

# Christmas Stories

A collection of memories from

*Aaron*

Channeled through Barbara Brodsky



Deep Spring Publications



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Ann Arbor, Michigan



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## Introduction

Aaron calls himself a “being of Light.” He is a discarnate entity. When I met him, I was struggling with the pain of my sudden deafness, brought on by illness, which seemed to so isolate me from the world. Angry and afraid, I prayed for help. I don’t know what I expected, but one morning soon after that prayer, when I sat to meditate—my practice of twenty-five years was Quaker devotional meditation—I felt an energy before me, saw it too. There was so clearly a presence there, the way I feel when my back is to the door and someone enters the room. “Is this an hallucination?” I wondered, and got up and walked into the kitchen.

A drink of water, look out the window, and back to sit. Spirit waits, a brilliant white presence, so bright that one could not tell if the intense light shone from him or if he sat in the middle of a white sun. Piercing eyes of blue radiated with the clarity and depth of crystalline water. Around the eyes a soft face faded into a white beard and flowing, snow-white hair. “Who are you?” I asked. “I am your teacher,” came the wordless reply.

There was little in my life to prepare me for such an encounter. It took me a few days to move past my old opinions—“new age mumbo-jumbo,” “crazy,” and more of the same genre. Quietly, he waited. It was important that I never felt pushed to open to him. If we continue noting an “hallucination” and it stays, at what point do we venture to investigate it? My heart cried, “trust.” Finally I said “All right; what are you here to teach me?” and thus began my journey with my spirit friend.

Is Aaron “real”? I can’t answer that, only tell you how I experience him and share his message as clearly as I’m able. Aaron tells us about his teaching, “Listen with your heart and not your brain.” He asks that we consider the message and ask whether it confirms our own deepest truth. “Do these words help you to live your lives with more wisdom and love?” he queries. “If not, just lay them aside. The source is irrelevant. Please consider the content.” Through the years, many people around the world have come to love Aaron and find comfort and guidance in his words. If they are of help to you, please take the message they offer into your own heart.

With love,  
**Barbara**

More information about Aaron is available through Deep Spring Center, a non-profit organization that makes his teaching available. Please write or call for information about Aaron’s other books and our newsletters, spiritual awareness workshops and meditation classes.

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## Foreword

Aaron has told us that at the time of Jesus' birth he was a very young child living in the hills in that country with his father who was a shepherd.

As an adult he came to know this master and became a follower. Aaron emphasizes that in that lifetime, even as an adult, he was "just a simple shepherd, unlearned ..." and not one of a core group who were the great disciples of Jesus. Nevertheless, he had great love for his teacher and gratitude for his teaching.

Each year Aaron has shared stories with us about what he learned from this beloved teacher. In this book are the collected stories from the six years from 1989 to 1994. He offers them as "teaching stories."

We hope they will give you much inspiration and joy.

**Barbara**

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## A Perspective on Jesus

### December 5, 1989

**Aaron:** I would like to talk to you about that Teacher you call Jesus. You are in the midst of your annual celebration of his birth. Do you understand what that birth really means, who he was and what was truly given? I see much confusion between the true gift and church doctrine that has grown up around it. I do not mean to offend anyone here. Your private and group myths are important to you and must be deeply respected. Yet the beauty of this gift is such that it needs no other myths to support it.

I have told you that you are all sparks of God, evolving slowly through your many lifetimes to perfect light and to mature compatibility with your Creator. Since the dawn of time a few beings have so evolved as to become pure and radiant light, filling the universe with their luminescence. Such beings truly sit at the side of God, and the power of their light and love are inextinguishable.

Such a being is the spirit of the man you call Jesus. For God, this spirit was the proof of His divine plan, the perfect example of what all mankind could become. As such he was deeply beloved, the son of God as you are all sons and daughters of God, and yet especially cherished because he was among the first to reach this divine perfection.

Your Earth in those days was full of war, of misunderstanding, of hatred, of chaos. There were those who believed that God taught that one being should avenge himself on another, and one nation avenge itself on another. Such bloodshed was enacted in the name of God. There were those who taught that God's laws were a matter of convenience, that murder was permitted in His name. These were not people meaning to do evil, but beings filled with misunderstandings. Many of you were there. Ask your higher self's memories if this is not how it was.

Seeing the misunderstandings that filled the world, God grieved for His children. So he asked His Son, who stood by his side, to give a great gift to mankind, to take it unto himself to return to that human plane to teach lessons of love, compassion and forgiveness. The gift was no less God's, for He was giving this beloved Son unto the pain and chaos of the physical plane.

The spirit of the man you know as Jesus agreed to God's request, with gladness that he might serve Him. He fully understood what he agreed to, that in returning to this physical plane, in agreeing to incarnate in human form, he was taking on all the pains of human birth. He agreed to the forgetting of his true self. Although this forgetting did not reach the level it reaches with most humans, there were to be times of deep doubt and despair. He agreed to the physical pains of the human body, of the frailty of the human form. Do you think those nails that penetrated his flesh at his crucifixion were painless? Out of love, and to give love, he gladly accepted whatever agony he might face.

He came to teach God's true messages of love and peace to a weary, chaotic, pain-filled world. This is the true gift of his birth and his life. He had free will, as have all beings. He could have said no, and God would not have loved him any less. Do you understand what it means to freely and willingly leave that perfect Light and Love? Can

you understand how much this Holy Spirit loved mankind and God, to accept this mission of teaching. Only perfect love could have made this choice, and only perfect love would have been able to teach such love to others. Had he said no, the world would have continued on in darkness until another being was so evolved as to be able to perform this task.

The other gift of this season's is God's. Which of you could send a beloved child to a place torn by war and hatred, to certain agony, to teach others?

As you think about his incarnation this season, to become the teacher known as Jesus, as you think about the teachings of love and peace and forgiveness, think also about the gift that was given—the gift of love. Let all your gifts that commemorate this birth be gifts of love and forgiveness, each to another, so that he may see that his lessons are truly being learned. This is the greatest gift you can give him, the way you can best honor his gift—to love one another.

I love you all and wish you a happy Christmas filled with peace and the beauty of God's and Christ's love.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 19, 1990

**Aaron:** My greetings and love to you all. It would seem fitting that we talk tonight about he whose birth you will celebrate next week ... he, who in his human incarnation was known as Jesus. We've talked about this being many times before. Rather than repeating what I've said, I'd like to simply share with you a beautiful memory.

You know that all of us have lived many past lives, myself as well as you, and there were a number of you who were incarnate on the Earth at that time 2000 years ago, as I was. I've shared very little with you of my lifetimes and my memories. For each of us, there are certain memories that stand out through an infinite number of lifetimes. I share this story as a profound memory.

At the time of his birth, I was a young boy, six or seven years old, and I was a shepherd ... yes, a shepherd outside that town of Bethlehem, dwelling in the hills with my father and older brother. I'm not going to try to separate for you tonight what has been built up as myth about the story of his birth and his life, and what is real. Was such a being born in the town of Bethlehem about 2000 years ago (and would we quibble as to the exact date)? Yes, he was. Does all that is taught about his birth come from fact rather than myth? This is irrelevant. Can you see that? The facts of his birth are far less important than what he did once he was here ... what he taught. We'll come back to that.

Let me first finish sharing this memory with you. The emotional climate of the world in that time was very different than it is today. Yes, there is war and hatred in many parts of the world today but there is a word the concept of which scarcely existed 2000 years ago, and that word is "forgiveness." Instead, the prevailing philosophy was that of "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth." "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you" was distorted to "do unto others as they do unto you." "If he hits you, hit him back." "Protect yourself."

There was an effort to follow the Ten Commandments: not to steal, not to kill, but it was acceptable to kill in self-defense. That wasn't considered killing really. And if one harmed you or those you loved, it was quite acceptable to seek revenge against that one and those he loved. You may think this sounds little different than today's world. And certainly, for individuals here and there, it is little different. But today, even as a nation, there is some effort at forgiveness. Look at your relationship today with Japan or Germany. The past is past, and hate is not extended to the citizens of those nations.

So, this is the world in which I lived ... a young boy sitting that cool evening, wrapped in a blanket by a fire ... a very peaceful scene. My father and the other men told stories. I was just considered old enough to accompany them, one of my first evenings outdoors. The night grew very still. And suddenly, there was a brilliant star. That much is fact, as I saw it. And below me in the valley some distance away was the town of Bethlehem.

Never had I seen a star like that before, nor, I would assume, had the elders because everyone grew quiet. Some felt afraid, but most felt a deep sense of peace and

## Christmas Memories from Aaron, December 19, 1990

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wonder. You have seen what the moon looks like—a full moon shining on a snowy scene—and the way everything seems lit up. That star did the same thing. The whole scene seemed lit in the distance. I can't say that the light was focused over a special building, a stable. I can't say that it was not either. I didn't observe it in that way. But there was such a sense of deep peace ... such a brilliance to the light. And music seemed to fill the air, not music which is heard with one's ears but music which is heard with one's heart.

We were drawn as if by a magnet to descend the hills, to approach the town. There were many, and my father was hesitant to leave our sheep and go too far from them. So we did not come all the way down into the town, but stood on a hill perhaps a mile away. It was a night like none I have ever known before or since. The strongest memory is that of deep peace, and of a profound joy that something had happened, something far beyond the understanding of this young boy that I was but something that would profoundly change the world.

Many went all the way into the town. Others of us stayed closer to our flocks on the hillside. But no matter where you were, this light permeated everything. I cannot say it came just from that star. It seemed almost as if the Earth itself glowed. We were awed ... not just myself as a young child, but the adults as well. Many began to pray.

We sat there for many hours. Some of those who had gone all the way into the town began to return. I was a young child and dozing by this time, hearing just the faint words of elders whispered past me in the still of the early morning hours: "A child is born. They call him the Prince of Peace. They say that his teachings will change the world." And then I remember my father's strong arms lifted me up and carried me back up the hill to our fire, and I slept with a sense of joy and peace as I have never known before and rarely since ... a sense that somehow much that had been wrong with the world was going to be righted ... that new hope was offered to the world.

I give you this memory to share with you what his birth meant to me. Think, if you will, as you celebrate his birth, of this gift of forgiveness, and the way his teachings changed the world. That is all.

**Q:** Speak to the words "atonement" and "salvation" in relationship to Jesus.

**Aaron:** Perhaps I would use different words here with a subtly different meaning. First of all, we're talking about the soul, the four bodies and the light body. For many of you at the time of Jesus' birth, you were already what we might call "old souls" ... had been through many incarnations, and your minds had accumulated many misunderstandings. The spiritual body was pure, as it is and always has been; but the emotional and mental bodies—which also comprise the astral body—were stuck in anger, fear and desire for retaliation. The pure spirit body needs no salvation. It was never cursed or lost to begin with. The body of confusion needs to be re-oriented, to move from ignorance to awareness.

Let's talk about atonement first. I said I would use a different word and that's "responsibility." You understand the workings of karma: that you must always be responsible for everything—every thought, every word, every deed—that passes through you. Many of you were stuck in this mode of revenge that I've just talked about. It is was the prevalent teaching of the time. For those whom you hurt with your "eye for

an eye, and tooth for a tooth" philosophy, you had to take responsibility for that hurt. Never mind that they had hurt you first. It was still your choice to return that hurt.

In the word *atonement*, I understand an acceptance of that responsibility, a truly profound regret that you have harmed another, the true desire to change that choice of harmful act or word in the future and—here we come to this word forgiveness—desire to seek forgiveness for what you had done and also to understand that you must forgive others for that which was done to you.

This is the essence of what Jesus taught: that forgiveness must begin with yourself, and then be extended out to others, that you don't need to suffer in a mythical "hell" for your sins. It's simple to understand: you cannot harm another and have it passed unnoticed; each time you do harm to another, you must truly repent of that harm and ask forgiveness of that being.

Atonement is in the karma that comes to you—that even if you've understood the situation and asked forgiveness, you are still responsible for what you have sowed and you will reap the fruit of that sowing. If it was bitterness or hatred or rage that you sowed, even if you understand and ask forgiveness, you are still responsible and will reap the fruit.

There is a belief among some Christians that you can heap this karma on Jesus' shoulders—that he died for your sins and in his blanket forgiveness you are released from all karma. Perhaps this is where the concept of salvation derives. I see this as a distortion. Salvation is to be found—through Jesus as well as through other Masters—not through his acts but through following his teaching and becoming responsible for yourself. That is where your salvation lies.

Do you want to stay stuck in this cycle, being born and dying, born and dying, always sowing rage and hatred and reaping the results of those passions lifetime after lifetime? Or are you ready to follow his teaching of love and forgiveness ... to begin to sow these new seeds? This is your salvation. Yes, there is a path to salvation here, but he doesn't do it for you. He guides you so you may do it for yourselves.

**Q:** I'm not well-rounded in traditional Christian teaching, but I know it's taught that Jesus died for our sins, for our salvation. What does that mean? Can you explain that?

**Aaron:** It is quite simple really. He encountered both joy and pain in his life. As with all of you, he was human, regardless of the myths or facts about his birth, once he incarnated on this Earth, he was human. For him, the veil that separated him from his spiritual awareness of who he truly was was far less dense than it is for most of you. Thus, he truly understood that God was his Father.

He understood this even as a young boy. Some of you may be familiar with this story. When he was in a town with Mary and Joseph, they lost him, and came back and found him talking to learned men at a temple. They said, "Where were you?" He replied, "I must be about my Father's business." So, even as a boy, he understood who he was and what work he had to do.

And yet, he was human. He felt physical pain as a human, and at times was plagued by the same doubts and fears that plague any man or woman. "Was the universe really

the way he thought it was?" So he lived his life, knowing more than most men but still prey to the pains of flesh and mind.

He died in agony. The human was suffering! And yet, his final words were, "Forgive them, Father ..."

Can you see what would have happened to his life and his teaching if he had been proclaimed a prince and a teacher, loved and never feared in any way, had built up great wealth and a great following and died peacefully as an old man? How much less force would his teaching have had? It's easy to say, "Forgive them," when there's little to forgive. But to be there on that cross in agony and still be able to say, "Forgive them," ... that's inspiring. That is truth and heard as truth.

Again, I suggest that he did not take your sins unto himself so much as lead the way for you—that his death was offered as your salvation in terms of its being the most profound way of giving his message that could be offered. He had a choice. You always have a choice. He did not have to die in that way. But he understood that his death was as important as his life, and that this was the gift he was asked to give. He gave it joyfully that others following him may receive his message and understand it.

Forgiveness doesn't just mean forgiving when there's a little to forgive, but when there's **everything** to forgive. Once you have mastered that lesson, this cycle of birth and death is broken because forgiveness truly ends karma. This is the gift of salvation that his teaching offers. That is all.

**Q:** I'm curious; how did Jesus deal with his very human anger? How did he release it so that it didn't cause him dis-ease? Or did he never have to deal with anger because of his constant spiritual grounding?

**Aaron:** I cannot answer this from my own experience with it. My first experience with this being in this incarnation was as I have just described to you. Then I knew him many years later toward the end of his life, when I took him as my teacher and was a follower of his. I was still a shepherd, not wise or learned in any way. At that stage of his life, no anger was felt or expressed by him. And yet, I feel sure that as a younger man, he did experience anger.

I emphasize that this is conjecture, not directly from his teaching but from my own present understanding about anger. He accepted his humanness. He didn't try to be anything but human. His anger, I would think, was not personalized so that it became him, not fixated upon, but was simply felt as an impersonal emotion—"here's joy, here's anger," felt without aversion or attachment. Even while he was feeling anger, through the depth of his compassion and understanding he was able to forgive those beings that angered him, to understand why they felt the way they did, why they needed to speak or act as they did, and no less important, to forgive himself for those arising emotions. He was angered, I feel certain, by injustice and callousness. But it was so totally balanced by love that it created no distortion.

He was unique. Very few who are as highly evolved as he was in that lifetime are born into human bodies. We have spoken of this before: that he had no need to incarnate for his own growth. He accepted this work out of love, to serve others.

Most of you are not that evolved. You're here to learn. And so, simultaneously, you feel anger and you understand that there is a need to forgive, to put yourself in the other person's shoes and know their own fears. But the anger is still personalized. That is fine. You are here to learn. You are not expected to be perfect. Just work repeatedly with it, noticing "Here's anger ..." noticing the way heavy emotion makes you want to react with retaliation toward another. You will develop the self-discipline to control reaction and will learn to forgive both yourself and the one who provoked you.

It's a process you will need to repeat over and over and over, each time accepting that you are human and as long as you are here, incarnate and learning in a human body, there's going to be anger ... until perhaps, near the end of your final lifetime, there may be a space of some years where you pass beyond the arising of heavy emotion.

**Q:** Would Aaron discuss the initiation or training that Jesus went through in this incarnation to become the Christ?

**Aaron:** Please remember that he was born the Christ. He was born fully evolved. And yet, he was human. As he matured, the veil became more and more transparent. But there were times in his youth when there was fear and doubt. As I understand it, he went off to the wilderness alone to cope with fear and doubt—finding the space of perfect faith within himself wherein these demons could no longer exert control.

Let me explain this at a deeper level. We've talked about negatively and positively polarized beings and that negativity thrives on hatred, jealousy and fear. When you experience such emotions, you allow more and more room for negativity to enter. It's not that you, as a positively polarized being, become negative; but the negative has an entry into your mind, into your spirit. When you can greet even that negativity with love, just saying, "There you are: anger, fear, doubt," greeting it as an impersonal phenomenon and without aversion to the experience of it, you don't give it a foothold. We do not speak of the non-experience of such emotion but the space and wisdom not to fixate on what arises, just to let it move through.

I've said over and over that love is the strongest force in the universe. Your love is a shield around you that protects you from fear and doubt. Your faith is also such a shield. I ask you to consider here the lines of the 23rd Psalm: "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."

You are not promised that there will **be** no evil. "I will fear no evil." In a sense, this is more of a guideline, or even a command, than a promise. No matter how bad it is—"though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death"—what shall I do in that situation? **I will fear no evil.** I will see whatever negativity surrounds me and send love to it. And in doing that, I cannot be harmed. God cannot protect you. You always have free will. It is your faith that protects you.

This was the essence of Jesus' learning as a young man: to move past fixation on fear and doubt. He had foresight that if he continued the course of his life, as he saw he must, there would be great pain. He nurtured the faith to face that pain and to do the work he had come to do. He also faced what any being faces in incarnating as a human. Although he was born from beyond any human plane, if he created adhering karma for himself, he would create the situation where he needed to incarnate again to deal with that karma. He understood that.

There was a question about his anger. If the deeds of another had led to a personal anger—a desire for revenge from him—that would have trapped him. Can you see that? He then would have needed to reincarnate to work that out. And it is probable that he could not have done what he came to do. His whole life had to be lived with constant awareness to avoid karmic ensnarements.

All beings face the same problem exactly. If there is misunderstanding that leads them into rage or hatred and creates karma, they become trapped in that human form and must return—perhaps for many lifetimes—to work their way out of it. This is not punishment. It will just take them time to learn what they came to learn. And they will emerge stronger and wiser for it. But it can be painful.

Beings are often aware of this sense of entrapment. I would suggest to those beings that thinking about Jesus and his life may be some comfort. He, too, had to try to avoid this entrapment. In a sense, you all do. You would all like to be ready to move on to the next stage of your growth, to experience yourselves as light bodies beyond the need for the physical manifestation. And so, it's the same lesson for all of you: to be aware of where you are creating new karma, to work harder and harder at compassion and forgiveness and acceptance of both yourself and of others.

Until he was able to move past all fear and doubt, to establish that level of faith where negativity could not find any chink to enter, he was not able to continue with his work. So, this was the first step: to become so fully comfortable with his humanness, that even in that form he could give unconditional love. That is all.

**Q:** Aaron, you say on the night that Jesus was born, there was light that seemed to be coming from the Earth and music. What is your understanding of this now, not as a seven year old boy, but the way you see it from your present perspective?

**Aaron:** I would have to think about this for a bit to answer you. There comes a time in your life when you understand the physical causes of a rainbow. But when you watch a rainbow, you don't think of those physical explanations, but just observe and enjoy the wonder of this light across the sky. Indeed, if I were to ask most of you in this room to explain the physical phenomenon of a rainbow, few of you could do so very adequately.

Through all my many lives, and time spent in between lives, it was enough for me to remember the love of that moment, and the wonder of it. I never sought a physical explanation of it. In doing so now, I would have to say—this is a quick answer and not well considered—that, in a sense, a doorway between heaven and Earth had been briefly opened, and some of the experience of heaven was pouring through, most literally. If you wish a more precise answer, you will need to give me time to consider it. That is all.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 18, 1991

**Aaron:** ... There's a complex law called karma—and I'm not going to get into it deeply tonight—but karma is, in essence, a law that says, "You reap what you sow." If you plant sour apple seeds, there's no way you're going to get a sweet apple tree, no matter how much you want sweet apples. The only way to get sweet apples is to plant sweet apple seeds. Karma is never punishment, but learning, offered learning. So, after a lifetime there is that karma that has adhered in that lifetime, which, in essence, directs you back ... says, "This and this and this and this need to be worked on."

Why? Is somebody standing over you with a whip? No. When I say that you have to get back to that, there is still free will, even in karma, and this is sometimes misunderstood. You are evolving from what I call a "spark of God" into a fully evolved "sun" in your own right. That energy that you are that started as a bit of the Eternal is clarifying and purifying itself so that it may return as pure soul, as pure light, to the Eternal ... but in a far more mature form than it left. To sit even in the shadows just beyond that light is bliss beyond telling. Each of you, at a higher self level, yearns to return to that light. Your conscious mind may be unaware of that, but this is what you are working toward and within you is the wisdom to understand that in order to return fully mature to that light you must clarify the shadow within you, the impurity, the misunderstanding.

