sing again?

Fay: I would like to.

Sherifa: We could sing "Silent Night" or we can.... Hmm?

Fay: "Hark the Herald Angels Sing"?

Sherifa: I don't think we know the words to that. At least I don't know any of them. We all know "Silent Night" but I thought that would be such a beautiful thing to close on tonight when we're finished. But let's go and get some, is it ginger ale? No, what is it we have? Root beer and the cake.