Karma means "action," and every act results in karma of some sort, some of it being "adhering" karma and some of it, "non-adhering" karma. It's only the adhering karma that brings you back for another lesson. It's a way of the universe saying to you, to this bit of energy that you are, "This still needs work." And since your effort is to purify this energy that you are, from the spirit plane, when you see that this or that still needs work, you willingly move into it.

Yes, there is suffering in this life, and also joy. And some of you wonder, "Why, from the spirit plane where all is peaceful, if I don't have to move back to this plane, why would I do so?" Because of that yearning, that aspiring. It's not a grasping; it's not a "trying to get something" ... because to "get something" implies that there's a self that is "getting," and this is a level of being far beyond self or ego. It's a full knowing of what you are, of the divinity of your nature ... and the desire to express that divinity as purely as you can, not for yourself, but for all life, for all beings, on every plane ... because every bit of light, of purified energy, that shines from each of you adds light to the entire universe. It is the ultimate way of serving others: to purify yourself.

... which leads me to the talking that I promised about that being who was known as Jesus. Some of you have heard me talk about him before. I'm not going to repeat last year's message but to build on it. This is my own sense of who he was and why he was here. I've said that each time you purify your own light, it's a way of serving others. This is a being whose light was already fully purified. He had no need to come back and incarnate, and yet, he willingly did so as a way of serving others. Those of you who have heard me talk about him before have heard some stories. Some of you one, and some another.

## Christmas Memories from Aaron, December 18, 1991

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Last year, I believe, I spoke about being present in that part of the world at the time of his birth. No, I did not see him, but I was the son of a shepherd—a very young boy tending sheep on a hillside—and there was that star. Not only a star, but the air was filled with angelic presences. Now, that, in itself, isn't unusual. The air is often filled with spirits, and with loving spirits. What was unusual was the strength of this being, that even those who would have been skeptical of the existence of such a being could sense the strength of energy that was present, and the love. And so, many were in awe of this being, having some sense that this was someone special. Had he encouraged that opinion, he could have grown into a very powerful being and wielded his power for his own gratification. It would have been easy to do because there was much awe, just about his birth. And yet, he went to great ends to do the opposite.

I knew him as a young man. My father brought me to see him. When I was grown and my father older—and, of course, he was also grown, and my father an old man. At that first seeing, I became totally devoted to him. I was a simple shepherd—I was not a teacher nor a wise man of any sort—but I knew that this was a being that I would follow anywhere. He simply radiated peace and love. And yet, he did not make use of that for his own power. To me, this was one of the most essential things about him. I know that stories are told of the miracles that he did, but far more important are the much “quieter” miracles he performed.

I came to him once, traveling for many days. He had been traveling at that time, traveling to a part of the country near where I was, and that was why I was able to come and see him. On my way I was stopped by outlaws ... robbers. They took my extra clothing. They took my shoes. They left me with only what would be similar to a loincloth and a small bit of water. In that way I traveled two more days over wilderness terrain. When I reached his encampment, he knew me; he had seen me before and remembered me. My feet were bleeding and I was very, very thirsty.

Yes, he could do miracles. I suppose he could have touched me and healed my feet, but he didn't do that. Instead, he sat me down and provided some food and water. And then, with his own hands, he washed my feet and bandaged them. They were so badly cut that it should have taken ten days or more for them to heal. And yet, in three or four days, they were healed. I didn't even wonder about it then. I thought my healing power within myself had done this. And yet, now, as I look back, of course I recognize that it was his work.

Had he miraculously healed them, I would have been in awe of him, and he didn't want that. He didn't want blind devotion. It is this quality of him that, perhaps, I most cherished as I knew him in that lifetime: he understood that he was human. Yes, he was divine, but he was also human. And he did not want to be worshipped as a god. For a god to teach forgiveness, to teach that one should turn the other cheek and love those who torment one, people could say, “Well, that's fine for you to say, but you're not human.” But the point is that he **was** human, fully human. He felt the same pain as any other human. He had the same desire for acceptance and for love as any other human. But he, more than any other being in history, clearly understood the nature of his divine spirit.

Now, I tell you that every being is of the same nature. The same divine spirit resides in each of you. No, you are not fully evolved as he was. You still have karma that needs to

be resolved. You are not yet beyond the astral plane as he was. And you have not come back just for love. But, nevertheless, your essence is no less holy, no less perfect and beautiful. It is this that seems to me most wonderful about it, that he knew that to be an effective teacher it had to be realized that he **was** human and that, far more often than not, he emphasized that humanness. He let people see that he bled when he was cut. He let people see that he felt pain when there was pain, and that he **still** could forgive and could love.

The epitome of this is his death. Certainly, one as powerful as he could have avoided such a painful death if he had so chosen. What would have happened to all that he taught if he had escaped that death and had allowed himself to become a powerful king whom many idolized? Could the message of love have been as clearly taught? Is there any way it could have been as clearly taught than through those beautiful words as he died in agony: "Forgive them, for they know not what they do"?

How can we follow that message with our hearts today ... learning the lessons of forgiveness, as one very beautiful human being taught them? That truly is the challenge of all of our lives: to learn that level of love, unconditional love, and compassion and forgiveness ... to truly have peace in our own hearts so that the infinite power of the Eternal may flow through us to all that is. I will stop here and would welcome your questions. That is all.

**Q:** Aaron, you keep helping me to learn to be accepting of my anger. And you just ended the talk about Jesus saying, "May we have peace in our hearts so that love may flow through us." Could you speak to that? It's the core of the confusion I feel.

**Aaron:** C, are you feeling anger any the less when you're trying to get rid of it than when you're acknowledging it? My point is simply that if there's anger, then there's anger. Unless you have compassion for the being that's feeling anger, then you're not learning compassion. When you move through this process of compassionate awareness, you come to a point where the self that's feeling the anger begins to dissolve into the totality of all that is. And with that dissolution of self, the anger itself dissolves. You begin to laugh at it, to see that there's nothing separate from you, that that which seemed to be a catalyst for the anger is simply an extension of your own energy. But to allow that process to happen, first there has to be awareness and opening.

When you are feeling the type of anger that makes you want to hurt another, no, you cannot serve as fully as a channel for light, love. But anger doesn't stay with you at that intensity—it comes and goes. Each time it appears, each time it arises, when you deal with it lovingly—not condoning unskillful action toward the catalyst for anger, but accepting, with compassion, this being who is feeling hurt, feeling frightened—each time you set a new pattern, reinforce a new pattern, of loving acceptance of all that is. So, when you see another being who is frightened and acting angry, instead of judging that being, you feel compassion for it—the kind of compassion that Jesus showed on the cross, asking not for his own moving past pain, but for forgiveness for those who did not know what they did or acted out of fear.

Each time you practice it, you move a bit closer. You don't have to get rid of the anger—anger will dissolve naturally with the light of awareness. That doesn't mean it won't come up again and again and again. As long as you're in a human body, you're

likely to experience some anger, but the intensity of it will lessen. The length of time that you're caught in it will lessen ... not because there's a "getting rid of" but because there's complete equanimity about whatever comes through, even anger. At that point of loving equanimity, yes, you are a very clear channel for light, even when feelings arise in you. Your heart is so open that there's loving acceptance for your own feelings and for any being's, and your light shines brilliantly, and that of the light which flows through you flows freely. Does that answer your question?

**Q:** Three questions. What was the date and time of Jesus birth? What can you tell us about Jesus' training in the mystery schools? I had a dream about Jesus cleaning my feet, only he was actually cleaning them out with a metal scoop, removing fat from inside the arches. It felt good, like scratching an itch. I knew I would be able to walk on them right away without pain, even though they were sliced open. What was the purpose of the dream? Part of it, to me, seemed to be about making me a better actor. My feet felt open all the next day.

**Aaron:** I really cannot speak to the first two questions. Remember, I was an uneducated six year old boy. I don't suppose even my father could have told you the date. Perhaps, what phase the moon was in, what year of that life. I cannot even tell you how many years I lived, nor what year I was born. From my perspective now as spirit, of course, I can read details of this sort through the akashic records, but I find no need to do so. I am more concerned with the fact that this human lived than the specific details concerning his life and whether this or that one can be proved. I also know nothing of his youth. I was present nearby at the time of his birth and knew that something special had occurred.

My next meeting with him was when I was a mature man. He was familiar with the practice of meditation. He learned that practice in the East. He was able to move freely into a jhanic state—that is a state of deep concentration—and understood the practice of that, and also understood that that could be an escape, and did not indulge himself in that practice. But he understood it well. From my own experience with him in that lifetime, I saw him meditate and recommend the practice of meditation, not only prayer but meditation, to others. I did not know on an intellectual level anything about what he taught, and he did not speak of such things often. It was part of his own training, which went into making him what he was, not part of what he taught to others. What he taught was very simple: forgiveness. Open your heart and love. Know God's presence within each being, and relate to everything through its divinity.

Your dream. Dreams may be interpreted in many different ways. Sometimes a dream of such a figure is in reality a memory, a past life memory of that having happened to you. More often, it is symbolic. I can't tell you which is so here, so you'll have to listen to my thoughts and decide for yourself which is most applicable.

In a typical symbolic dream every being in the dream is an aspect of yourself. If it is a male and you are male, it's an aspect of your conscious self. If the other being is a female and you are male, it's an aspect of your subconscious self. The fact that this being in the dream was Jesus means that it is a very wise aspect of yourself. The feet are a foundation, of sorts, are that upon which you stand, upon which you walk. They

carry you, they support you. When there is something wrong with the feet, it may indicate an awareness of weakness in the foundation.

You say there was a cutting away of that which was not only unnecessary, but which was deteriorating the foundation, weakening it ... a cutting away of that by a deeply wise and loving aspect of yourself, and allowing healing in and a strengthening of the foundation. Even though it was cut away, you could still walk on it, and it felt better and brought you joy. I have a sense that in your daily life at the time of this dream, you were also "cutting away" at some level, cleaning up the foundation, in a sense, and strengthening it, and that this is symbolically what the dream spoke of ... perhaps giving yourself permission to do this work, which may have been difficult or painful.

I emphasize that this is the usual symbolic form for a dream of this sort, but that it is possible that in some way it was a past life memory, and you will need to decide that for yourself.

**Q:** When did you first learn of the death of Jesus? At the time, what significance did you assign to his death? When, after Jesus' death, did you first learn that his followers continued to meet and preserve his teachings? Did you ever join them?

**Aaron:** While I was a simple shepherd, I also felt myself to be a disciple of his. What he taught spoke more to my heart than anything I had ever heard anywhere, and I tried to follow his teachings and to share them with others. In this way, I became very much of a follower of his and, at a certain point in my life, left my shepherding to be with him. I was not one of his center core of disciples. I was a very simple being in that lifetime and I had fear for myself. I had love for this being who was Jesus, yet, I also had an ego and a sense of self and fear.

I was not present at his death, but I knew he had been captured. I knew that he would be put to death. People who knew that I had been a follower of his directed officials to ask me, and I must admit that I denied him. I said I did not know him out of fear for myself. The tremendous guilt and fear I felt about that led me away, as far away as I could get at that point. It was not until later, several weeks later—having spent most of those weeks alone in prayer and meditation—that I understood what I had done and what I needed next to do.

At that point, yes, I joined those who had been his followers and who continued his teachings. I found that there were many others who had done as I had done and who also felt guilt, and who had also learned the true depth of his message of forgiveness through that guilt, and the necessity to forgive ourselves. It was his final gift to me in that lifetime. His death, and my own fear that led me to deny knowing him, is what led me to really understand his message of forgiveness.

**Q:** Jesus experienced a "dark night of the soul" just as St. John of the Cross did. I seem to be experiencing a modern form of this concept. Can you speak of this?

**Aaron:** I would say that that dark night is an essential step in your growth. The soul yearns to return to God, to be part of God, and yet, feels itself to be fully unworthy of God. The dark night is the period of being present with that sense of unworthiness, and it is through that experience that one finally comes out to the light at the other end ... to knowing that you always have been worthy and are fully worthy. Until you question your worthiness to that depth of despair, you cannot really understand the essence of

God which is in you, and that you've never been away from God in the first place, that the whole separation had been an illusion. You can know that on an intellectual level, but it is this dark night that pulls you through the process of knowing on an experiential level that you are within God and God is within you, and of finding the healing to know your full worthiness on the spiritual plane.

St. John of the Cross expresses this very beautifully. He says that the soul who knows God finds itself unworthy of God. And yet, because of the depth of its love, it persists in reaching out, aspiring, to be part of that which it so fully loves. And, through this process, it finds the courage and inspiration to purify itself.

At times, the darkness may be very dark indeed, and there's something else I would speak to here. One of the things you are learning on this plane, all of you in human incarnation, is faith. Some of you have asked me in the past, "Why does this veil of forgetting fall into place? Why am I not given clear seeing of who I am? When I take incarnation, why do I need to lose that?" And I've said that if you retained that clear seeing and knew fully who and what you were, then your growth would not be a matter of learning faith, but of how well self-disciplined you were.

If you aspire to be an athlete or a dancer, you must undertake rigorous physical training. You have a clear picture of where you want to get, where you are now, and what steps are necessary. One doesn't promise that you'll be the best athlete or dancer, but to reach that height of physical condition is a matter of self-discipline: "I know this is what I have to do, so I'll do it." If it was as simple as that, as clear as that, then, rather than faith, what you'd be learning is control, self-discipline. And yet, in a sense, what you're being asked to learn is to give up control—not to be undisciplined, but to let go of your will and to know that His will for you is always what you most need.

A friend of mine puts it very beautifully when he says, "You are an actor in a play. Can you read your lines as best you can and leave the script to God?" This doesn't deny free will. You **always** have free will, but you have the most freedom when your free will is the decision: I will trust; as dark as it may seem, this is the path I see I need to follow and trust. Not my will but Thy will be done. That is the greatest freedom that one can move into. So, through the darkness, you are offered the opportunity to practice and learn faith. That is all.

**Q:** Christians accept Jesus as a higher being and Jews do not. Have Christians moved to a plane beyond Jews?

**Aaron:** My friend, do you suppose that you have always been a Jew or a Christian, Moslem, Buddhist or any other in every lifetime? In one lifetime, you were a Christian. In one, you were a Jew. In one, a Sufi. In one, a Native American practicing the religion of that culture. Every religion with a foundation of love is a viable path to graduation from this plane. Every religion ...

Those of the Jewish faith in this incarnation, who do not accept Jesus as the son of God, may still find great love for him and what he taught. Those who do not, that's fine. They are then asked to learn about love and forgiveness without the inspiration that Jesus offered, and that's an even harder task.

Jesus is quoted as having said, "None may come to the Father but through me." This quote had been widely misinterpreted by those who use it for the power of the church

to be assumed to mean that one must take Christ as one's personal savior in order to move to God. I would suggest that that's not what he meant at all, that his "through me" was not meant as personal "through me." He meant *through what I teach*, through this path of forgiveness, acceptance, love, and especially through the living of the Christ Consciousness which may also be labeled Buddha Nature or Pure Mind. None may come to the Truth but through the opening of the personal self to its own deepest truth of non-separation, of love. That is the way for the soul to come up, and none may go there but through that path, learning the lessons of love as exemplified in his life. Do you wish me to speak further on this or is my answer sufficient?

**Q:** To me, it seems that his painful death was somewhat in vain since those who learned the lesson did regardless, and yet many in his name killed, raped, etc. and so did not learn it.

**Aaron:** Please don't forget that his life and his death spoke not only to those who were alive at the time of his death, but to each succeeding generation. Thus, the message of his life may have spoken to each of you many, many times in different incarnations. Those who have been murderers and rapists in one incarnation are learning, slowly, the lessons of love. At the time when they're ready to hear this message, then they will be moved by it, touched by it.

Each of you is making the growth from service to self to service to other. There are what I would call "negatively-polarized" entities and "positively-polarized" entities. No being is totally negative. Only the being that has reached the level of pure soul, total clarity of light, is completely positive. And yet, there are beings that are very negative and beings that are very positive. Those beings that are considered negative work mostly in service to self. Those who are more positively-polarized are more service to others. Most beings are a mixture of the two.

Within yourself, if you look, you see fear arising and a need to care for and serve yourself, and you also see the desire to serve others, the heart opening in love. You are evolving from, perhaps, a balance of fifty-fifty to a more clearly positively-polarized being, perhaps seventy-thirty or eighty-twenty. But there will still be moments of service to self, of fear, of hatred, even in beings that are largely positively-polarized. So, your many lives are a progression of becoming increasingly clear in your energy, increasingly positively-polarized. At that point where you're fifty/fifty—fifty-one/forty-nine, perhaps, just a bit more positive—but ready to hear the message of love, to be inspired, to move toward service to others, then you hear it. If not in this lifetime, then the next one or the one after that or the one after that. It is a timeless message.

**Q:** Were there other teachers on the level of Jesus and the Buddha? Is there one incarnate today?

**Aaron:** We're speaking of two different types of beings here. In one, we have a being who had already moved beyond the need to return to this plane and chose to come back as a matter of love. In the other, we have a being who reached that depth of understanding that he not only graduated from this plane, but, in one leap, bypassed the need to move through fourth and fifth density, as he totally dissolved even the emotional body while on this plane. As such, the Buddha is a beautiful example and inspiration of what one can learn through human form, of the preciousness of human

birth. The Buddha became, in that final lifetime, what Jesus already was when he came to that final lifetime.

Yes, there have been other such beings—some in recorded and some in pre-recorded history. None have become well known. And yet, such beings have always inspired those around them, even if it was only a small group of people. What strikes me as important here is that an essential part of both the Christ and the Buddha's lifetimes was their intent to teach others. Jesus returned to teach. There have been others who have not made that decision outwardly to teach, not because of negative polarity but through a clear understanding: "My work lies elsewhere; I share who and what I am with those around me ... but upon leaving this plane, after the death of this body, my work lies elsewhere." There are many such teachers on my plane.

I am talking here about beings ... Let's go back to this question of density again. In fourth and fifth density, there are still the vestiges of an emotional body. In sixth density ... I use the term "density" here as a description of the density of the energy, how much shadow and how much clarity there is in it. Sixth density is the level of the higher self: there's no more emotional body at all. And yet, there is still a self; there is still personal awareness and memory. Seventh density is the beginning of moving beyond the self. The mental body also begins to fall away. There must be a tool of "self" in order to teach others. Pure awareness cannot manipulate that awareness so as to teach. The being who is capable of moving into seventh and then into eighth density, manifesting its energy as the pure spirit body returned to the awareness of full union with God—the being ready for seventh density who elects to stay in sixth density so that it can function as a teacher for others is doing what Jesus or the Buddha did.

Buddhism has a term for such beings. There is a word, "Bodhisattva." This is one who recognizes the suffering in the universe and is willing to come back to incarnation over and over again, rather than finding its own freedom ... coming back to serve others. That's one level—to be willing to return to third density. Another form of Bodhisattva is one willing to remain in sixth density.

That spirit that became Jesus was a sixth density being at the time that it agreed to come back. It was a sixth density being fully ready to move into eighth density, and held itself in sixth density only because of its desire and willingness to serve others. It knew that it would progress beyond sixth density when its work was done, but that it needed that mental body in order to continue its service. Following that final incarnation, the Buddha moved to that same level, and that being could also have progressed, but chose not to do so, but remained for some time to teach.

There are many beings who are capable of moving into seventh and eighth densities, and who yet remain at sixth density. Some of those beings moved to sixth density through third and fourth and fifth density, not quickly as the Buddha did. So, perhaps, there was nothing that remarkable about them on Earth except that they became ready to graduate, as many beings do, into fourth density ... that there was no more karmic need to incarnate. They became more remarkable when they reached this level of sixth density and were ready to progress into seventh density and said, "No, I am willing to remain with this to serve." In your terminology, such beings are thought of as angels. That is the closest definition for the word "angel" that I can offer: a being of

## Christmas Memories from Aaron, December 18, 1991

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sixth density that does not progress of its own free will, but stays in sixth density to be of service to others.

Each of you has within you all the light and love of the universe. I would like you to try this very simple meditation.

Breathing in, I am aware of the love within my heart ...

Breathing out, I send that love to all who are in need of love.

Of course, the words are too long to fit the breathing pattern, so simply **think** it as breath flows:

Breathing in, I am aware of the heart of love within me ...

Breathing out, I send that love where it's most needed.

In and out, at your own pace.

*(Long pause while we do.)*

I wish you a Christmas season of healing, joy and wonder. That is all.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 19, 1991

**Aaron:** My greetings and love to all of you. This week before your annual commemoration of the birth of he whom you name Jesus I promised to speak to you about some of my memories of that being in that lifetime. Last night I spoke about him at length. Since many of you were here I will not repeat that now. I will assume that the transcript will be available to those who were not present.

What I emphasized in my talking of him last night was the importance of his humanness. Those who came to be his followers related to him not because they thought of him as God, but because of the very beautiful human qualities in him ... that he was not above the suffering that we all encountered. He did not set himself apart, nor wish to be worshipped in any way. **He** did not call himself God.

*(Long pause.)* I'm sorting out memories. There was a time when I was with him and he was traveling. We came to a village where his reputation had preceded him. There were those who shunned him and those who sought him. Those who came after him wanted to hold him up on a pedestal. They brought out food and wanted to serve him and to set an elaborate table. This was a rural and rustic village. When I say "to set an elaborate table," I mean to bring the best of the food they had. He sat down, as did others ... not at a table, on the ground.

They brought him a plate of sorts with ... more of a bowl, with many foods in it. And they served him first. I know he was hungry. We all were. We had been traveling for several days with little food. At the outskirts of the circle was a young child watching, and he was thin. There was obviously some scarcity of food in this village. And those beings that chose to honor him by serving him their food were serving the very best they had.

So, there was this child watching. One of those who was serving, noticing Jesus looking at the child, went to shoo the child away: "Get out of here! Go on!" And said to him, "That is the child of one who disdains you." The child was very thin and had sores on his body, and Jesus simply stood up and took the bowl of food, carried it to the child. The child was frightened, seeing this man walking toward him and having been told to go. But in a very soft voice he said, "I will not hurt you. Would you like food?" And he sat down on the ground, held the bowl out, handed it to the child. He asked for clean cloths and water. While the child ate, he washed his sores.

Just that. There was no lecture. Certainly, he could have used it as an example: Love your enemy. Words were totally unnecessary. The simplicity and grace of his gesture was all that was needed.

There were other children there. This one had been the boldest. The others approached. Seeing this one eating, they became a bit bolder. And this food was shared with all. Somehow there was plenty. I don't know if he did it or how it happened, but there was enough for all to eat who were hungry.

There was another day that I remember when we were in a very poor hut. Please do not mistake my stories to think that I was very close to him or followed him all the time. He traveled a good bit and when he came near to where I lived and word came that he

would be there, I would have the great joy of spending a few days with him before I needed to return to my family, my sheep, my responsibility. There were many with him. I was not one of a chosen or select few in any way.

We were gathered in a barn of some sort ... flimsy shelter against a great storm. The roof was leaking ... not just here and there, but everywhere. And yet, it was still better than no shelter. There was material present to mend the roof, a thatch of sorts. The being whose barn it was was injured, unable to do that work. So, when the rain intermittently let up, some of the younger and stronger of us went out in the cold and rain to repair the roof as best we could, to put some of this new thatch on it. It is a job far easier to do in nice weather. And yet, it can be done in inclement weather.

He came with us. He didn't have to. He could have stayed inside in the driest spot. He didn't talk about it—he just came. Such work in cold weather may lead one's hands to become raw and bleeding, especially the fingertips. His hands bled along with ours. I'm sure he could have stopped that, had he wanted to. Instead, he bore it with all of us. When we were done and came inside, he simply took each of our hands in his, not to perform miracles, but as way of saying thank you, just of sharing the comradeship. And somehow in his touch, much as I told last night, there was some healing.

I'm sure that he could have thoroughly healed those torn hands of ours. He was able to perform such miracles, although I never saw him perform them. He chose not to awe us with his miracles, but to do his healing quietly. Simply at his touch the pain receded, almost to the point that we weren't aware of how it happened. It wasn't until thinking about it much later that I realized that it had been his touch that had taken away some of the pain and soreness and led to prompt healing of the split skin.

This spirit that is presently Barbara was my son in that lifetime, the son of a poor shepherd. That being that she was was a boy named Mark. She's seen this lifetime, it's something that I've shared with her ... not because there was a need to know, not because there was karma, but simply as a small gift to her, a very joyous memory. When he was first old enough to travel—perhaps seven years old—old enough to walk that distance, I took him with me on my annual pilgrimage to meet with he who was known as Jesus. We walked for several days and Mark did an admirable job of keeping up, but he was tired, his feet sore, a bit hungry. When we arrived at the place where Jesus was ... Perhaps I should let Barbara tell this one as she remembers it from her own viewpoint, and I can only tell you how I remember it as the father. But her memory of it may mean more to you.

**Barbara:** At one point I was dealing with Aaron with many heavy past lives and I said to him, "Aaron, can I never see a past life where there is beauty and love?" ... and saw just a glimpse of this past life. I've seen other glimpses of this lifetime with Aaron. But this one hour or so of it was so very beautiful.

This man was standing there and I knew from a distance ... It's awkward to keep saying, "the being that I was"—please understand that if I say "I" it's not me, it's that being who I was, but I'm going to simplify the talking about it by saying "I."

I knew immediately which one he was. He wasn't bigger or taller or different-looking than the other people that were gathered, but he radiated light ... literally. Aaron—my father—brought me up to him and he simply said, "This is your son." And Aaron said,

“His name is Mark.” He just said, “Hello, Mark.” Food was brought—we had been traveling and we were hungry. I was a small child; I ate and adults were speaking above my head. I became drowsy. I was just mesmerized by the energy and presence of him. After I ate, my head started to droop, and I dozed. I felt his arm come around me and just pull me over, putting my head against his chest. That memory means more to me than almost any memory I have. When I’m feeling afraid, when I’m feeling alone, I come back to that memory, and how immense and powerful his energy was. There’s nothing profound to tell about it, it’s just one of the most quietly joyful memories that I have ... that in the midst of talking to all these men, he could notice a young child falling asleep and lovingly pull him over to sleep against him ... and how much love and comfort there was in that. It’s a memory that I very much cherish.

**Aaron:** I was not an educated being, nor political. I didn’t really understand the political forces of that time. I was a very simple person. What I responded to most was his love, his humility, his honesty, his kindness. But I also responded to his humanness, to the fact that he grieved, that he felt sadness as well as joy, that he felt pain when his body was injured, that he was clearly human.

People have asked me here about the stories of his divine birth, let us say, through a virgin and I’ve declined to answer that. Each religion builds the myths that are useful to it. In saying it that way, I’m not saying this is simply a myth. It doesn’t matter. He was human. However he came to this incarnation, by whatever route he moved into human form, once in human form he was human. I’ve spoken before about seeing this as one of the greatest gifts that he gave.

Last night I was asked, “Are there others like Christ and the Buddha who have walked the Earth, who do so today?” There are many beings who have reached that level of evolution, but very few who, having reached that level of evolution, have returned to human form—very few. In incarnating as a human, he was a part of the law of karma. Any anger, hatred or fear within him could lead to adhering karma and the need to return again and again. He knew that. He knew that he would be incarnate with only the thinnest transparency of this veil of forgetting that most of us have, so that he had clear memory of who he was and why he came. And yet, he also knew that he would be human. He was still willing to come.

There are many highly-evolved beings who serve humans—who serve all beings, human or non-human—from the spirit plane, but very few who have willingly chosen to come back and serve from the human plane. And yet, it’s the only way it could have been done. It’s one thing to receive divine guidance and another to see a fellow being practice what he preaches, even to his own death. The power of that is very forceful, very profound. And this, to me, is his greatest gift: his willingness to serve, even to that degree ... and the fact that he didn’t take advantage of his clear seeing of who he was and why he had come to avoid, in any way, the pain of being human.

Can you see that even the smallest avoidance of that would have set him apart ... so that his teaching could not have been nearly as effective? And he knew that.

I was also asked last night if Christians who have some belief in Christ are more evolved in some way. And I said that every religion on Earth is a viable path to freedom, to graduation from this human plane. What is a Christian? The church has distorted the meaning of this word. Perhaps more murder and ill will has been performed in Christ’s

name than love has been performed, sad though that may be. There are a great many Christians who are not members of the church, but like those of us who did not call ourselves Christians in his time but simply followed this being whom we called Jesus, there are beings who are intent on learning to forgive and love each other, to not harm another being, and learning these lessons of love. In doing that, most certainly they are followers of him, whatever religion they choose to belong to. It has nothing to do with the Christian church, only that they follow the lessons taught by a great master. That is all.

**D:** Was Jesus called Jesus back in that lifetime when you knew him, or was he called by another name?

**Aaron:** Some called him Jesus, some called him the carpenter, or the carpenter from Nazareth. In some circles, he was simply known as "the teacher." Yes, there were many teachers. And yet, he came to be called that by many. When I say he whom you know as Jesus, perhaps I do that more to distinguish because, of course, the spirit also lived many other lives. Yes, he had reached the point where he no longer needed to incarnate in human form, but to reach that point he had lived a great many lives. So, in naming him in that way I am referring to that specific incarnation of this spirit.

*(Many pages deleted as not directly relevant.)*

**A:** I have the sense that J is wondering about South America and some of the cultures that existed there. I am wondering also about the idea that Jesus came to this hemisphere and taught also. (**Barbara:** *During that lifetime?*) Or at another time.

**Aaron:** Let's save your questions on South American culture and spirituality for another week. Did he who was known as Jesus come to this hemisphere to teach in that lifetime? No. Unequivocally, no. That does not mean that what he taught might not have been taught by other entities in this hemisphere in much the same time frame. But he himself did not come here. Nor did he reincarnate after his death in that lifetime. That entity who was known as Jesus in that incarnation did live in this hemisphere in prior incarnations. He was not yet fully evolved, but still was a great teacher ... a very wise and compassionate being. Does that answer your question?

**A:** Did Jesus evolve through the Earth plane?

**Aaron:** Yes.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 16, 1992

**Aaron:** I promised you some Christmas stories tonight. Many of you have heard me, in past years, talk about the being whose birthday you will celebrate next week, the one who was known as the human, Jesus, or the Christ. I do not wish to repeat myself, but I realize there are a number of you here who have not heard me speak of him before. There are transcripts available, but I will tell it very briefly.

I was a young boy at the time of that being's birth, in incarnation at that time, as were many of you. I lived in that part of the world where he was born. When I was an adult, I came to know him. I was not a wise man, or a teacher in that lifetime, but a simple shepherd. I loved him with all my heart. I knew, at that first meeting, that was a being that I would follow anywhere, and yet, and I want to emphasize, I do not consider myself a Christian. I was not a Christian in that lifetime, nor was he. I do not label myself as a follower of ANY religion, I have been of all the world's religions in one incarnation or another. My talk here is not about the church that evolved around being, but about the man himself.

Regardless of the facts of his birth, once he took human incarnation, he was fully human. When he was cut, he bled; when he was emotionally hurt, there was pain in his heart. He experienced the veil of forgetting only in small part and not with the opacity most humans experience. He always retained a good deal of clarity about who he was, and why he was here.

Why was he here? Quite simply, to teach peace and forgiveness in a world in which those terms had little meaning. It was a world in which there was an attempt at the morality of not stealing, or not killing, but above that moral stricture was the philosophy of an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. Not do unto others as you would have them do unto you, but do unto others as they do unto you—if he hits me, I can hit him. People thought more in terms of justice, of balance: one wrong equaling another wrong, not of forgiveness and of healing.

It was into such a world that he was born, to teach a different lesson: that there can be healing, there can be forgiveness. And it is ONLY with that healing and forgiveness that an end to karma is possible, only with that forgiveness that the whole world can begin the process of healing. The idea that two wrongs do not create a right was new in the world of that time. Many felt a need to blame others and could not hear his teaching; it was threatening to them. But others responded with joyful hearts.

My emphasis is that once incarnated he was human and knew human pain and fear. Earlier tonight I spoke about surrender of the small will of the ego self, about the suffering that grows out of attachment and fear, I said that we are each only a thread in the whole tapestry. The thread cannot know the finished design. The brain shakes in fear while the heart moves gently forward. I spoke of letting go of need to control, knowing that you, as human, cannot see the whole picture, but the divine aspect of self knows deeper wisdom. This I learned from him!

I ask you to look at his death, this man who had the power to heal by his touch. Certainly, he did not need to die hanging on a cross. He had the power to choose abundance, power and glory for himself, but it was clear to him that was not why he was here. One could well argue that, had he become a king, he could have spread his message far and wide.

It's easy for one who is not faced with pain to speak of forgiveness. Far harder for one who is nailed to a cross to say "Forgive them." What would have been the impact of such forgiveness had he aspired to and attained that worldly glory? Nor did he NOT seek that. He did not AVOID acclaim nor seek it. His focus was not on being powerful or fierce, nor in being humble or hidden, but simply on teaching love. Just that. And he trusted his life, that it would lead him where it needed to. Certainly, he had a preference. Before his death he prayed, "Take it from me, it is too much to bear. But if it be Thy will, I will carry it." That is expressing a preference and then saying "Thy will be done."

I want to add a personal story here. When I speak of my relationship with him, please understand that I was a simple shepherd, not a known disciple of his, just a simple man who loved him. When his travels brought him near to where I lived, I sought out his presence for a few blessed days. I had an eldest son named Mark. I first brought Mark to see him when he was a small child, and through the years as he grew. For those days, friends would tend my sheep. It was very important, to me and my son, to spend those few days with him, but I had a wife and other, younger, children and felt the pull of my responsibility to stay just a few days and leave.

Then there was a year where the one who had been my wife died. I was feeling deep grief, for I loved her very much. Hearing that he was nearby, just a few days walk, I left my younger children with relatives and, with Mark, walked to where he was. I had an accident upon the way. Walking on a rocky slope, I slipped, fell quite a way down the slope, and my leg was broken. People came to help. They bound the leg, and as I was not far from where he was encamped, they carried me to him. This was a man who could perform miracles, who could heal the blind, and raise the paralyzed up on their legs.

I talked once about the fact that he preferred NOT to perform such miracles, because he did not want to be worshipped as a god, but known as a man. He understood that it was not my leg that most needed healing, but my heart, which was broken from my loss. I had small children, how would I raise them alone? What would I do without my beloved companion? I knew, also, that he could do miracles, and I beseeched him "Heal my leg. I must go home to my children, to my sheep." He simply looked at me and said "Mark can tend the sheep." And it was true that the children were well cared for by loving relatives. It was my fear that was pulling me home, and he understood that. It was my fear that if I stayed there with him, my heart would break, because, somehow, being in his presence, I had allowed myself the feeling of grief that I had been suppressing.

It took six weeks for my leg to heal. For the first two weeks, I was very angry with him. I was helpless. I could not walk, only be carried. He saw that I was well tended, but I pushed him aside. Why would he not heal my leg? I knew he could do. Slowly, my heart began to soften, and I understood the real reason I was there was not for the leg, but

## Christmas Memories from Aaron, December 16, 1992

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for the heart. His love helped me to let go of her, to trust my life. By the time my leg was healed, I was ready to go back into the hills to my family and my sheep with a confidence and faith that everything would be just as it needed to be. As it was. That is when I the learned lesson: "Thy will be done."

My anger did not threaten him. Not that he found my feelings to be trivial. Simply, he was not afraid of my anger. If I would not speak to him because he wouldn't heal my leg, that was fine. He knew what I needed. I did not know. Had he been any other lesser being, who could have performed such miracles, perhaps he would have healed my leg, and I would have rushed back to the hills filled with the same fear and anguish with which I had left them. I am only one thread in the tapestry. May I make a thread as beautiful, as radiant as possible. Thy will be done. Can we all learn a lesson from his life, but especially from his death?

The love and generosity of his life and his death shine brilliantly on all our lives. Even unto death, I trust your plan. "Lift from me, but if it be Thy will, I will carry it." I ask of you, as you celebrate the time of his birth, think about this aspect of his message, and ask yourself, "How can I live my own life with deeper faith?" That is all.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 17, 1992

**Aaron:** In past years, when talking about recollections of that lifetime in which I knew the one known as Jesus, I have focused on one or another special quality of that being. Today, I prefer to simply share special memories.

He usually did not eat meat. It was not a strictly maintained doctrine of vegetarianism; he preferred not to eat meat, but took that which he was given. Knowing his preference, very few served him meat. One day I was with him in a group of about ten people. We had been walking all day in rain and were wet, tired and hungry. We'd had a bit of warmed grain in the morning, and that was all. We came to a place where it seemed that we might rest. There was a cave, of sorts, to provide adequate shelter, but we had no food with us. A young boy appeared, of perhaps eleven years and we spoke to him, asking "Do you know where we can find food?" And the boy said, proudly, "I'll get you food." He was back in about an hour, with his arms full of small animals that he'd just killed.

Now, some of us ate meat more readily than others, but we all knew his preference not to eat of this. This child felt so proud, for having provided. I remember how lovingly he knelt down and received that gift, asked us to clean and cook it, and invited the boy to sit and eat with us. There was such generosity of spirit. As we were cooking the food, a family came by. They had bread with them, and he invited them also to stay and eat with us. They had some vegetables, so we had a very full meal.

He spoke very movingly before we began to eat. He spoke of the life that had been in the potatoes and carrots, the life that had been in the wheat, the life that had been in the animals. He asked us to be aware that we were a part of that life and not separate from it. He reminded us that the human cannot exist without nourishment, and that it must draw that nourishment from other life. He spoke of the importance of being aware of the gift of that life, from whatever source it came, and asked that we consecrate that gift as we took it into our bodies. He suggested that we remember that nothing can live forever. As we bring it into ourselves with gratitude and loving awareness, it nourishes us so we may move out and serve others, who serve still others. Thus, we give eternal life to that gift of life that was given us, because our kindness lives on and spreads through the universe.

Just a small memory. Attach what meaning you wish to it.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 8, 1993

**Aaron:** Good evening and my love to you all. I am Aaron. Every year I share Christmas stories. For those who have not heard these before, I want to make a few opening remarks. First, I was alive—not as Aaron but that incarnation whom I was at that time—at the time that the one you know as Jesus walked the Earth. I had the great blessing to know this man. The one who I was was a simple shepherd. I was not learned nor was I a leading disciple of his, just one who loved him and followed him. I tell these stories not as I, Aaron, interpreting with a deeper wisdom, but the way they were experienced by that shepherd.

I also want to emphasize that I do not consider myself to be a member of any specific religion. I have much love for this one, Jesus, much love for the one who was known as the Buddha, much love for many other teachers: Hindu, Sufi, Hebrew and of religious sects of which you never heard, teachers who taught from their heart.

When you scrape off the traditions and the specific ritual prayers, and seek the essence of most religions that have really touched the world, you find that they have far more in common than they have differences. Their commonality always grows from the fact that they were heart teachings. They did not come from a man or woman who was trying to impress others, nor from one who was striving for power, riches or control, but always from one who was deeply moved by the suffering that was seen around that one ... always from one who strived to empty the small ego self and allow the God-self to speak through, to allow oneself to hear that divine wisdom and share it.

The Buddha did not call it “God’s” wisdom but Dharma. It doesn’t matter what you call it, whether the religion is non-theistic or theistic. There is still a recognition in all of these great religions that there is something greater than the small separate self, something of which we are all a part. There is an attempt to live one’s life in harmony with that energy, by whatever name it is known.

Those who have followed such great teachers have built up churches and temples around those teachers, have built up whole systems of religious doctrine and belief which often have very little to do with the teacher himself. There is a beautiful medieval legend that I’ve heard told many times in different ways. The legend is that the one who was known as Jesus, looking down from the spirit plane, saw the fires of the Spanish Inquisition. He looked closer and finally moved into body form to see just what was going on.

Now remember this is a legend. I am not claiming it to be history, only it could have happened. What he saw brought tears to his eyes. He saw men with crosses in their hands lighting fires and burning people at stakes. He asked them, “Why do you do this? By whose will do you do this?” And they referred him to the one who was highest in the hierarchy of the church in that place. So he went to see that man. “Why do you do this?” He was told, “To strengthen the church. For Jesus’ sake we do this, to remove heresy from the church.”

The legend has it that the one who was known as Jesus said, "I am Jesus and I bid you stop! I never taught hate. I never taught killing." The man to whom he spoke had the wisdom to be afraid. He knew at some level that this really **was** Jesus; and yet, he said to him, "If you go out and tell them to stop, we will have to burn you, too. We must control because people cannot control themselves. We cannot say 'Love one another' because they don't, so we have to force them."

The story has it that the one who was known as Jesus, when he heard this, began to weep. He wept so hard that it put out all the fires of the Inquisition and a new spirit began to dwell in the land.

Those of you who are members of any specific religious organization, I ask you, if the one who was the founder of your religion came to Earth today, would your church or temple welcome that one or would he or she be an heretic? What are we creating in the name of love? How are we dividing ourselves so that one religion fights against another in the name of righteousness? Perhaps we are coming to a time on your Earth where your labels do more harm than good. I do not mean that it is harmful to follow the disciplines and doctrines of a religion, but it is useful to ask yourself, why do I need to label myself? How does that label separate me and make me feel better than another? Am I part of the solution which pulls all beings together, or am I part of the situation which creates separation and enhances it?

As churches or religious structures grow, they tend to move into what might be called an esoteric or private kind of teaching for the initiated few. They create hierarchies. Some of you who are in Barbara's meditation class will remember last month she read to you from a "bootleg" book, a book that she is entitled to read because she has had the proper Tibetan Buddhist initiations, but which, without a high lama's approval, she is forbidden to read to you. It seemed appropriate to her to share this one page with the class. She trusted her own wisdom. But this is an example of esoteric teaching.

At times there may be a reason for it. For example, what she was reading from relates to the Tibetan *dzogchen* teachings which lead one to find the space of pure mind and learn to rest in that space. In that space no karma is created. It is a space totally empty of self. One who is not sufficiently mature could distort and misuse those teachings to say, "I don't have to be responsible." So, with a sense of their own responsibility for presenting powerful teachings, those who wrote down the teachings requested that they not be offered to those who are not ready to hear them.

BUT, how can we determine readiness for another? I cannot judge you and what is in your heart, nor can you judge one another. Perhaps those very words are just what one might need to hear to shake something loose and have one suddenly begin to understand who one really is.

Some religious structures have created this hierarchy of esoteric versus exoteric teachings offered to the masses. Through this means they have controlled. This brings me in a round-about way, finally, to my Christmas stories. Each year I have spoken to you about some aspect of this man, Jesus, that most deeply touched my heart. Jesus did not offer exoteric versus esoteric teachings. He spoke very simply, if at all. Much of his teaching was in deed and not in word. When he did speak people would hear his words at the level that they were ready to hear. The same words, but those who were

able to take it deeper could do so. For those who took it on a very surface level, that's what they needed at that point.

Never did I hear him lecture. He did not teach by sitting down with people and telling them, "Now you should do this and this and this," and philosophizing about it. He simply acted. Perhaps he had infinite power, but he did not show off that power.

A very simple story to illustrate this: There was a time when the one who I was was walking with him and a group of people. We passed a field where there were sheep and there in the field was a sheep lying on the ground in pain, bleating, making the sounds a sheep makes when it is suffering. No caretaker was present. So he immediately went to look.

This was one who had the healing power of life and death in his hands. He looked at the sheep and it was obviously in great difficulty giving birth. There was a foot sticking out. He could have fixed it in a moment. He didn't do so. He knew that the one I was was a shepherd. He turned to me and said, "Can you help it?" And, of course, I did know what to do, was able to insert my hand and push back one leg, pull forth another leg, twist and turn that tiny body to correct birth position, and draw out the baby lamb. Just that. Nothing special. But I wondered as I did it, why did he ask me when he had such power?

He said nothing then. We dried off the lamb and put it back with its mother and went on our way. That evening he simply said to me, in response to my unasked question, "Always do things in the simplest way. Never show off your power to impress." Just that.

That is how he lived. One would not have known his power, except that he gave off a radiance of energy—this light body that we've been talking about, which is perfectly clear, radiated from him. The emotional, mental and the physical bodies perfectly harmonized with the light body. Except for that radiance you would not have known that he was a great teacher. He did not ask people to bow to him or worship him in any way. He did not ask for special treatment. I have described to you in a past year how, when a roof was leaking, he climbed up there with us in the rain and fixed the roof. That transcript is available; I won't go into that story.

He was simple and direct; he taught by his actions. Once, when I was with him ... When I say "I" here, please understand this is not the "I" who currently addresses you, which is a discarnate energy, but that it's the "I" which was one manifestation of this energy incarnate on the Earth at that time—one slice of this energy that I am.

Once, when I was with him, we came to a town, a small town, with a market place where apparently a man whose children were starving had just stolen a loaf of bread and had been caught. Those who caught him—the man who owned the bread and some others, including the one who, let us say, upheld the laws in that place—they were debating what to do with him. The man whose loaf it was wanted him to have the traditional punishment, right there, to have his hand cut off. The man was weeping, "My children will starve." And they lectured to him, "You should have thought of that." But, of course, he had only stolen because his children **were** starving. The gathering crowd was of mixed, and vehement, sentiment.

This one whom you know as Jesus watched the scene for a few minutes then asked those with him, what food did we have. We brought out vegetables, bread and other

food. He said to the man whose loaf had been stolen, "Will you take this in payment?" They looked at us and said, "But you're a stranger and that will put you without food." He simply said, "Our needs will be met. Will you take this in payment?" "Yes." That was far more than had been stolen. And, of course, the stolen loaf would be returned. Then Jesus said, "No, will you take this in payment and give him the stolen loaf?" Again, "Yes."

Then the bread man asked, "What will you and your group do for food?" Jesus simply said, "Our needs will be met." At which point, five or six people, strangers to us, each approached and invited us, "Will you come to our house to eat?" They started vying with each other, each trying to outdo the other for the privilege of hosting this radiant and generous stranger, until Jesus said to them, "Will you bring your food together and we will all eat together?"

This was not a rich village, but so much had been hoarded out of fear. Suddenly, people were eager to give and they began to open what they had hoarded and bring it out. People who had not contributed because they had nothing to contribute stood at the edge of the circle until the one known as Jesus invited them, "Sit and eat. Have faith. There will be enough food." And, of course, there was.

It was not through a miracle that he created plenty, although yes, he did do that at some other times and for his good reasons. In this place the lesson was different. Open your hearts and trust! The food was there. It had always been there. He simply asked those who were wealthy to open their hearts and share. But he did not do that by shaming them or lecturing to them, but by opening their hearts with his love, then allowing their open hearts to open their eyes to others' needs. A very natural flow. There was no judgment in it, no "you **should** give."

When we came back through that village again many months later, there was no longer any starvation. People had found adequate work and adequate food so that everybody there was fed. So, it was not just the passing moment, but it continued, because those who had been afraid learned to release their fear.

A similar story occurred with people who were fishermen. I came to a place with him once where somehow the nets had gotten tangled so that one group had far more fish than it needed, and another group had no fish and had lost its nets. The nets were marked; the group with the fish returned the nets, but they were empty. It was clear to all what had happened, but their greed and their fear made them cling to that which they felt fortune had sent their way. "Never mind your hunger." and "Aren't **we** lucky, **we've** got all these fish?"

This was not a culture where people took fish to market and sold them. There were only so many fish they could use. Yes, they could salt and preserve them. But they were closing their hearts to the others' hunger.

It was a very similar situation really handled in a similar way. He didn't lecture. He only said, "I see that you have many fish to eat. We have vegetables and bread. Shall we eat together?" And he pulled out such abundance that they said, "Yes." To those who had lost their fish he said quietly, "Wait. Be patient." There were some among that group who knew and trusted him. But there was still anger and fear on both sides.

We sat down to eat. Those who had lost their fish stood behind at some distance. One of the other group made as if to chase them off but Jesus said, "They do no harm." Those with the many fish began to eat, but none of us did. We just sat with our plates in front of us, following his lead. They ate. They ate of their fish. They ate of our vegetables and our bread and our fruit. They looked up and said, "Why aren't you eating?" Jesus simply said, "No hurry."

How much can a man eat when he's surrounded by hungry people without finally becoming aware of his own greed and his own fear? A leader of them leaped up then and said, "You are taunting us!" And Jesus said, "No, it is your own fear that is taunting you." Just that. And that one understood. He looked around, saw all the food and said to the others, "I am sorry. Will you eat with us?" And of course, again, there was plenty.

I'm not suggesting we could not have had more to eat, but it was adequate and all were fed. More important, those who had taken what didn't belong to them were offered the non-judgmental opportunity to look at the roots of their own fear and greed and to allow the natural outpouring of love and generosity. This did not happen because they were lectured into it with some moral doctrine, but because they were offered the opportunity to find that love and generosity in their own hearts. This was his way: to connect each person with their own special beauty, with their own divinity.

He did not talk about prayer. He meditated in silence at times and he prayed with words, but rarely did I see him lead an organized prayer or ritual. Yes, he at times went to a temple where he participated in such ritual prayer because that's what was happening there, but he understood that prayer must come from your heart and that to recite words by rote closes the heart. It allows one to think one is "religious," "moral," "prayerful," and to think one is thereby better than another who is not. It doesn't connect the heart to God.

There was a time when he was recognized in a temple with some disdain by the hierarchy of that temple for they felt he would disrupt their service. When I say the hierarchy, not the rabbi so much as the more wealthy members of that group who felt uncomfortably challenged by his teaching. It was permitted for people to stand and speak in such a temple. They asked him, "How do you pray?" And they handed him a prayer book. He put the book aside, stood with head bowed, and simply was silent. After a few minutes they asked him, "Are you going to pray?" He looked up and said, "Yes, I am praying."

It was accepted practice that one not interrupt the one leading the prayer. They waited a few minutes more and said, "Are you going to lead us in prayer?" He said, "I am leading you in prayer." And again he was silent. Finally, some of them began to catch on. So, they stood there in silence for five or ten minutes and he uttered the proper closing to the prayer—the equivalent of "Amen"—thanked them and left.

I do not know how many times he did that. I was with him that once. I'm sure he did it repeatedly. He challenged people by being where they were, not throwing ideas at them, just "I am praying." He didn't even say "Why do we need words?" just "I am praying."

Always, his heart was filled with love. I think he was able to teach as he did and not lecture because there was no lecture in him. His heart was so deeply filled with

compassion, so totally free of judgment that he simply shared where and what he was with those around him, meeting each being exactly where that being was.

If one who was well educated came to him and wanted to talk ideas, philosophy, he could do that. He would indulge in that intellectual banter for some time and then ask a very simple question like, "Well, where is this taking us? Is this entertaining you? What are you after? To see if you can dissuade me from my philosophy?" And such a one would see that there was no such thing as "dissuasion" because he had not come to his philosophy through an intellectual path, but by a deep inward knowing. The power of his inner knowing would shatter the intellectual games of the other and bring him to that same place of purity in his own heart.

He would often choose to sit with the one who was very simple and lacking understanding. I saw him with such a one once, a teenage boy. (*Some words are lost as the tape is turned.*) ... He was walking with a mule which had a burden that was too heavy for it and it was staggering. The youth was hitting it with a stick. No lecture. He simply walked up to him and said, "Your beast seems to be having difficulty. Are you going to town?" "Yeah." "Let us help you." And he picked up all the bundles and distributed them so that the mule had nothing left to carry.

We all got into a line, carrying the various parcels. The young man watched with some distrust. The one who was Jesus took his parcel after a few steps and handed it to another and turned back to the mule, gently took that animal and, with his arm around it, helped it to walk. And thus, we went into town. And there he washed the beast's cuts, saw that it was fed, all the while speaking to this young man with loving friendship, inquiring about his work. Where was he going? What was his name? Who was his family? What did he enjoy to do? No lecture.

We left the young man with all his parcels together, his mule comfortably fed and bedded, and a much deeper understanding of love. It came not through being lectured **about** love, but through **being loved**. Just that. Love one another. Don't talk about it. Do it!

I feel deeply blessed that such a one was my teacher.

May I challenge you a bit before I stop? The next time you are tempted to lecture another—"You didn't wash the dishes," "You are always late," "Why are you so impatient?" ... to a boss, to an employee, to a spouse, to a child, to a friend—stop yourself and ask some questions. "If I am trying to teach them by saying, 'You didn't wash the dishes' or 'You are always late,' is there a more effective way? Where does the voice of correction come from, a space of loving service or a space of fear that their lack will hurt me?" I'm not suggesting you become doormats for others, but can you be more fully to others what you wish they would be to you? Think about it.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 21, 1994

**Aaron:** Good evening and welcome to each of you. I am Aaron. I want to start a bit differently tonight and then go into our Christmas stories. As you know, my dear friend Barbara has lost her father this week. Perhaps on a soul level of connection there is no other being outside of her husband and children with whom she has such a direct closeness. There was a very close reflection one onto the other of the deepest and most cherished values and beliefs. This one has seen this father as father in prior lifetimes; has understood the karmic relationship between them and what they each had to teach the other. There is a considerable grief. Her energy field is a bit like Swiss cheese.

I would ask two things of you: That we might spend a few minutes not quite in silence, but with me offering some rather specific prayer for this one who has departed his body, and also that you will sit first for a minute or two simply sending energy and love to Barbara.

*(We do this.)*

This one is in too deep a trance state to speak for herself, but she is experiencing herself enveloped in a living cloak of light which helps patch the holes in the energy field.

Now I ask you to offer these thoughts to Barbara's father, to Jay. First I would like you to have some sense of who he is. I ask for a copy of the book of poetry Jay has written. I would like one stanza read to give you a feeling for this man. I pause here.

*(A stanza from Jay's book is read.)*

To live for others,  
to love and share  
Helps banish loneliness and despair.  
To find this goal is ever so rare.  
It is a dream for which we dare.

May we have two or three minutes of silence relating to this being in whatever way you may, offering your loving energy, and especially directing him; guiding him to move to this light, reminding him that he is safe. I pause here.

I thank you. Your loving thoughts and energy do offer support and guidance.

You think of death as a cutting off point. In fact, it is simply part of a continuum. We speak of numerous "betweens." I offer here a very simply capsule of several of these between states. There is one phase between birth and death that you call life. Life is one form of illusion. There is another between death of the physical body and the first dawning of the consciousness in the next phase. It may be a flash, like that (*snapping fingers*), or it may be of several days' or weeks' duration. It is a kind of sleep, just as your incarnation is a kind of sleep.

Consider the small between within the incarnate life, from the moment you fall asleep in your bed to the moment you wake up. Within that small between, there is increasing level of awareness as you become more lucid in your dreams, more aware that you are dreaming when you are dreaming. Within the larger between of birth to death, there is also increasing awareness as you become more lucid of the illusion in which you dwell. It's all part of the process. Those of you who meditate and who are increasing your awareness within this incarnative illusion will spend far less time unconscious when you leave your body. Those who have learned the process of lucid dreaming will be aware in that time after leaving the body of when you are in "dreaming;" your practice with the dream state will help you move to a clearer, purer awareness.

Here I want to put death aside and to use this discussion as transition to move into the Christmas stories. In that moment of pure awareness, you are awake. In that moment, you are fully awake and enlightened.

You have heard me speak of the four bodies. Three of these bodies exist on three levels. Each level has its own "reality."

The highest level of all four of the bodies, let us call it the Buddha or Christ level, is the level of the pure and perfect light body. For the spirit body, this is the pure spirit which some call soul. Spirit body exists only on this highest level. It is enlightenment itself.

The highest level of the mental body is this level of light body, expressed as pure awareness. This is the highest level of your being, where personal and universal are joined. The mental body also expresses on the levels of partial awareness and non-awareness.

The best illustration I can offer uses the metaphor of the deep sea diver. Here is the Sun in the sky; a blazing orb; brilliant. (*Gesturing with hands.*) When a deep sea diver goes under water and looks up, there is a shimmering light far above it, but the diver can have no real notion of the Sun. Beings who are not yet awake, not yet spiritually conscious in the physical body, are like deep sea divers, aware that there is some kind of light, but with no notion of what that light is and without relationship to it.

Many of you are above the water, dwelling in some degree of cloud or clear sky and aware that there is a Sun. Still, it is clouded by the atmosphere which shields you from that brightness. It may be a clear day in which there is less shielding. It may be a cloudy day in which there's more shielding. If there were no atmosphere, you feel you could not stand in the Sunlight, that the brilliance and heat would destroy the physical body. The atmosphere clouds the direct sun. It offers distortion and the illusion of protection.

The Christ or Buddha awareness dwells directly in that middle of the Sun. It dwells in pure mind; pure spirit; pure awareness. When the Christ or Buddha—and when I use those terms, I do not mean only those two historical beings, but any being that has so clarified its energy that there is no heavy atmosphere around it; no shadow—when the being has reached that level of clarity, it knows not only itself as that perfection, but everything as that perfection. Therefore, while it may relate to the physical reality of that which lies before it, it has no question in its mind which is the mirage and which is the reality. Within any human it sees the divine nature.

We recall the metaphor of the wrinkled sheet of paper that lies within the perfect sheet. That fully awakened being does not focus on the wrinkles. It knows the reality. It touches the distortion with kindness but with no fixation on it as reality. Its compassion leads it to open its heart to those who are caught in the illusion, and therefore to take care of the illusion. It offers support for the healing that the hurt one seeks, but it does so while never getting caught in the distortion, never believing it to be ultimate reality. There was never anything to be healed. This is like a parent comforting a child who has had a nightmare of a monster. The parent knows the monster does not exist but also that the child is frightened. It attends on both levels, comforting the child who is afraid and also making it clear that there is no monster.

Beings like yourselves, in different degrees of realization from newly awake to possessing some degree of realization, focus on both. There is still some belief in the monster. The unaware human level focuses on the wrinkles and has no notion of the divinity within each manifestation. This one gets out a gun to shoot the monster. This is a common human distortion which leads to an attack of that which is wrinkled.

The stories I want to tell you tonight are about this one who was known in this final incarnation as Jesus, and the way that he related to each being as if it were divine.

Again, I feel it necessary to say here that which I say each year. The being that I was was a poor shepherd and unlearned. I considered myself a disciple of Jesus, but certainly was not a major one of his disciples. When he came near to where I was, I would leave my flocks in the care of friends or relatives and go and spend a few days with him. I found this a deep blessing. The memories I offer you are not those of Aaron, who sees from a very different perspective, but simply are memories of that shepherd who I was.

One day I joined Jesus and others as they were traveling. There were some light packs, carried by a beast of burden. In one there were simple but beautiful candlesticks. This great one did observe some of the forms of the religion in which he was born, which was Judaism. He did commemorate the Sabbath. There was one who joined us and walked with us for two days, keeping to the rear. He was clad in ragged robes, unkempt of appearance, and definitely not willing to meet another's eye. On a Friday afternoon, it was noticed that he had disappeared.

At sunset, the time came to light the Sabbath candles and say prayers. The one known as Jesus did not seek out a temple to say his prayers. He felt the Earth to be his temple and was content to offer his prayers wherever the sunset found him. When the pack was opened to get the candlesticks and other ceremonial paraphernalia, the candlesticks were missing. Others were upset and angry and pointed a finger of blame. "That wretched one must have taken them. Let us go after him." "No," replied Jesus. He took the candles, and I remember he made a small hole in the ground and said, "The earth will serve for a candlestick." He simply inserted the candles into a hole. The prayers were said; the Sabbath observed.

Within the week, new candlesticks were obtained, given by someone and were again in the pack. Less than a week later, this furtive one joined us again. Men were angry. There was no proof that this one had stolen the candlesticks, but they felt certain it must have been he. They wanted to accuse him, even though Jesus had taught forgiveness.

This is not a simple story of forgiveness. It goes deeper. To forgive another, there must be something to forgive. At the lowest level as one not yet awake, one blames others. This one may not yet know how to forgive. One in the middle level of their being may see the divine in another, but also see the human thief. One at this level forgives. One at the highest level asks, "was anything stolen?" He knows the soul is not evil; the soul is not thief. In his compassion he may reach to the human level and offer forgiveness to the human if that human seeks forgiveness, but he also knows that forgiveness is unnecessary. With the great compassion, there has been no wrong done. There is nothing to forgive.

The somewhat awakened and unawakened of that group of men gathered and asked, "What should we do? Shall we confront him?" Jesus knew our thinking. He walked up to us and simply said, "Let him be. Offer him your love. Let him be." He did not see a thief. This was not what I'd consider enabling behavior on Jesus' part. Rather, he related to the highest in this man. By relating to that highest, he allowed this man to elevate himself to that highest of himself. Jesus welcomed him back, said, "We're glad you were on time to join us again this week for the Sabbath. Let us walk together."

I was asleep, but I am told this man went to the packs in the middle of the night, perhaps thinking, "I got away with it once, I could do it again." He opened the sack that held these ritual objects. He took out the candlesticks, at which the one who was known as Jesus, arose, walked up to him and said, "You need not do this furtively in the dark. If you have need, take what you need. Is there anything else you need from this pack? Anything we can give you?"

Never had this one experienced another who trusted him, who invited him to be the best that he could be instead of the worst. Again, I repeat what I was told, because I was asleep, but I was told that he began to cry, handed the candlesticks back and said, "I have need of nothing but your forgiveness." And the one who was Jesus said, "There is nothing to forgive," and embraced him.

I did not hear the story immediately upon waking. I woke and some of the men were preparing breakfast, including this lone newcomer who would not meet my eye in the past. There was a remarkable change in him. He looked at me and smiled! He met my direct gaze. He had begun to grow into his divine self, to manifest his divinity. This one became a follower of Jesus. He left his thievery behind. He had no more need for such behavior, no fear that led him to take, because he had begun to trust the deepest truth of who he was.

To expand this idea, I want to tell a folk tale not specifically about Jesus: There were two men who were each landholders with considerable power over their domains. Their land holdings were side by side. One was peaceful and loving. The other was more fearful and negative. The negative one invaded the lands of the more peaceful one. The more peaceful one came to the King and asked for protection. The King asked both of these men to come before him. Because the King's army was strong, the negative one was inclined to do as he was asked. The King said, "Why do you invade your neighbor's lands?" The negative one said, "The people in my country are mean and petty. My neighbor here speaks of his subjects as being loving and generous. I want such subjects for my own, so I wish to take over his territory."

The King was very wise. He said to the loving one, "I want you to go into your neighbor's country, to look until you find an evil man, and bring him to me. Your neighbor says his people are mean so the search should not be difficult." And he said to the negative one, "You say your neighbor has such good men in his kingdom. I want you to go into his lands and look until you find a good man, and bring him to me. It should be simple to find such a one" He asked them to be back in a few days and each went on his way.

In the suggested time, they came back for their audience with the King. To the negative one he said, "Where is the good man?" The negative one said, "I looked throughout his lands, but he's a liar, no where could I find a good man. They all steal. They all lie. All I saw was evil, just as in my own lands. He is a liar." To the generous and positive one he said, "Have you found an evil man in your neighbor's lands?" The positive one shook his head. "I looked and looked. I did see greed and fear. I did see hatred. But in each case where there was action that was harmful to others, I looked deeply into that one's heart I found men who were confused, and filled with fear and despair, but none who were evil. I found none who were not good in the depths of the heart." "Ah," said the King, "And are you each content to go back to your own lands?" The negative one agreed. There was no need to look in his neighbor's lands. Perhaps the good that he sought was not to be found elsewhere, but to be nurtured within.

I first heard this story at the feet of the one known as Jesus. He taught that anger and greed came from a place of fear which was to be met with compassion and loving kindness. He taught that the root of forgiveness and compassion was understanding. He did not say, "Forgive with a sense of obligation." as in "I should forgive," But, "Forgive out of the natural depths of your own understanding." Forgiveness to him, then, was not a blind way of action based on a blind faith, but a natural conclusion.

This one looked deeply into his own and others' nature. He taught us to do the same, less from verbalization than from his example. In short, he woke us up to his way of seeing. We weren't very able to see the way a fully enlightened Buddha or Christ sees, to see clearly the divinity and not fixate on the wrinkles. But he did teach us to see the divinity.

I find it important because often what is stressed in his teachings is the forgiveness and the love of one another, but not the basis for that love and forgiveness. He is therefore sometimes portrayed as naive as to the evils of the world. He was not naive in any way, only he saw deeper, he saw past the fear, the greed, the anger, and into the divine perfection of each one's heart. He encouraged each one to live that divine perfection in itself, and to begin to see that in another.

Much of his healing; the miracles that he is quoted as having performed, come from seeing the already perfect. If there is a leper, whose skin is broken by his disease, that is only the surface appearance. If one believes that surface appearance, one goes to work to fix the brokenness. Jesus knew it to be merely appearance. He saw the already perfect/always perfect light body of that leper. The strength of his perception was such that he awoke that awareness in the one with the disease. "This is not how I am. That is how I am." And, just as the thief that did not any longer need to enact his thievery, greed and fear, so the leper no longer needed to carry this distorted outward manifestation. Jesus did not heal him. Jesus offered him the choice. "You can dwell in

the illusion that the body is distorted and continue to manifest that illusion, or you can come with me into the ever-perfect."

I did not understand this in those days. I told you that I did not often see him offer such miracles. His preference was to keep it as simple as possible. When it was necessary, he was not beyond offering it, but it was not a miracle. It had a very logical, carried an almost scientific basis? Where does one choose to focus one's attention, on the wrinkled shadow of the leper's body, or on the always-perfect? He gave humans an option; awoke them to the fact that this choice was theirs', and then offered the energy to help lead them into their more skillful choice. Yes, that he had that energy to offer is, in its way, the true miracle—that such a being was incarnate on the Earth and willing to offer its energy and soul.

One night, when I was not with him, but off with my sheep in the hills, I made the rounds of them before retiring and discovered that a ewe, close to time of giving birth, had disappeared. Leaving the rest of my flock in the care of my friends and my son, I went off into the hills searching for the ewe. There was a moon and enough light to see, but also heavy, dark clouds that came and went. As I got away from the fire and further up into the hills, the wind blew cold. We had come over a pass earlier in the evening, and I realized that I must have lost her then. She must have stopped, feeling the beginnings of her birth pangs, and I had not noticed it. I felt responsible for her and concerned about her and what suffering she might be undergoing alone there.

As I neared the top of the pass, I heard her voice, a sheep's soft, bleating cry. She was indeed giving birth, but it was a troublesome birth, the lamb twisted the wrong way. She could not help herself; her straining only jammed the infant tighter. But it was an easy matter for me to reach my arm in and straighten it out. And so I twisted this almost-born creature, and allowed him to emerge. As I did so, the clouds that had been close by and occasionally passing the moon moved in front of them. Clouds and more clouds, darkened the night. So there I was with an exhausted ewe, a newborn lamb and simply the light robe I had wrapped around me to walk. No fire. No protection. The clouds were low, heavy fog covering the mountainside. All about me the landscape was cliffs and ravines. It was not safe to walk where one could not see.

I sat down holding the sheep, its body warmth helping me to find warmth. The lamb I wrapped in my cloak, holding it close to its mother and offering them both some protection. It was not a big enough cloak to shelter the three of us, not really enough shelter even for one, sitting inactive as I was. My teeth began to tremble; to chatter. I do not recall consciously praying for help. I recall only that my concern was truly not for myself, but for this ewe and lamb. Perhaps I did ask for help, that they might not suffer.

I was dozing and holding these animals close to me, shivering violently when I was suddenly shaken out of my reverie by a strong light. I looked up and there was Jesus! I could not explain this sight at that time. I knew he was not physically present, but that he was there. The light that came from his body was so brilliant that it pierced the fog. The sheep was able to walk. I picked up the lamb and simply began to follow this lighted figure ahead of me. One step at a time, we proceeded over the rocky pass and down the mountain. The fog stopped at a certain level and below me I saw the valley perhaps a mile away. Fires were lit. I turned to thank him, but he was gone. And so, we descended safely to the fire.

How did this happen? The shepherd who I was did not even try to figure it out. He simply gave thanks. This is your example of a miracle. How did it happen? You might say that the energy body of this Being had come from His manifest self, had come forth hearing one in trouble, and physically led him out. That's one way of looking at it, but its a bit of a distortion. The energy of this Being of Jesus, and of all of these great masters, is always available to you. Each of you has one or more great master who serves as primary teacher to you, and in whose energy field your own energy vibrates to a much higher pitch, one to whom you resonate. When you send out a prayer, it invites in the energy of that master with whom you mostly deeply resonate. It does not matter if that Being is alive or dead. Jesus is just as available to you today as he was to me that night.

From my present perspective, it is verified that he did not physically come there, although I have no doubt that he would have been capable of that. Rather, his thought energy awakened my own highest level of being; the always-perfect within me. We all are divine. We can manifest that divinity in remarkable ways. There are stories of people who perform seemingly impossible deeds. How? Not on your own. You, the finite being, do not have that power. But when you are connected with the divine, you are infinite. What this Master does is connect you to the highest level of your own being and allow you to begin to manifest what you need from that level.

I cannot say he did not save me, but had I been unwilling to move into that divine level of my being, he could not have saved me. The fact that I sat there, with my primary concern being these other creatures and not myself, opened me to the highest level of my own being, the divinity of my being, which is truly unselfish; selfless. Only at that level of being could I have perceived him. Just as with the story of the thief, he invited me to move into the deepest level of myself so that I could see his light and follow it to safety.

To open to this deepest level of oneself, one does not need to be free of greed, anger or other heavy emotion. One needs not to be fixated on that heavy emotion. Certainly I felt fear that night. It's not that there was no fear, but that I did not have to act on my fear. To act on it would have been to kill the sheep, take its skin and wrap it around me. Would we both then have perished? One need not be motivated by fear. When one finds deep compassion for oneself and one's situation and one's heart is open, one comes into touch with the highest level of oneself, which resonates with the highest level of the master.

I want to say here that it would not have been wrong to have killed this sheep and taken its skin. It would have been wrong to do that in fear. It might have been that the wisdom of my own highest self and the teachings of Jesus would have said to kill this sheep and offer thanks that it gives it life to preserve my life. Had there been a terrible storm, I know he could have stopped the storm, but perhaps would not have done so. Perhaps then the lesson offered would have been to act with love to preserve myself and the baby. So the lesson does not center on the taking of the life of the sheep, or not taking it. It is about acting in love rather than fear.

Barbara asked me this fall, will I run out of stories to tell? I think not. You have been sitting a long time. Let us pause, and after your break, I will continue to tell stories or answer your questions as you wish. That is all.

*(Break)*

**C:** Aaron told us one of the stories was about a man who stole candlesticks from Jesus. The man then came back later and was trying to steal more candlesticks, and Jesus said, "You don't need to steal. You may have whatever you need", which transformed the thief. He had never been seen that lovingly and acceptingly. I understand that perfectly. Then Aaron said, "Jesus, said that at the highest level of being, there was never anything taken." Could Aaron speak to that?

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. I hear your question, C. Let me put it in these terms. We have wrinkled paper. Here is somebody who is pressing the wrinkle, working desperately to make the paper perfect. There is no need to say, "Stop pressing the wrinkle." The value of the wrinkle myth is that it leads us to the ultimate space. How long does one press the paper before one realizes it is already perfect? If this one wants to keep pressing the wrinkle, let him do so. Eventually, he will see the emptiness of that work. Do you understand the metaphor? We stay in relative reality until we understand that relative rests in ultimate and we have always been also in the ultimate. We cannot be out of the ultimate although our eyes may be closed to that truth.

On the relative level, the candlesticks were owned. On the ultimate level, everything we need is always already present. Our thought of need is fear-based illusion of the relative plane. Jesus said to this man, "You do not need to steal. Ask for what you need. It's already given." How could he be a thief and steal candlesticks when they were already his? But on the relative level he was stealing. Intention is important here. Because of his fear he had intention to take for the self, thus falling into dual mind. From this place of dual mind he could not recognize his wealth. Do you understand?

I pause here.

**Q:** Are you saying it's okay for him to steal?

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. What is stealing? You cannot steal what is already yours. Since there is no separation between me and you, what is mine, is yours. Therefore, you cannot steal what is mine. This does not mean that one is not responsible. If you take more than your share, perhaps of the food we have, day after day, so that I starve, you are responsible for my death. If the man stole the candlesticks and had also stolen the candles, had there been no way for them to see in the darkness because he stole what they needed to light the darkness, had someone then stumbled and hurt themselves badly in the darkness, the thief is responsible. But, he's still not a thief in ultimate reality. There is no such thing as a thief, except in the dual mind that differentiates me and you. That is all.

**C:** It seems that in the same way the man who stumbled and fell in the darkness wasn't hurt.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. Yes, but the physical body has struggled with the illusion of being hurt. We must also connect with compassion and to the physical plane. There is a physical reality. We cannot deny that physical reality. We must rest simultaneously in both realities and understand that the higher reality is that one which is veiled for us. Do you understand?

**C:** I am beginning to, but I'm sure we have a long way to go.

Aaron: Do you understand that when you relate to the highest in another is when you must closely emulate Jesus. When you relate to the highest in another, you must do that from the highest in ourselves. Thus, you invite in the highest level of yourselves and invite in the highest level of the other. The other may or may not be able to respond to that invitation. Even if the other continues to be a thief and cannot rise to the highest level of himself, you maintain the consciousness that the highest level exists. You keep the door open to that highest level to emerge. If you only focus on the negative, you slam the door on that highest level. Do you understand? That is all.

**D:** Aaron just told a story, a part of which was that when he was human in the time of Jesus, he was trapped by the weather with a sheep that had just given birth. It was night time, the three of them were trapped by fog and it was very cold. Aaron was trying to keep warm and protect the animals. He said that it would not have been wrong to kill the animal and use it for warmth. That seems like, somehow, the life of a human is more important than another life. Can Aaron talk about that?

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. I hear your question, D. It is not that one is more valuable, in terms of the way you normally establish value. And yet, certain life finds as its primary purpose the desire to serve others. For instance, a carrot is not here merely to propagate the species of carrots so that carrots may take over the world. A carrot finds much joy, in its own way, in being thanked as it is plucked from the ground and eaten. The carrot isn't destroyed. It takes another form. When you choose to eat an animal, those of you who are not vegetarian, the animal's energy moves into you. It takes on new form. One could then say logically, "Yes, then I should feed myself to a wolf or a tiger, and I would take a new form." But this is not the primary reason you have moved into incarnation. I do not mean that the primary reason of sheep or other small animals might have moved into incarnation is to feed you. It has moved into incarnation to come to some level of self-awareness. One of the ways that it may do that is in experiencing the changes in its energy as it is loved and appreciated and taken into another form. No animal should suffer. That is inexcusable. But it is not wrong to kill an animal for food any more than it is wrong to kill a vegetable or fruit for food.

**Q:** Why did you feel Jesus would not have stopped a storm?

**Aaron:** Certainly, one who can appear before me in such a way is also capable of stopping a blizzard. However, one asks the very simple question, "Is it right to interfere with the weather for the good of one ewe?" Perhaps the snow will bring needed moisture that will water crops. One could then argue, "But it's only for an hour until he gets out of the hills." The principle is that one interferes as little as possible. Perhaps precisely what this human needed was to move into much deeper appreciation of his flocks and awareness of the depth of his responsibility. What might be learned by needing to kill this animal, to beg its pardon, to offer its deepest gratitude, and as painlessly as possible, to kill it and skin it to protect itself and to protect the animal's baby as well, so that they might both survive the night?

We cannot judge the lessons of another. Thus, if it were necessary and were done with love, it would not have been wrong. But first, every other means must be explored.

We also must learn our responsibility. We are unlimited. We must live that truth.

## Christmas Memories from Aaron, December 21, 1994

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This reminds me of that old story of one who is drowning. He is on the roof of his house. A boat comes by and he says, "No, go away. God will save me." A log comes by; a helicopter comes. Each time, "God will save me." And he drowns. He approaches God and says, "Why didn't you save me?" God says, "I sent you the log and the boat and the helicopter. Why didn't you save yourself?"

We all saves ourselves on whatever plane. We do this through our own will and through faith; through allowing ourselves to resonate with the highest vibrational frequency possible for us, tuning in to the highest level of loving action and intention, and manifesting that perfection. In this situation, it was not necessary to kill and would not have been useful. But in some situations, it may be.

One is asking, "Would it ever be useful to kill another human in that way?" This is a different situation, because a human already has self-awareness. It would never be skillful to kill another self-aware being without that being's permission. You can get a sense that it is willing to offer its life in this way. If they were several humans instead, with a newborn infant, if they were starving to death, and the mother said, "I am going to kill myself and I want you to cook this flesh and offer it to my children," that would be permissible, but one could not take it unto themselves to say, "I am going to kill you and feed your children." That is the mother's choice because she is self-aware. Does that answer your question?

Have a wonderful Christmas, all of you! That is all.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 20, 1995

**Aaron:** Good evening, and my love to you all. I am Aaron.

Some years ago in our gathering before the date which you celebrate as birthday of the one known as Jesus, I talked about a lifetime of my own which coincided with the life of this being, and of my experience of him. I did not then expect it would become a tradition to tell these stories, but it gives me much delight to do so. I am deeply grateful that this man was one of my teachers.

I emphasize that in that lifetime, I was not known as one of his disciples. I was a poor shepherd, wise in my own way, but unlearned. I had responsibilities to my family, to my sheep, which did not permit me to travel with this dear Master in the way that my heart would have prompted. But wherever his travels brought him near to me, and I heard of his presence, I would leave my sheep in the care of my eldest son or a neighbor, and travel to spend as many days as were permitted to me, with this one who I came to love.

In the stories I have told you in past years, I have emphasized different aspects of my experience with this being, especially that he lived his humanness. He did not want us to put him up on a pedestal and worship him as a god. For one who is not human to teach as he taught, do as he did, even die as he died, people could shrug and say, "It's fine for you, you are not human. But we can't do that." This Master's entire message was you can do this.

The world at that time would on the surface seem not so different from your present world, where there is considerable violence, hatred and greed. The prevailing religious teachings at the time that Jesus was born gave lip service to not killing, but also there was the concurrent philosophy an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. If someone attacked you, it was both legally and morally acceptable to attack him back.

Here and there around the globe there were pockets of teachings which contradicted this belief. For example, the Buddha was born some 500 years earlier and in a somewhat different part of the world. He said, "Love can only grow from love. Love can never grow from hatred." But this teaching was not popular around the globe. Very few thought very much about love in that way. Peace was mandated by a, let us call it, a militaristic stance, a stance of strength. Then Jesus came with the teaching, "Love one another." Learn forgiveness. Essential to his teachings are the words, "Blessed is the peacemaker." It is this aspect of him that I wish to address tonight.

What does it mean to be a peacemaker? The argument has been lived out in your lifetimes with the extended cold war in which your nation was engaged with the prior Soviet Union. Each side armed itself to the hilt, in a policy of deterrence. Certainly one thinks twice about attacking one who has a sword. But it does not lay the groundwork for peace. It only means that you must always carry your sword. There is nothing wrong with carrying a sword. I personally carried swords in many lifetimes with no desire to use them. But the sword does no good unless there is intention to use it if one feels such use to be necessary.

I'm not going to get into the debate tonight of whether one should or should not defend oneself if one is attacked. This is not my decision, this is your decision, and each of you must arrive at the most honest answer for yourself. If your answer is that you need to carry the sword with the intention to use it, to not do so is dishonest. It is not where you are.

Ultimately, though, the answer is that very simple, "Love one another." The way that love is interpreted is what varies. We've talked here many times about not being a doormat for others, that it is a kindness to say "no" to someone who is abusing, and not just suffer their abuse, which is in essence a way of hurting them, allowing them to misuse you in that way.

We have talked about how that "no" needs to come from a place of love for both of you, and not a place of fear. It's the same two-letter word, "no," but it must come from a place of love. And therein is the core of your work, understanding how to come to that place of love, even when fear is present. How do you allow that inherent loving voice its say?

This one whom you call Jesus was such a great Master at this skill, that to simply watch him in action with others was a profound lesson in love, and in skillful human relationship. I've been asked, did he ever get angry? Of course he got angry. He was human. And yes, there were times when I heard that anger reflected in his voice in response to a situation. He was not afraid of his anger. He did not use it from an ego place, to be powerful, to be in control, even to be safe. He used it as energy, when he felt it was appropriate, out of concern for the harm that was being done.

Let me give you some specific example. Two stories come to mind. One, I was with him and many others in a village. We were resting in the shade during a hot part of the day when we heard a sound of pain and terror, a small squeal, repeated. He immediately picked himself up and moved toward the sound, and several of us came with him. His gesture asked others who were still sitting to stay back so I feel fortunate that I had been sitting close to him and was able to witness this.

Young boys were tormenting a small animal, a small cat type of creature, literally torturing it. I will never forget the expression on his face. I saw a mix of rage, grief and compassion, all at the same time. There was this powerful rage that shouted, "NO!" I was staggered. I had never heard him shout. "NO!!"

And at the same time, tears were streaming down his face. The children heard his anger. If that was all he gave them, it would have only taught them that one bigger and more powerful than they were could take command. It was the combination of his anger and his tears that moved them. He went to this small creature which was partially mutilated, and picked it up with such tenderness, held it to him, his hands filling with its blood. Yes, he could perform miracles, although he seldom did. But I believe he could have saved that creature. I think that he spoke to it and asked if it agreed to die, to teach others. I am sure that at his touch, much of its pain left it and it died in peace.

Remember this was a society where life, even human life, was treated lightly, where people did not think much about cruelty to animals. The sight of this powerful man holding this small, bleeding creature, and crying over it, touched those children's

hearts. If he had just walked out to them without the anger and said, "Please don't do that," they would have scorned him. He was not afraid of his anger. He was not afraid of his power. And his "NO" literally reverberated from the hills. It certainly caught their attention.

There were three children. By the time this creature died, one was weeping with Jesus. One had his head hanging in shame and I could not see his face, but I presume he also wept. And the third seemed to hold himself aside, in defiance. It was to this one that he handed the body and said, "Let us go together and bury it."

The one who was defiant took the small creature, and you could see a change come over him as he now held this lifeless form. He looked up at Jesus and said, "Please forgive me." Jesus said to him—and I have heard him repeat these words at other times, in other stories and will also tell you—"It is not my forgiveness that you need."

"What do I do?" the boy said. "I don't know yet," said Jesus. "We will see."

So they buried this little creature. And meanwhile, Jesus asked quietly, is there any sick animal in the village that needs nursing. A baby goat was brought to him. The mother was unable to nurse this baby and it was so weak that it could not be put with a foster mother, it could not compete with the foster mother's own offspring. So it needed to be bottle fed. He took these boys and said, "You took life, now give life. Learn how it feels to nurture another."

Rarely have I seen children take a task so seriously. During our remaining days near this village, we watched them pass that little goat around, saw how one would sleep with it at night, and awaken to feed it.

You do not teach love through hatred, but through love. But love has many voices. He said, "Blessed are the meek." I think that your understanding of this phrase translated into English is a bit distorted. Meek does not mean the shy one who creeps out and says, "Oh, please don't hurt that cat." Meek means one who is humble, who is not obsessed with their power. In my experience of Jesus, meekness is not to be confused with lack of strength. He did not use his power to show off, but he was not afraid of his power when its use was necessary.

There was a time a few years after this first story when I was again blessed to join him for several weeks. He was traveling with a group of followers like myself walking with him. At different villages he would talk and sometimes people would join the walkers, others drop off, as the days passed and we moved around the countryside. Many who joined us were not known to him, or to others of the group. Most people drawn to him were so drawn because they wanted to learn lovingkindness, forgiveness and peace. That they wanted to learn did not mean that they had yet mastered the greed and anger in themselves.

We sat by a fire, several small fires actually. I was not at the same fire as the one who was known as Jesus. A man who had a rather rough, brusque manner had joined us a few days earlier. He talked very little. Some of us felt uncomfortable with him. The evening was cold. A man who was my friend had a blanket that he wrapped around him.

Suddenly this newcomer said to my friend, "I want that."

"What? What?"

"Your blanket. I want that. Give it to me now." And he pulled a knife out of his belt.

"But this is my blanket," my friend said. Most of us had blankets or robes with which we wrapped ourselves to sleep. "This is my blanket," he continued. "Let us see if we can find a spare blanket for you, if you have need." As his words finished, this man came up with his knife, stabbed him, not fatally but painfully, and grabbed the blanket. He was apparently accustomed to getting away with such behavior, because he didn't flee, he just wrapped himself and sat down.

Again I saw that same look on Jesus' face. I have never seen such anger, or such grief. And to see them on such a face, and to see them both together, was almost overwhelming. The one who had taken the blanket and knifed the other was clearly not discomfited by Jesus' anger. He just looked at him and said, "Well, now it's mine."

How do you teach love to one whose heart is not yet ready to love? How do you say no to such a one? "No, you may not harm me or these dear ones gathered around me, and you may not go off to the next village and harm them." How do you figuratively disarm such a person?

This is one of the few times that I ever saw Jesus use his power. I do not know what image he conveyed into this man's mind. I know what I saw, and it was terrifying to me, who was a loving person already. I saw death, desolation. I saw the end result of hatred on the earth. It was enough to make me quake and shudder. As we compared notes afterward, my companions had much the same experience.

But the one who had taken the blanket stood abruptly. He screamed, his eyes seemed to bulge out of his head. He dropped the blanket, and he fled.

Jesus had us attend to the wounded one, saw for himself that this one was safe, and then used his touch, helped to heal those wounds, although not in any startling way. Wounds were still left there. We simply sat back down and an hour passed. And then the one called Jesus said, "I will need to go now and find him." He did not want anyone to come with him. It was dark and the ground was somewhat rocky and barren. He knew he could not have gone far. I suppose some inner sense led him there.

I do not know what transpired, only that several hours later he came back, the man following him. He would not approach us, would not approach our fire. But he did lay down. A blanket was found for him. And he slept.

A few days went by and I heard that he had asked forgiveness of the one he stabbed, and that one had said yes, I forgive you. Later that day, when we were again gathered by our fire, he came to Jesus and said, "Will you forgive me?" Again, those words: "It is not my forgiveness that you need."

"Then whose?" The man looked as though he would begin to weep, his face contorted with pain. He said, "If you cannot forgive me, how can I ask God to forgive me?"

Jesus replied, "You must begin by forgiving yourself."

Somehow he directed each person past the uprisings of greed and anger in themselves, past the eruptions of fear, and into the depth of their own loving heart.

This was a profound lesson for me. The two stories I tell you here are chosen from many with similar pattern. You must forgive yourself. Only that way can you come into connection with the Divine in yourself and begin to live from that Divinity. As long as you seek forgiveness from others, without forgiving yourself, you're refusing to look at knowledge of that inner perfection. Yes, you must also ask forgiveness from others, but first you must forgive yourself.

I began to understand how this was the prerequisite for peace. Those words, "Love one another," are meaningless unless you can connect with that within the heart which is capable of love. The children mutilating the cat were out of touch with that loving place in their hearts. By giving them a small animal to save, literally, to nurture, to feed, he connected them with that loving place.

When he said to the man, "You must learn to forgive yourself," this one bent and began to gather his things as if to leave. I saw my friend, the one who had been stabbed by him some days earlier, look at Jesus and Jesus nodded to him. He was one who had long been a follower of Jesus. He went to this man and he said, "Please stay."

"How can you ask me to stay when I have hurt you?"

This friend was wise. He said, "Your healing and my healing are part of each other. As my wound heals, your heart heals. Let us heal together."

Jesus came up at that point and said, "Will you take care of this man? He cannot walk quickly. He needs someone to lean on, someone to help him prepare his food," and so forth. Much the same story. Nurturing another, we connect with the loving place within ourselves.

One more story. This a bit different.

We were in a town. A short distance from where we sat, loud voices were heard, and then two men whom we did not know began to fight with one another, first with fists and then one pulled out a knife and then the other pulled out a knife. An angry crowd had gathered around them.

No shout of "No!" this time. He simply walked in between them. If we had not been worried about him, it would have almost been funny. He moved with them. They were trying to jab at each other around him. He just stood there. They began to push him, not using their knives but pushing at him. "Get out of our way!"

He said to them, "Is your anger toward each other so non-specific that you so easily redirect it to me?" Very quiet. His words further angered one of them, and stopped the other cold in his tracks. Two different responses. The one who stopped just put his knife back and said, "It doesn't matter." The other one continued to push at his former opponent, and at Jesus.

"Why do you push me?" Jesus said.

"Because you're in my way."

"And if I get out of your way, what are you going to do?"

Angry words. "Get back at this ..." I will not repeat his language.

"At what were you angry?" Jesus said.

"He did this and that to me, spoke wrongly about me in front of others."

Still very quiet. "And for this you would kill him? And what after you kill him?"

"Then nobody will wrong me in front of others again."

"What did he say about you?"

"He ..." and here the man faltered. "He said I am violent."

Just a sigh from Jesus. "Brother," he said, "may we sit down and have some food together? You and me, and this one you feel has slandered you." His way was to open people's hearts. He was not unwilling to use angry energy if it was useful, but that anger came from a place of such deep love, such sadness, at our inhumanity to one another. Hearing him, each being began to believe a deeper truth of himself.

You know I tell you that Divine place within yourself is always there. There is nothing which arises in you which cuts you off absolutely from that place. But sometimes when there is much confusion, it's very hard to access that place. He was a master at guiding others into that access. I believe because he saw that Divine light shine brilliantly even from the angriest and most confused of beings, that he went straight for that light.

As you celebrate this one's birthday this year, my request to you is this. Whoever may be around you, however they may aggravate you, please try to see this light in them and ask yourself, not, "How do I get rid of his aggravating words or acts," but "How do I help to connect him and me to this light?" When you do that, then instead of acting from a place of fear and anger yourself, you begin to act and speak from a place of your own deepest light. What had seemed impossible becomes possible. Heart to heart. Light to light. This is the way of love, and of peace.

I have been speaking for a long time. It is always a great joy to share my memories of this being for whom I have such deep love. If your time permits, I would be happy to hear your questions. I have gathered from this instrument that the intent of the evening is to offer you a longer amount of social time than is your usual, so that you may have some of the various food and drink that are offered, and enjoy each other's company. I pause here.

**Q:** What other incarnations did Jesus have that we might know?

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. One such as myself who is in a position to simply read the Akashic records must be very careful not to invade another being's privacy. Like you, like all of you, he lived through many human incarnations. The time of his full realization and his move past this cycle of birth and death preceded your recorded history. I think that is all you need to know, that he, like yourselves, moved from dwelling on the shadow within himself into a deep awareness of the innate perfection of everything as expression of the Divine.

This instrument finds much inspiration in the life of Buddha, the life of the Buddha who did this in his final incarnation as the Buddha. In a sense it is sad that you cannot know the story of Jesus' many incarnative experiences, and be thus inspired by his progression. At the time that he came into incarnation as Jesus, his past lives were very far behind him. That is all.

**D:** Was the birth of Jesus actually a virgin birth, and if so, why?

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. Each religion establishes its own mythology, which is at times helpful in fostering the faith of those who find nurturance in that religion. I will not confirm or deny the myths of any religion. It doesn't matter. How could it possibly matter how he was born, or whether the virgin birth is actuality or metaphor? As metaphor, it's a powerful statement. This one was indeed a fully realized being, an avatar. He was far beyond the need to incarnate; he came into incarnation to serve. One who would move into such an incarnation in this way must move into incarnation through a pure source. It is not necessary in my way of thinking that that source be virgin to be pure, because there is nothing sinful about sexuality. Her heart was pure. She was capable of teaching the child what it needed to know so that it could fully develop the potential that it brought to the incarnation. For that we thank and bless her.

I know that your question is, did this being have a human father? Was he the product of a sperm and egg as other humans are. Simply, you do not need to know. If he was or if he wasn't, does it change the statement made by his life and his death? I pause.

**Barbara:** Aaron is laughing. He says every year he is asked that.

**K:** Should we worship Jesus as the Son of God? Or just as an enlightened teacher?

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. I can tell you how I relate to him. I cannot tell you how you "should" relate to him. Each of you is unique. Each is in a different place on the spiritual path. For some, at certain places on the path, the worship of another as literally Divine, especially when that one is worthy of that worship, can be a very powerful thing. God is very abstract; sometimes you need a personification of God. It's much easier to trust, to let go of control, to say, "Thy will be done," when you have a loving personification into whose will you release your own. For a such a being, in such a place on their path, worship of the Divine in any form is helpful.

On another level though, we're all sparks of God, we're all children of God. Every being is an expression of God, not just human beings but every ant, every blade of grass, and every redwood tree. Everything. It is fine to relate to Jesus as the Son of God, literally, if that is of help to you, but do not limit yourself and assume that this is the **only** Son of God. Allow yourself reverence for life in all its multitude of forms, as he did. Even more, if you see God in Jesus, must you see God in everything. I do not want to repeat material that has been recorded and transcribed in prior years. The one who asked this question might like to read the very first transcript in the book of Christmas stories, in which I spoke of the gift which was given. God offered his Son to the world. I do not want to personify God here, let us just say that the Infinite and Eternal offered this specific expression of Itself back to the expanded expression of Itself we call "world" with the full willingness of this specific expression of Itself, in order to speak to the suffering in that world. Whatever other way you may relate to him, be aware of the love that prompted his decision to incarnate.

I am leery of the term, "Should we worship him?" especially as regards Jesus, because this one did not want to be worshipped as a God. His strongest voice was in his humanness. A God can take any pain and say, "Forgive them." It was the human voice, fear and agony on a cross, which said, "Forgive them, Father," which taught so many the true meaning of forgiveness.

Do not hold him up on a pedestal as something other than human. In his incarnation he was fully human. While he is no longer alive, he is still very available to you as the Spirit that he now is. Relate to that spirit in the way your own heart prompts. I cannot tell you what is right or wrong for you. That is all.

*(Pause)*

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. I would like to say one more thing here. You have heard me talk about the various densities and what they mean. At the farthest edge of sixth density, there is only the purest spirit body and the mental held lightly as tool, simply the link that enables that energy to have mental processes. At that point, that energy is ready to let go of the mental body, and return to the light, to its Source. Many beings through time have done so. This one that you know as Jesus continues to give his gift of love. He is fully ready to move off into seventh density but he holds back from doing so to continue to keep his energy available to those who would find it useful. The same is true of the one known as the Buddha, and no, they are not the same being. They have different histories. There are other beings, high masters, still available to you. This is such a gift of profound love. You could liken it to this in your incarnative experience: If you were hard at work in the city where there was poverty, starvation, sickness, at work helping beings who were suffering in these many ways, and if your beloved human father got on a ship and said, "It's time for me to leave, you may come." The father is leaving this place of suffering and going home to a place of great peace and beauty. Can you imagine the deep love and faith it would take to say "No, I want to come so badly but I must stay here." Now multiply that trip home by a million in its power. Yes, when all suffering is done on earth, I believe he will go home. But meanwhile he remains present and available. This is his ongoing gift. That is all.

**Barbara:** Aaron is emphasizing that there are other great masters as well who make this same gift, and requests that we be aware of all of them, that we each have an affinity to certain ones through many past lives, and that's fine. We don't have to have affinity to all of them.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. I am not going to invite any more questions. I do not wish to invade what I think is an important and valued social time. I thank each of you for hearing me tonight, for the hard work each of you is doing in an ongoing way in your lives to bring these lessons into your heart, and learn to live them. It is hard work. Each of you experiences the shadow within yourself. So many beings have fled from that shadow or lived in denial of it. You are learning instead to embrace that shadow and draw it in with you into the light. This is a beautiful and powerful path. As I speak to you tonight I simply want you to know that your efforts are noted and honored and that each of you is deeply loved. I wish you a Christmas, or whatever else you may be celebrating, of much joy, love and peace.

I am asked by one if I can tell stories of some of the other holidays such as Hanukkah. Not tonight. Perhaps next year we will expand our Christmas stories a bit. There are so many religions that are barely known to you that each have their own stories of beauty and inspiration. I speak of these stories of Jesus not to separate him out as better than other great masters but only because so many of you relate deeply, and vibrate deeply, with the energy of this being, and feel much love for him. And thus, the stories

## Christmas Memories from Aaron, December 20, 1995

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of his life become especially powerful teaching tools for you. My love to you all. That is all.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 18, 1996

**Barbara:** Tonight is our annual Christmas stories night. We're going to start a little bit differently tonight, by popular demand. I am simply going to read an excerpt from the December 19, 1990 transcript of Aaron's memory of Jesus' birth. Later, if you wish, he'll expand a bit on that. I'm not going to record this.

*(Transcript is read.)*

**Aaron:** Good evening, and my love to you all. I am Aaron. It brings me much joy to come together with all of you and share my memories of this beloved teacher.

Each year I have tried to focus on a different aspect of what my knowing of him meant to me, the ways I experienced him. I have tried to share certain large and small moments, to try as best I can to offer you, not the concept of him, but my own experience of him.

One of the most profound lessons that grew out of knowing him was that of the meaning of generosity and the practice of it. There are different levels of generosity. There is that generosity that gives of itself from a giver. I do not mean specifically that there is pride or ego in the giver, but there is still a sense of one who gives and one who receives. He did not give that way. He gave in such a way that there was little awareness of a giver. He was the instrument through which the love and abundance of the universe flowed, and he gave in such joyful and skillful ways that often you were not aware of what you had received until after. He did not give just in material ways. Perhaps the greatest gift he gave me was faith.

I would ask you here to move into your imaginations. Imagine yourself standing, warmly clothed and well-fed, at the back of a large truck. All around you are people gathered, people who are wearing rags, people who clearly are very, very hungry. They are not a rowdy mob but a very humble and respectful group. I want you to imagine how it would feel to have a very hungry child approach and have the joy of handing that child an orange. You do not reach into the back of the truck and select. Something is placed in your hands and you pass it on. This is your job, just to pass it on. You did not create it, you do not choose it; you take it into your hands, let it flow through you, and hand it out.

Here is an old man in rags, shivering. A blanket comes to you and you hand it to him. Your eyes meet. There is no shame on his face in taking it because you are not the giver, but merely the instrument through which it flows. Here is a mother with her small children and you receive a fully cooked turkey to hand on to her. An adolescent in rags takes a sweater from you. Another mother appears, to whom you deliver a large bolt of warm fabric, that she may make some clothes for her children.

I ask here that you do this as a meditation and really feel the joy in being part of the flow of the abundance of the universe, of seeing the suffering at least temporarily alleviated.

It's very easy not to be someone giving but simply a channel through which it flows because you are warm, fed and comfortable, and the crowd is not at all unruly, but come up one at a time to receive the gifts. Thus, there is little to call up "selfhood."

Now let us change the image. This truck has arrived but you are not on it, but rather you are on the ground. The crowd is pressing in a bit more, not unruly but anxious. You are part of that crowd, also in rags, also hungry. As the truck stops and the back is open, someone from the truck points to you, "Come up here!" Your heart lights up thinking, ah, I'm going to receive some food, or something warm to put on. He hands you a package, a blanket, and for the moment, you think it's for you, but he indicates that you're to give it to another. Here is the orange, no, it's not for you, give it to the child.

Hour after hour you're asked to do this. You are still cold; you are still hungry. The crowd's anxiety has abated and again they are grateful and not rowdy. But your anxiety has not abated. You see that the blankets are all gone. What's left in there? You look over your shoulder. "Are my needs going to be met?"

Can you see how it is to feel such fear? I'm going to be quiet a minute and ask you to work with this image ...

That one who I asked you to imagine yourself to be, chosen from the crowd to hand out all this merchandise, some would say he is being generous. And certainly there is a generosity. He or she could have just grabbed the item that he or she desired and rushed off. He or she has been willing to serve all the others. But there's fear.

Because of that fear there is a giver and a recipient. Because the fear shines in your eyes as you hand that last blanket out, the one who receives it does so with shame. He looks in your eyes and reads your fear. He received what you wanted.

Now imagine in this moment of your fear as you hand the last blanket to an old man, from within that truck comes a man who you had not seen, one who literally radiates love, peace and light. Suppose he stops you for a moment, rests his hands on your shoulder, smiles and acknowledges your fear with kindness and not with condemnation. He says, "I know you are afraid that you'll give it all away and your own needs won't be met. Do not be afraid, for I promise you that your needs will be met and I thank you for your willingness to serve others."

Something in his demeanor, his words, his innate radiance, inspires your trust and your fear falls away.

Can you see the difference in your own experience? Can you feel what happens when your heart opens with such trust? Can you feel how joy enters the scene, how there ceases to be a giver, how glad you are to hand that blanket to that shivering old man and watch and participate in his joy?

Of course, I did not deliver blankets and oranges with this one from the back of the truck. But there were so many occasions when my own fear arose in that way: "Will my needs be met?" When he was there, literally or figuratively looking over my shoulder, he was able to acknowledge the fear that I could not yet verbalize, and to acknowledge it with kindness and remind me, "Your needs will be met." In this way he taught me faith.

Of course, there are many things that may call up a strong self or giver, such as pride, but these are all vestiges of fear. We become a self to give the illusion of separation, that we may be safe from the suffering of the other. We become a self to enhance ourselves, because we feel frail or helpless. Here I wish to simply address the ways he taught us to give without fear, taught through his own loving example.

Let me relate some of these scenes to you. Each is a bit different. They are a random handful out of the great many from which I could choose. In each, the important thing for me was that he was able to acknowledge my fear, often my unspoken fear, and not in any way to criticize me for that fear, but to embrace me, fear and all. Within that embrace, he reminded me that I had nothing to fear.

We were on a road, a small group of us. I had felt fortunate to catch up to him as he was walking from one place to another. At each end there would be a large group of people but just for this afternoon and evening, I had him with only a small group of others, a very special delight, to have the opportunity to speak directly to him for some hours.

It was almost dusk. We came through a grove of trees and around a bend and heard some kind of skirmish ahead of us. As we rounded the bend, we saw seven or eight people with sticks beating a man. He stopped one at the edge of this crowd and asked, "Why do you beat him?" "He had asked to travel with us," came the reply, "and then behind our backs he stole from us." This man invited us to join him in administering this beating.

I wondered what he would do. Would he try to intervene? I think if it had looked like they were out to kill the man, he would have intervened. As it was, he simply said, "No, I do not beat another." What he did was to simply sit down close to this man's head and invited us to sit in the same way, so that to some degree the five of us who were there served as a barrier of sorts, not fully surrounding the one who was being beaten, but making it more awkward to get to him.

At first there were angry cries, "Get out of the way," and we also received some indirect hits. He did not flinch and, mirroring him, we also sat quietly.

"But he stole from us!"

"Yes, I understand."

"He deserves much worse than a beating!"

The reply, "He should not have stolen, I agree. I wonder what prompted him to steal. Did you ask him?"

An angry retort. "I do not talk to thieves."

"Perhaps he had some reason."

"Yes, he had a reason. His reason is simply that he's warped, that he is bad, that he is a thief."

"Perhaps he is warped in some way. Perhaps he has not been raised and trained to have proper respect and reverence for other people. Will beating him teach him that?"

And so on went the dialogue, until those who were doing the beating simply walked off.

Yes, I was afraid. I was afraid they were going to beat me more too, and I was afraid they were going to beat him. But his demeanor was so calm and loving, there was nobody doing anything, he was just present, judging neither the one being beaten nor the ones who were doing the beating, just present.

When they had left he began to tend this one who had been beaten, who had some bleeding wounds. We stopped there and built a fire, had a meal and slept there for the night. When we awoke in the morning, the thief was gone, and also our bag that contained our food. This one whom you know as Jesus made no comment, he just said, "Let us walk on."

The one who had been beaten was badly injured and I think Jesus knew that he could not maintain a rapid pace. We began to walk briskly, a bit to my surprise, and soon we saw this thief in the distance. We saw that he tried to hurry but his body would not sustain him. He finally fell to the road trembling, crying, anticipating another beating.

"Why do you steal?" Jesus asked.

The man's face contorted with grief and rage. "Because all my life people have stolen from me. I have learned that I must take what I need. It will never be given to me."

"Perhaps you have not encountered the right people," he answered. "Perhaps your own fear has led you to interact with others who carry an equal amount of fear. Here are our packs. Please take what you need and leave the rest for us, that we may have our breakfast."

Please understand that I had grown up in this culture which believed in the words, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth." I was both amazed and filled with joy at what he did, and yet also very skeptical. I thought to myself, ones such as this can never learn. Perhaps he needs to be beaten enough to arouse enough fear in him that he will cease his thievery. But of course the choice was not mine.

This thief got up, looked at the ground as he handed the package of stolen food to Jesus and said, "I don't need anything."

Jesus said, "Of course you do. Have you had breakfast?"

"No." He shook his head.

"Well, take what you need. Or better yet, sit here and eat with us."

I think he wanted to do that. He could not. He finally took some bread and some fruit and, head hanging in shame, he walked away.

The story doesn't end there. After our meal we walked down the road. Some distance away we came upon a very poor man in rags, sitting under a tree eating bread and fruit.

"Have you need of more?" we asked. "No," he said. "A man," and he went on to describe the thief, "a man just gave me this. I have all I need."

I cannot tell you what became of him, only in that whole process of his giving I learned a very important lesson. It was my fear in me that said, "Perhaps he needs to be

beaten." It was that in me which said, "Will my needs be met?" If the man had asked, Jesus would have given him the entire package, all of our food, because he knew our needs could be met. That doesn't mean we might not have been uncomfortable, hungry, for the morning, or the entire day, but we were not about to die of starvation.

There was another time when I was with him when he did give away our entire dinner. I have told you in past years of times when he invited others to share their food and somehow there was enough for everyone.

Again, we were traveling; here, a bit larger a group. We passed on the road a group of people who were also travelers, several families traveling together. They told us that bandits had taken all their food and clothing. The one who was Jesus literally took the shirt from his back, his cloak, and wrapped it around the mother holding her baby. He did not ask us if we would give our food, we simply gave it. He did not ask us to give our own clothing, but many of us did.

These people protested, said, "No, then you will be cold, you will be hungry." Jesus said, "No, we will be fine. We will be taken care of. You take this, we do not need it." Now, of course, I was afraid! It was going to get cold that night and the next town was a distance away. I was already hungry. But he said, I did not need it, and so, trusting him, I gave it. I was a simple man and perhaps that condition made trust easier for me.

I think I expected that when these families had gone on their way, he was going somehow to create a miracle, but he didn't do that. We walked a short distance and he pointed to a spot and said, "This looks like a good place to spend the night." We looked at one another. None of us had cloaks. None of us had anything warm. None of us had any food.

It is clear to me that he was teaching us. "Your needs will always be met. It is safe to experience some discomfort. You do not have to be afraid." Had he not been present, I know I could not have done what I did that night, which was to simply settle down, hungry and thirsty, by the fire and go to sleep, half-naked on the hard ground. And yes, I shivered. But we took turns arising to fuel up the fire. The morning sun warmed us, and several hours' walk brought us to a village where people knew him and very joyfully offered us food and clothing.

Trust the abundance of the universe. Do not be afraid. Do not measure what you're given. When you see need, give to that need, and let the giving be without a giver and without the measure built of fear.

His giving was so simple and so joyful, so spontaneous. Never did I see him give in a premeditated way. The giving of his talks was also not premeditated. When people gathered around him and were confused, these messages of love and truth would pour out of him. And to each he gave just what that one needed.

On one more occasion I had the opportunity to travel with him with a small group when something, for me highly unusual, happened. Please do not take these stories to indicate that I traveled with him often and knew him well. But on these few occasions I was blessed to share his company.

I had sought him out and my son, Mark, now a young man of perhaps 11 years, was with me. And once again we were in a very small group. I had not expected to meet him on this road but had heard he would be in a distant town, and was simply walking

to that town with Mark. As we walked along the road, here he was. And so I had the great joy to walk with him. There were only the Master, two disciples and Mark and myself.

Suddenly in the distance we heard some small bells ringing. As we walked down the road and looked up at the hillside, there were some caves. At that time, beings who had leprosy were cast out of their communities and sent to live with others who had the same disease. It was much feared because it was contagious. They were requested to give a warning to travelers so travelers would keep a distance from them. So when they saw us coming, they rang their bells to warn us. "Unclean: leper." The warning was meant to keep us down on the road, to make sure we did not climb the hill seeking anything from the beings that lived there. Of course it had the opposite effect on Jesus. They were people in pain. He simply turned on to the trail that went up the hill and began to climb.

The first disciple accompanied him immediately. The second turned to look at me, and turned again to look back at Jesus. Jesus turned and said to me, "You may come or wait. I will be back." How he challenged in this way. I was more afraid for Mark than myself, to expose this child to this dreadful disease. He did not condemn my fear. He said with his glance, "I know you are afraid. I know that this can be contagious. You do not need to come." His kindness, which acknowledged my fear with no criticism, allowed me to surmount it, and I followed, along with Mark.

I had never seen lepers this closely before. Some of the disfigurements were quite terrible. He immediately asked for water and simply began to wash wounds, took his cloak and tore it into strips of rags to bind those sores. The first disciple joined him. After a few minutes, he turned and looked at me and the other man, for the two of us simply had stood there and watched. He did not look at us with a glance that said, "Shame on you!" He did not look at us with a glance that said, "I expect you to help." In his eyes was so much kindness for our dilemma.

These people had been so forgotten by the world, they were in such pain and had so little, I could not have been the giver, but I could be the instrument through which love flowed. As I watched him for those few minutes, I saw how he was that instrument, and realized I also could do that.

The second disciple followed him after a few minutes and began to tend to these others, but I still stood to the side with Mark. Soon he paused in his work and looked at me. He knew that I was a shepherd. He said words which went directly to my heart. He said, "These are my flock, and I must care for their needs."

I do not know if he was telepathic, but with those words, the thought came into my mind of the time the previous winter when I had literally faced a wolf-like animal to rescue a ewe and her lamb. And I had not been afraid because this was my flock and this was what I needed to do.

I knew that if I just stood there, he would in no way condemn me. He would not love me less. It simply became so clear to me: here is a place where love is needed, and I may be an instrument of that love. And so I knelt and began to work. Mark watched me for a few moments more, watched all of us, and then he joined me. My heart ached at first for my young son, that he might contract this dreaded disease, and I almost bade him

stand aside. Then the one known as Jesus said, "Mark, please come and help me," and my fear dissolved. Surely he would allow no harm to the boy.

We did not go on our way immediately, we shared our meal with them and spent the night there. In the morning, we shared breakfast and left them the rest of our food. He paused to look at a few of these wounds to see how they were healing. I have told you before that while this one could do miracles, and very occasionally did so, his choice was never to do an obvious miracle and thereby draw attention to himself. If he healed another, that disempowered the other. Then he was the healer. But if through his touch and energy he called forth the other's ability to heal, the process would be much slower but the beings were empowered, and learned that they were whole and could heal themselves. Where it was possible, this was always his choice. So he paused to be certain the wounds were healing.

There is one more story I must tell of how he taught me to give. One that still deeply moves me and brings tears to my eyes. I had another son, older than Mark. This one was unwell from early childhood. His joints were crippled. I suppose today one might label it juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. I loved this young boy. It brought such pain to my heart to see how difficult life was for him, how painful every movement was.

When I brought Mark to see Jesus I did not bring my older son because he could not walk that distance. Then it came a time when this older son fell very ill. His body was inflamed with fever. He wept for the pain that he experienced. For days he wept. He was always in pain, but this present pain was excruciating.

Now we were at home and I had no idea where the one who was Jesus was, had not seen him in almost a year. Through that night of my son's pain and fever, I prayed, "Please come and save this lad. I know you can do that. Restore him to health. Save him."

And then I began to feel his energy moving. I did not see him in material form, simply in my prayer and meditation I felt his energy and his thoughts. And the thought I received was simply, "You must give him permission to come home. You must allow him to leave this life of suffering and not hold onto him."

Then I understood that my son was trying to live because he thought that I needed him to live, which indeed I thought I needed also. Again, my fear was intense for I loved this firstborn son so deeply. How could I give this gift, how could I let him go?

Through the night he shivered with his fever and then burst into sweat. He screamed and cried, literally out of his mind with his fever and pain. Toward dawn the fever broke and he looked at me with clear eyes. I knew I had a choice, then. I knew if I said to him, "You are strong, you will recover," that he would continue to fight for me, and that he would face similar terrible moments—how many of them? Or I could tell him, "You are free to choose to stay here if you wish or to leave. I love you and will support your choice. If you need to leave, it's okay. I love you."

As that realization of choice came to me, I felt Jesus' loving energy embrace me. It was very much like the experience I offered to you in meditation at the beginning of tonight's talk, of feeling your fear, as you stood there at the end of the truck, giving away what you needed, and then feeling his loving energy surround you and say, "It is

## Christmas Memories from Aaron, December 18, 1996

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safe." And suddenly I knew, it is safe; safe for my son, safe for me. His essence will survive even his death, and I will survive his death.

I know I have told you in the past about the loss of my wife, this lad's mother, and so his dying was all the more painful to me because I had loved his mother and he so reminded me of her. I found myself looking into his clear eyes and was able to tell him, "Do whatever you need to do. I love you. The choice is yours."

He looked at me with such gratitude in his eyes, I was aware of how much I had held him to this earth. He simply smiled at me, looked deeply into my eyes, and died. He needed to go home. I needed to give him permission to go home. I needed to transcend my fear and give permission from that place of love. With my deepest gratitude, even now 2000 years later, I thank the Master who taught me how to give with such love.

In this season in which you celebrate his birth with the giving of gifts, may all of your gifts be given with this heart of love, with no measure of what is given or received, with joy and without fear. May you learn to trust the infinite love and abundance of the universe.

I thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts with you. If there is time, I should be glad to answer your questions. That is all.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 17, 1997

**Aaron:** Good evening and my love to you all. I am Aaron. My plan to tell a Christmas story tonight is of no surprise to any of you and I know needs no introduction.

This instrument once asked me, "Aaron, are you going to run out of stories?" because of course I was not constantly with this man, in fact, very infrequently, and she feared they would be limited. But I don't think I will run out of stories. Only, they become a bit more subtle.

I have talked to you of the way he taught people, the way he was in his daily being. To be in the presence of a truly enlightened being is a great gift. We think of the Buddha as being enlightened because there is the story of his enlightenment. The one you know as Jesus did not move through that enlightenment process in his lifetime as Jesus but came back into incarnation after enlightenment in a prior lifetime. The path he took to his enlightenment was not identical to the Buddha's path but his realization was no less profound, nor was his spiritual mastery.

It seemed to me and to many others that he was Kindness personified. When I said that once to this instrument, she asked, "Was he ever angry?" Here you must understand that there are two bases for anger. One is a fear-based anger which comes from the ego and is based on the ego's desire to protect the self, to gain for the self. The other is a love-based anger. Anger is almost not the correct word for it; rather, it's a profound sadness which gives rise to energy, as opposed to a dulling sadness which brings despair. It's a sadness which inspires energetic action. It is not a sadness that blames another because compassion is so present. Nevertheless it aspires to touch that which is distorted and bring it back into balance.

You have heard me talk of the tripod of moral awareness (*sila*), concentration (*samadhi*), and wisdom (*panna*) and how the three move in a spiral, each one serving as cause for the arising of the next one. When there is a moral awareness that understands that self and other are not separate, then there is a kind of restraint to your actions. Even if anger arises, there is a restraint that prevents you from vocalizing or acting upon that anger in ways that would be harmful to another. On the basis of that restraint, there is some lightening of the being, a spaciousness which understands how these thoughts of anger have come into the mind because causes were present for them, and sees the whole situation with increasing compassion. The compassionate heart-mind knows it can be patient and does not have to act out that anger in harmful ways. This lightening leads into a deepening of happiness, a serenity in which deeper concentration becomes possible. You are able more fully to be present in each moment, and in that presence, greater wisdom arises and greater compassion. With compassion, the root causes of anger and greed begin to fall away and as equanimity deepens, anger and greed do indeed fall away. And one does reach that stage of full realization.

The being that I was in that lifetime was at the restraint stage. I could see my anger arise, could restrain myself. I felt a certain deep peace. But I was, as this instrument

might put it, clueless about what to do with that anger, how to bring it into being as useful energy without creating harm by it.

One day I was with the man you know as Jesus and a group of other men, perhaps a dozen of us. You all know the story told in the scriptures of Jesus standing near the woman who was about to be stoned, and his words, "Let those among you who are without fault throw the first stone." The story I tell you here came before that. We sat beside a cooking fire by the home of one of his followers in that town. Suddenly, there was shouting, screams, anger. He arose abruptly and we of course all arose with him. To this day I do not know precisely what the woman had done but there on the ground was a woman and they were stoning her. She was bleeding. She was unconscious. A large cut showed that a stone had hit her head.

I don't think I'd ever seen an expression on a face quite like the one he gave at that moment. There was anger. There was compassion. There was sadness. He didn't know this woman, didn't know any of the people gathered around her. He simply walked in and said, "Are you finished?" Quietly, "Are you finished?" and looked many of them in the eyes. He knelt down to this woman but she was already dead. He simply sat there and wept. A quiet weeping. No vocalization but tears running down his face.

I did not understand his sorrow then. I thought he simply wept for her because she was young and beautiful and her life had been cut short in such a violent way. It seemed strange to me then because he did not know her. It was not until much later that I realized that he wept for all of us; for human passions that can so violate another's being; for human fear and hatred. And he wept for himself, I believe, for the fact that although he had come to teach love, he could not prevent human suffering and the acting out of the fear-based emotions. He understood that he could only begin the process, a process that would take millennia. And I think that is why he wept.

One other time I saw him weep thus but there was more anger in his response. This was in my village. When I say "my village," I lived in the country but this was a village near my home. It was the only time that he came through that village, a very joyous time for me because it gave my entire family the opportunity to meet him.

There was a young man in the village who was deaf and mute. He was a simple man, really a boy in his teens. Those who knew him knew he had a loving heart, but many made fun of him. The village had a central square, a marketplace. As we walked into the square from one side, we became aware of crying, a soft cry. And there across the square was a small child, dirty, disheveled. She was making signs that she wanted something to eat, pointing to food. I am sorry to say that nobody was paying attention to her except for this one young man. He saw her hunger. He walked to a stall where a merchant was selling fruit, simply took a piece, took it and walked to the child with it and handed it to her. He was deaf, remember. He didn't hear what happened as he turned his back on the merchant. The merchant had known this boy most of his life. He knew he was deaf, but he yelled, "Stop, thief!" Of course the young man did not stop. He handed the fruit to the child. The child's face lit up. The merchants came out from their stalls. Some few of them did not know him. But most of them did. They had sticks and they began to beat him.

By the time we could push our way through the crowd, this boy was severely beaten. Jesus said in a voice that I'd never heard from him before, "DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU

ARE DOING?" The power in his voice stopped everybody short. They were ashamed of themselves. A dozen men attacking a boy, a teenager not full-grown, and in no way able to defend himself. One spoke up, "It is the law. He stole. He's done it before." Jesus said in the same commanding voice, "IT IS ALSO THE LAW: LOVE ONE ANOTHER. HE IS YOUR CHILD AND SHE IS YOUR CHILD." I cannot imitate his voice. It was controlled but I could feel the anger in it. And in that anger, again, the sorrow, the compassion, the clarity that they had acted as they had to act. When a two year old snatches a toy away from another two year old, you stop that snatching. You tell the snatcher, "No, you may not do that." But you understand that he does not yet know any better and he will probably have to pull toys away from others many more times before he learns to take care of others and not to take what doesn't belong to him.

Written on his face was all of that, his sorrow and his compassionate understanding that these were infants around him. Again, I got a sense of his own realization of his limitations. I said to you that my stories become more subtle. Of course he was not limited. He had immense power and could have used that power if he wished. But he would not violate another's free will. He understood that they had to learn kindness by themselves; that he could serve as guide but he could not do it for them. On his face was etched the dilemma, the acknowledgment to himself of his infinite power and the acknowledgment that he could not change the way things were right here, that any changes that he made are those that would be seeds that would take fruit many, many, many centuries down the road.

He sat down and held the boy in his arms, his tears running down his face. He did not speak again. He looked up at the men and I could see that within him that wanted to speak. I knew there was really nothing to say. I know he had a miraculous power and I believe that he could have saved that boy's life. I think that he understood that much as he eventually himself needed to die, to be crucified as part of his instruction while in incarnation, that this boy also was giving his life in this way as teacher to others. He saw that the boy's death would have a much more profound effect upon these men than they would experience if he worked a miracle and revived him. So he sat and cradled him and we stood there and watched him die.

The little girl meanwhile had finished her fruit and came over. She was perhaps two. He looked at the men and asked, "Does no one know this child?" They said yes, she was the baby of such and such.

"Where are the parents?"

"The mother died. The father cares for her."

"Where is the father?"

Again I could feel his anger growing. And yet, it was a controlled and compassionate anger, one with a purpose: to lead these men to a deeper wisdom and a deeper compassion.

He asked in a very quiet voice, "Would this baby normally be here alone and hungry? Was there none among you except this young man who realized that she was in some kind of difficulty?" It is the only time I ever heard him speak in a way to create a sense of shame to people. I do not think it was his anger talking; in fact, I am certain it was not. But he was asking them to reflect more deeply on how they had reacted and killed,

how they had moved from their own anger and hastiness, without reflection or restraint. Several detached themselves from the group and went to the father's house which was in the village. There they found the man lying with a broken leg. He had fallen down a ladder. He was in his cellar.

How do we teach another to wake up? The enlightened teacher has his own methods. He always knows just what the other needs. It is not that he does not experience emotion so much as that emotion is not what drives him. He understands how it arises and lets it pass by. What drives him is a generosity of spirit, a willingness to give everything of himself to others.

There is absolute clarity that anger can be a catalyst for compassion, that it can lead to clear, direct statement of truth, offered with no intention to harm but also with no intention to let oneself be damaged by another. And yet for the enlightened being there is also the clarity that each being must resolve its own karma. One can only point the way. Then one must step back and allow freedom of choice.

While he was enlightened, he did not come knowing the best way to teach. Through the years that I knew him, I watched him evolve a clearer teaching style. I watched him come to understand more deeply what it means to allow another to make their own mistakes. Certainly we try to help prevent those mistakes if they can be prevented; to intervene if one is about to hit another, for example. What if the deed has already been done? What good is anger then? The question is not how to punish the one who has acted violently. The question is how to teach that one. And if anger is present within, what to do with that anger so it does not become a force for wrongful action, word or thought. The answer to both questions is non-judgment.

This is one thing I learned from him beyond anything else: non-judgment. To be with a being who is totally non-judgmental is a profound experience and that cannot help but rub off. So many times judgment arose in me and then I observed him respond in a deeply compassionate and non-judgmental way which nevertheless said, "You may not pursue this violence to another." He never said, "You're bad." He simply said, "You may not. Look at the roots of your anger." And he said it with so much love and so much understanding that the one who was asked to look did not feel threatened but deeply loved.

I am glad to be able to tell you that after he left our village, there was much change. This child, this baby, was taken in by a loving family along with her father, something that never could have happened before. His family would have cared for him but he had no family. People before would simply have turned their backs. So this was a process of waking people up. The baby became the entire village's baby. In fact, she called the whole village "Mama" and "Dada." Everywhere she went people hugged her and fed her. After her father's leg was mended they continued to live with this large family at the family's invitation. They said to the father, "You cannot be away at work and care for this daughter. Leave her here and we will care for her."

He said, "No, I need her with me. I love her. She is all that is left of her mother, whom I loved."

They said, "You stay too."

I'm not suggesting that there was no generosity of spirit. Such generosity of spirit is always present but sometimes it's sleeping. His presence awakened it, not only in that situation but wherever he went.

There are three different kinds of giving. If I have two apples and one is shinier and richer than the other, the second has some brown spots, if you ask me, "May I have an apple?" I can give you the defective apple. It's still edible. I don't have to give anything. So there's a certain kind of generosity to giving you even this slightly wormy apple. In the second level of giving, I look at the two apples and give you the better apple. In the third level of giving, I give it all to you. I know that if I need an apple, somebody will give one to me. You may choose to give one back to me. But I don't keep anything for myself.

This level of giving requires a great awareness of fear. It requires having done much prior work with fear. It must never come from a voice that says "I **should** give it all." It must never come from a voice that says, "I want others to respect me or love me and so I will give it all in order to get something, to get love and respect." Rather, it comes almost without thought. It comes from a clarity where giving of oneself becomes a reflex.

I have told you several stories through the years, other ways that he gave. But I would add one more, more subtle story here.

We were walking in an area which was arid. I want to remind you here, when I talk about walking with him, I was not one of his disciples. I was not constantly with him. It was a great gift to have a day or two here and there in which I might be with him. We had water with us and a small bit of food. Also, some cloth that we could set up as a shelter against the hot sun of mid-day. For to be out in the open in that hot sun could truly kill a man. The dwellings were far apart where we walked.

We had no beasts with us; each man carried his own few possessions, a bit of communal food, some containers for water. We were attacked by bandits. They did not know who he was. We had very little for them to take but they took it all, or almost all. They left us one jug of water, just a small container, perhaps about like your quart container. It was enough that they need not acknowledge they had left us waterless, which was akin to murder. But there were four of us. They took our shelter, they took our cloaks, they took our food, they took the rest of our water. We walked on after they left, but it became clear there was no dwelling, shelter or water source. We decided to burrow down into the sand as best we could to give ourselves some shelter from the mid-day heat. And so we slept awhile.

When we awoke it was late afternoon. We could barely talk, we were so thirsty. We knew that we might need to walk a long way through the night, that if we walked all night we would reach a dwelling and be given food and water. But it would be an arduous walk. We passed the water around and each took a sip. And we began to walk.

We had walked for perhaps an hour when there was a bleating noise, a goat. A goat? Here? In this wilderness? Around a pile of scrubby brush and sand we found a she-goat who had just given birth. She must have been lost from a flock and been wandering

and here was her infant. It was nudged up close to her and nursing, and miraculously she did have milk for it, although she, herself, must have suffered terribly from thirst.

Most men would have made a choice that said, we humans are of more value than a goat. They would have said, "The goat has come to us to save us." They would have killed the goat, drank its blood, eaten its meat, or killed the baby and taken its milk. He looked at the goat and he looked at us. He did not ask us to give the goat our water. He simply looked at the jug and said, "I wish to give it my share of the water." We knew him well enough to know that he was not pushing us to follow, that he would not think less of us if we did not also give. And we also knew him well enough to know that he was not promising we would survive that night without water. Yes, he could do miracles. He could have brought us water there. The question was not to survive, the question was to learn, to learn to have faith, that if we could offer this selfless gift, truly the abundance of the universe would be available to us, and that whether we lived or died was quite secondary. It was clear that what was necessary was to support this life and there was simply no question in his mind that this is what had to be done.

So we all gave the goat our water. It revived a bit. One of us carried the kid and another helped support the goat to stand. Alternately it walked and we carried it. It was this conviction in him to offer himself freely in whatever way he could to where there was suffering, to hold nothing back, and to trust God, that was so powerful for me. It was this deep-seated love and faith that spoke so deeply to my own fear. No words he could have said, no lecture he could have offered would have taught me. I had to walk the road, to see how it felt to let go of fear.

I knew at some level that if water did not appear, he was not going to save us. That may sound cruel to you. But the lesson was that it's okay to give everything regardless of the consequences. This is unconditional giving. He could not then lift consequences of our choice from us. I understand that you must be practical in your lives. For instance, this instrument owns a house. She does not need to give her house away to the homeless of Ann Arbor. It's fine to keep your house, to keep the food that you need and the clothes on your back. But each being must investigate for himself, "Where am I hoarding out of fear?" There is truly very little chance that we would die that night, because we did know that we would come to a village by morning. We knew it would be hard. We knew the water would have made it easier. There was no guarantee. But we all did know the countryside and did know where we were. I don't think he would have asked it of us, if our giving the water to the goat would have meant certain death for ourselves. But he didn't say that. He didn't even ask it of us, he just gave his example.

What does faith mean? And how can you deepen your own faith in the course of your everyday life? What opportunities does life offer you to give more graciously of yourselves?

I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to the universe for the opportunity I was given in that lifetime to walk occasionally by the side of this man and to learn from him. And I am grateful that I was awake enough to be able to learn from what he offered. For that I respect and honor myself.

One way that you celebrate his birth is to exchange gifts between you. I would request you to be mindful as you exchange these gifts. You don't have to give your whole

house and all of your bank account in order to find this total giving. It is a state of mind. Investigate as you offer a gift: is it given with true joy and a sense of love for the recipient, with deep desire that that recipient rejoice in this gift? Or is it given with some sense of fear and wonder, "What will I get back?" If that fear is present, do not castigate yourself for it. But simply acknowledge that fear is present and offer yourself love in response to that fear. Work with lovingkindness, "May I be happy. May my needs be met. May I experience safety and ease of being." Acknowledge the desire to be safe. Until you can acknowledge that desire in yourself, you cannot acknowledge it in others. Then offer the same wishes for others. Until you can acknowledge fear in others you cannot do other than judge others when they act upon their fear. And your judgment will never lead them to the growth that lovingkindness and compassion can offer.

Whatever you may be celebrating this season, I wish you happiness and a new year of fulfillment, clarity, and peace. My love to you all. I would be glad to speak to your questions after your break. That is all.

**Barbara:** C1 said that she was confused because Aaron said that Jesus did not become enlightened during the lifetime he was Jesus but in a previous lifetime. Aaron says he was simply trying to make the point that we don't think of him specifically as enlightened in the way we think of the Buddha as enlightened because we are aware of the Buddha's enlightenment. But that everything this man did, it came from the same clarity of enlightened mind.

*(Mention of treats waiting for everyone during the break.)*

*(Break)*

**Barbara:** If we can tear ourselves away from the fudge and cookies, do we have questions? Aaron asks, do you have any questions about his story, did it bring up any questions for you, both the issue of anger as energy and allowing anger to move through you and be transmuted into clear energy. And the questions of giving or anything else.

**V:** It is very hard for me when I allow anger to move through me to then be clear about when I am then acting from the anger or when I am transmuting it into something else.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. Think of anger, V, as having a sticky side and a non-sticky side. When the sticky side is turned out, everything seems to grab hold of the anger and attach itself to it so that what moves through you under the guise of anger is fear, disappointment, expectations, old conditioning and so forth. These are not the anger, they are the things that have gotten appended to the anger. Anger itself is just energy.

When we speak about the liberated being moving beyond anger, the point I hoped to make tonight was that the liberated being does not move beyond the experience of anger so much as he or she moves beyond the adhesive quality of anger. Then the anger is clear. Of course, that's not where you are and that's fine.

The reason you have trouble with anger is because you have a concept of where you think you should be with your anger, and you're not there. Instead of experiencing the anger and the appendages, each one clearly seen in this present moment, you get lost in the thought of either getting rid of the anger or that in some way you "should" be able to channel the anger in ways I have just described. But it's a process and the

result will not come until the intermediary steps are taken. You can open the faucet of a hose and go to the other end and open the nozzle, but unless the hose is unkinked, water will not come out and no amount of turning up the faucet or opening the nozzle further is going to entice that water out. First the obstructions in the hose must be cleared away and then the water will naturally flow.

So when you experience anger in this way, this is your opportunity to investigate the obstructions, which are mostly old concepts, to investigate that which has attached itself to the anger, and see through it bit by bit until all you're left with is that flow of pure energy. I pause.

**Q:** If it's pure energy, it's no longer anger.

**Barbara:** He says, "But it is a process through which anger dissolves." He asks, conceptually do you understand what he is saying? He says it may be a helpful image to you when you're feeling anger to envision the faucet turned on and instead of running to the other end of the hose to see what's coming out, just slowly to trace the line of the hose and investigate, is there anything stuck here? And slowly work your way to the end, uncovering all the myths that are in the way, any expectations. What's blocking the clarified emergence of this anger?

**R:** I thought that anger has to do with contraction. Pushing down, and that once the contraction or blockage disappears, is loosened, it's no longer anger.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. You are correct, R, it does cease to be anger and English does not have a word for it. It is this movement of the heart that I attempted to describe but which is really quite indescribable. It's a mixture of sadness, equanimity and compassion, and yet entails a firm dedication to not allowing the harm that has grown out of this specific situation to perpetuate itself. That commitment to addressing the various energy contractions of the situation is the transformed surge of energy which we initially called anger. We can only say it is a compassionate energy derivative of anger. I pause.

**C1:** In polarity therapy the energy which arises from the solar plexus in the third chakra is referred to as fire energy or fiery energy. It is also the source of anger.

**Barbara:** He says that's perfect except all of the elements are really involved in anger, in this expression of anger that he talks of. Fire is the heart of it but it contains all the elements ...

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. If it were just fire, then it would probably emerge as anger, explosive anger. The other elements balance it in such a way that it emerges as compassion, patience, endurance and sadness, and energy combined. This is a quality that you can see in yourselves. It comes up at interesting times, not always times of enormous anger. This instrument this morning was filling the dog's food bowl when the dog nudged her hand and the kernels of dog food fell all over the floor. She was in a hurry. There was one moment of initial contraction and then a spaciousness that smiled at the whole scene, at the fact that she was hurrying, at the need now to pick up all of these bits of food and place them in the dog's bowl, the dog's eagerness for his meal, these feelings of impatience. There was in that moment a tremendous amount of compassion for the human condition, a sense of joy, and it was all born of the energy of that initial moment of anger. You **can** see this in your lives, more often in

the small things like the spilled food than in the major things which do tend to catch you more. I pause.

**J:** In past meditation classes and private sessions, discussing anger and related energy, I am attempting to clarify the examples I offered from personal experience. I thought that I was clear. Now I feel confused by Aaron's last comment in responding to R specifically, that what now feels like a clarification of his earlier comment; I had understood that anger without attachments is still anger and it is a pure energy, we just label it as anger and it is a powerful force in pure form. What I hear tonight is that is **not** what has been described.

**Barbara:** Aaron says we are simply getting subtler about it. Breaking it down from anger into its different components.

**J:** For me right now, use of labels in the subtle differences is very useful. In watching anger arise within myself, my intention is to note whether or not fear or fear-related pieces hang on. There are times when the anger, or what I describe as anger, feels very clear and I continue to experience confusion: is it old anger with attachments or not? The energy sense is very similar, though different if I am sufficiently aware.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. Generally I confine myself to discussions about what you are experiencing, where you each are in your path. Tonight, because I am talking about a spiritual master and what I learned from him, I'm not talking about where you are as humans but about where he was. It is a refinement somewhere down at the end of the path. But I do not tell the stories just to entertain you. I hope that they provide a map which you may pull out someday when it's useful to you. If where you are with anger is simply trying to restrain yourself not to react to that anger but to develop some understanding of what provoked the being who provoked you—to experience some compassion for that being and his or her fears and pain so that you need not be reactive to the provocation of it, but may simply experience the intensity of the anger—that's where you are, that's the work you need to be doing.

So please regard what I have said tonight simply as a map. Take out of it what is useful to you now and leave the rest for another time. Remember that there are different practices, of renunciation of anger, of transformation of it, and of what we may call "self-liberated" anger, knowing it immediately as wisdom. One can not move ahead of oneself.

Anger is essentially a fear-based emotion. It may be very much based on the present moment or it may have many old-mind components which turn it into a kind of rage. If somebody passing by you spills something accidentally, a cup of tea, on your shoulder, anger might arise. "My clothes are dirty. Why was he careless?" There's a contraction of energy and thoughts of anger and wanting to blame, feeling discomfort and so on. But the anger is really right here in the present moment.

If this person habitually pours tea on you (*laughter*), is truly careless and furthermore when you were a child, adults in your household continually poured beverages, spilled beverages on you (*laughter*), and didn't even apologize for it, so that there was a sense of being invisible to those adults, not being respected, if all of those old thoughts came into this bit of spilled tea. Then there might emerge an enormous amount of rage.

I'm using these words "rage" and "anger" loosely. We need to call one by one name and one by another name so that we're speaking the same language, so I'm simply choosing the word "rage," I'm not saying this is the word that must be used, but just so we understand each other. We see that rage arises at a point where there is much old-mind involved. With anger there is still separate self and other, even in this present moment, but it doesn't go further. Mind need not obsess in the presence of anger. But it is very difficult not to get caught up in obsessive mind when rage is present. As you begin to investigate the old-mind involved so that it becomes merely anger, it's much easier to restrain yourself from reacting verbally and physically. Nevertheless the feelings are still there. That awareness of anger and its triggers is one step. Awareness of old mind components is another step.

The next step is to create some spaciousness around those feelings. We talk about the contraction of anger and then the secondary contractions, which may be about wanting to get rid of the anger or wanting to attack the catalyst for the anger; whatever these secondary contractions are, we observe how they arise around the experience of anger, and we cease to contract around the contractions, we just notice the entire flow of process. This gives rise to that; that gives rise to this. At this point there is still anger, identified as "anger." There is still a sense of self there, but there is much more spaciousness and no need to react to the anger in any way, just to see it moving through. There is more space for wisdom.

At the point that one has that spaciousness around anger—and I'm using anger here but any heavy emotion such as jealousy or desire could be substituted for it—at the point where one has some spaciousness around it, one might begin to nurture the conditions that lead to a compassion with the anger. Instead of being thought of as "my anger" it's more thought of as a human experience of fear and pain. The heart begins to open in a boundless compassion for all beings who keep being pushed back into this self and its fears. Slowly and with practice, compassion becomes the primary ingredient. You literally create a new habit where instead of the arising of anger leading to various mindstates in which you contract and try to figure out what to do with the anger, how to fix it or blame someone for it or in some other way control it so you don't have to experience it, instead there is the deep willingness to experience the discomfort of this energy, and a profound compassion for all sentient beings which experience this kind of anger, the pain of it. These are the fruits of morality or precept practice, the deep intention to do no harm, and renunciation, the willingness to not feed into old stories, along with a growing recognition of one's true nature as kindness, compassion, love. Here, self and other begin to taper off. The energy of the anger will still be felt. It's transmuted into something different, though. C1's fire element is part of it but I don't want you to think of it just as fire because it's balanced. I can only label it "the compassionate wisdom mind's energy expression resultant from the experience of anger."

Let's use a very simple metaphor. If I pour boiling water into a cup, it will burn you. You cannot put your finger in it, you'll burn. If I take ice cubes and add them to the water, it cools it off. It's the same water. Let's say I had a pot of water; put some on the stove to boil and some other in the freezer to freeze. Then I put them back together, the ice cubes and the boiling water. The ice cubes change the boiling water but there's nothing there but water in different forms.

Anger here is an energy. There is contraction. Mindfulness is the ice cube of presence and awareness, which touches anger energy, but that mindful awareness is also energy. So these two energies of anger and awareness merge, and they create this new expression of, let us simply call it compassionate result of anger. That's a shorthand expression for the lengthy description I gave you earlier. This is really dzogchen practice, the instantaneous liberation of anger into Dharmakaya itself. Does this clarify it a bit for you? I pause.

**J:** Yes. And there is another piece which may be useful. In the polarity training, an example is offered of using fire to heat an earthen bowl filled with water, turning it to steam. Letting the steam rise to the heart, which then controls the energy.

**Q:** Aaron often speaks of putting space around the situation and I wonder if you could review the practical techniques of doing that when one is in the clutches of anger. Would you suggest a specific meditation?

**Aaron:** Basically I could say that Barbara is spending a whole year with the advanced meditation class looking at just this question and the many, many answers to it. There are many tools that you have accumulated that allow spaciousness around any heavy emotion so that you will not be reactive to that heavy emotion. While there is a vast toolbox here, and I hesitate to say one is most important, I think intention is primary, intention to live without harm.

When a heavy emotion has arisen in you, I just said intention is primary but of course there must be awareness, awareness of the whole process of arising and dissolution, awareness of this present moment and the willingness to be in this moment. It's circular: the willingness to be in this moment is dependent upon the intention. If your intention is simply to be safe, to be right, then you may choose not to be in this moment because it demands of you to explore more deeply. So it's circular.

To nurture in your heart, constantly, your innate connection with God and all that is, and your deepest intention to live your lives doing no harm but only good, this intention leads you to investigate what it means to do harm, what it means to offer yourself in service to others. It leads you to investigate the nature of the self and the experiences of that presumed self. Out of the deep-hearted intention to live one's life lovingly with more kindness and wisdom and skill, comes all the rest. So awareness and the nurturing of intention are the places to start.

Through last year I gave the teaching on the Awakened Heart, which I hope will soon be available as a book. This entire chain of perhaps a dozen dharma talks was essentially dedicated to the question, "How do we nurture this intention?" I would refer you particularly to what is called the Seven Step Prayer, which was in the book. Perhaps this instrument can provide you with a copy of it.

You begin to acknowledge that you have a choice and that you are responsible for your choices. You begin to acknowledge that the divine essence is there and, if you allow it, to express that essence. What really allows expression of lovingkindness? If you wish to offer lovingkindness to another and there's simply a thought, "I should offer lovingkindness," well, that's a start. But it comes from a place of judgment. But when you are truly peaceful and happy, and deeply experiencing the interconnection of self and other, then the offering of lovingkindness flows very naturally.

This really comes back to the beginning of my talk tonight, the whole chain of experience. From moral awareness grows deepening awareness of the interdependence of all beings, which leads you into a sense of restraint, into more lightness and happiness and so forth, I won't repeat the whole chain. So these are some of the ways that you can practice. Does this sufficiently answer your question? I pause.

**C2:** My experience is that when I am in the clutches of anger, it's very difficult if not impossible to become philosophical about my overall intentions, leading a good life. I need some ... I need some quick fix to get to a state where I can offer lovingkindness and compassion.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. C2, if you ever were cold and somebody with a pair of tongs offered you a hot coal, if you didn't know what a hot coal was, you might take it. OUCH! You'd drop it. You'd learn that to grab the hot coal, appealing as it may be in this freezing night, is not comfortable, in fact is very painful, and that it does have repercussions, blisters on your hands for example. In the future, nobody needs to tell you, even if you're trembling with cold, "Do not grab the hot coal in your bare hands." You understand that there are consequences. My suggestion to you when you are trembling in that way with that anger, and there is an angry reply looming up in you, a desire to speak out in ways that might hurt another, my suggestion is not philosophical at all, it's on the immediate experience level of the hot coal. Ask yourself, "What are the consequences of this going to be? Is this really what I want to do now? What is my ultimate intention here? Is it to be right, to shame the other? To protect myself? Or is it to create harmony? I have a choice." Which choice leads to harmony? You can even ask in a more self-invested way, "Am I about to burn myself as I attempt to burn another?" It's not a philosophical question, it's very immediate. In your gut you know the answer. It's the simple reminder, "I have a choice and what I choose will have consequences." Begin to rely on past experience, not moving out of touch with the present but simply remembering, "When I grab the hot coal, I get burned. If I throw the hot coal at another, they get burned." I pause.

**Barbara:** Others?

**M:** Here goes. I know I am probably way behind where your advanced students are, but I am still having difficulty with getting past judgment. I tend to be very self-critical and self-judgmental. It is all very well to talk about anger but we keep coming back to the first step which seems to be non-judgment, which I do not quite grasp how to get there.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. I hear your question, M. First, please recognize that each of you in this room have different stumbling blocks, such as judgment, jealousy, pride or greed and selfish motivation. Each of you have areas which are more difficult and other areas may not be hard for you. This is not based on degree of training but is simply the individual karma. This is not a problem. If you had no stumbling blocks, no difficult areas, you would not be here in incarnation. Your incarnation is a schoolroom. You're here to learn. The stumbling blocks are the catalysts for your learning. They're tools. You are not here to conquer judgment or jealousy or pride or anger. Do you want an honors certificate at graduation? I'm sorry but there are none. You're here to learn how

to use those mindstates to lead you into a deeper spiritual awareness, to lead you into more non-judgmental, unconditional love, beginning with the self.

Each of you is in a different place. None of you in this place are new to spiritual practice but some of you have done more of certain kinds of formal practice than others, and certain formal practices are more viable tools than are others for certain issues. So this is not a matter of somebody being ahead or behind somebody else, it's just a matter of being present where you are, accepting of yourself, knowing that while judgment may be a stumbling block for you, generosity may be no stumbling block at all, and greed may be a stumbling block for somebody else. This is part of the pattern of judgment, by the way, not to recognize this truth but to denigrate the self.

So here you are and judgment, including self-judgment, is an issue. How do we start? You start with simple awareness, being present and noting how often judgment arises. You may begin out of your meditation to reflect on the question, "What does judgment give me? If I were not feeling judgmental right now, what might I be feeling?" As you begin to feel safer asking these questions, you begin to find a softening and spaciousness which is able to acknowledge some of the pain that judgment has protected or seemed to protect you from. As you begin to investigate that pain, and understand it better, judgment ceases to arise as often. You're more able to be present with the pain and let it arise and dissolve without needing to barricade yourself from it with the barrier of judgment.

The process then is first to become aware of the arising of judgment in a spacious way, so that you can see, "Judgment is present and I want to fix the judgment," without needing to jump in and fix it. Just let it be there. What is judgment free of all the stories which arise with it? That's step one.

Step two is to begin to investigate the judgment. "What is it? It's curious. Whenever this happens, the judgment comes up. Whenever that happens, judgment comes up. How fascinating. How curious. What's going on? What is this?" It's the spirit of investigation which you nurture gently and gradually, which allows you to begin to break the judgment into small pieces so it doesn't feel so heavy, so solid. Then you begin to be able to learn and to make choices which do not necessitate the arising of judgment. Awareness is a very beautiful, flowing process. I think it might reassure you to hear some of the others in this room briefly acknowledge that this process has worked for them and how it has. One of the difficulties in the present meditation class divided between the more experienced practitioners and those newer to this form of meditation is that you don't get that feedback from those who have had more experience with meditation. I pause.

**Barbara:** He asks, does that answer your question or may he speak further on it? He asks would it be helpful for you to hear briefly from someone who has worked with judgment and is experiencing less judgment now than they were at some other time? Anybody willing to talk about that?

It is 10 o'clock, is there anybody who would speak for just two or three minutes on that before we end?

**J:** It works. For me, speaking about anger, with anger one issue I have been working on and I've gotten to where I can break it down and recognize energy patterns and feel

the energy within my body and just invite deepening awareness of that sensitivity so it's further upstream, when pieces start showing up energetically. And to respond and in that process also a sense of judgment, like, "Dammit, I shouldn't be feeling this again, I should be through that, blah blah blah," and sometimes I do and sometimes I don't. And learning to just acknowledge that it's there is sometimes a way of just diffusing the whole thing.

**Barbara:** Thank you, J.

**Q:** Judgment is also a form of fear. I don't always remember to use this technique. But it works when I do. And that is to ask myself what is the fear I'm experiencing that I need to make this judgment. It might be a fear that I'm not being treated fairly coming from my own insecurity. And then I can remind myself that I'm a divine child of God and feel better, or it may be a judgment about someone's behavior and I can look inside and ask if some of my behavior is inappropriate. Well, it can go in many directions.

**C1:** My teacher Marguerite used to just remind us, how would you know if we were feeling judgmental about something, simply she would say to us, "How would you know that that was good or bad? It's God's judgment, not yours." That helped me learn to quiet my own mind.

**Barbara:** I think there are two issues: the arising of judgment, and the judgments we have around the judgment. It takes a lot of patience and willingness to trust, for somebody who is just beginning to work with this in meditation, that it does open out into spacious mind, but it does. Aaron would like to say one last very brief thing here.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. My thanks to you all for allowing me to be a part of your circle tonight. For those of you who celebrate the birth of Jesus, keep in mind that he is but one of many masters who have offered themselves with great generosity and love to the earth plane. Allow it to serve as a reminder to you that you are not alone, that you are loved, and all you need to do is extend your hands and help is available. You are loved. And each of you has within you the same divine essence and the potential to also become a master, offering your own energy back to those who follow you. We each teach and learn. My deepest love to you all, and I wish you a joyful holiday. That is all.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 16, 1998

**Barbara:** We have a Hanukkah menorah here and I've just been telling the Hanukkah story and a little bit about what Aaron has taught me about it. The "eternal light" (ner tamid) is the light that is (meant to be) ever-present in front of the holy ark which houses the Torah scrolls. It was urgent that the Jews, in rededicating the temple, keep this light going.

Aaron says the everlasting light in the temple symbolized the desire to hold the light of God in people's hearts. Because of the symbolism, and the command to keep the light burning, the idea that it would go out was terrible. There was just this little bit of oil, and fear, "What if the light goes out?" The fact that it lasted for those eight days until more oil could be gotten, Aaron says, might be felt as a statement that the divine light will never go out, that it is inherent to us. Trust. So, this to me is the symbolism of Hanukkah, holding the divine light and knowing that it can't be extinguished.

There are candles for each day, and each has a special symbolism or meaning. The shammas or servant candle, lights the others. Just as the light of God reaches out to the world and spreads light, so we light this candle (*pause*), then a prayer (*Prayer recited in Hebrew, then English.*), "Praise be thou, O Lord our God, Ruler of the world, who has sanctified us by Thy commandments and bidden us kindle the Hanukkah lights."

I'm not sure I know the second one perfectly. (*Prayer recited in Hebrew.*) "Blessed art thou O Lord our God, King of the universe, who has performed miracles for our fathers in days of yore this season."

These are all actually "blessings" or "brachot" rather than prayers. They are praises of God.

Before we get into the Christmas stories, you probably have heard on the news that the US bombed Iraq this evening. Apparently the target was military bases. I'm not making any political comment here about whether this was wise or unwise, only aware of the pain that people experienced, regardless of whether they're military people or civilians. Let us spend a few minutes in silence offering whatever loving prayers you feel to be appropriate.

(*Pause*)

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. Having heard the news, it feels appropriate to follow up with a further prayer from the Jewish scriptures, translated into English, and a bit of Buddhist prayer from the Metta Sutra. "Grant us peace, Thy most precious gift, O thou eternal source of peace. May our nation always be a stronghold of peace and its advocate in the council of nations." Throughout this world, beings are suffering. All beings, be they great or small, seen or unseen, born or not yet born, may all beings find peace.

I pause briefly while you sit with your reflections; then will begin my talk.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. I know I do not have to introduce you to my tradition of sharing Christmas stories. I want to emphasize that while the being that I was in that lifetime

lived at the time and in the vicinity of the one who was known as Jesus, and greatly loved this man, I was a poor ignorant shepherd, by no means a teacher or a senior disciple of him, but I loved him no less. The gift of those times given to me to spend near him, I hold as amongst the greatest gifts. Just to be in his presence, even in silence, was a profound teaching. To observe him or the way he was with people, the way he bore himself, his actions and speech, was profound teaching. A being who aspired to lovingkindness could not come into his presence without feeling his light, and opening his or her heart to him.

I was a shepherd with responsibility to my flock, to my family, and it was clear that even had I wished to I could not ignore that responsibility and simply leave and follow him. Since he traveled, and word of his travels spread before him, when he came near to where I was, I always laid aside my work to spend a few days in his presence. Occasionally the gift was given to me by such as a brother who said, "I will care for your flocks for a few weeks. I know how important this is to you." And instead of a few days I would have a few weeks with him.

Each year in the telling of these stories, I have tried to highlight a certain quality which I observed in him and which I learned from him. Many of you in this group have worked with the difficulty of letting go of self will. There is a common phrase in today's world, "Let go and let God." What does that mean?

A cherished friend tells a simple poem taught by her grandmother.

I am the place that God shines through  
for God and I are One, not two.  
I need not fret, nor will, nor plan  
God wants me where and as I am.  
If I'll just be relaxed and free  
He'll carry out his will through me.

Many of you struggle with this. What does it mean to put ego self aside and allow oneself to be a clear channel for divine wisdom, for the divine heart? The one known as Jesus was expert on this. Never have I known another who was so able to be a channel with such grace and clarity. You might argue, "Ah, but he knew who he was. He was not born with that veil of forgetting." Yes, he knew who he was, but then what was asked of him was enormous and still he was able to do it. I do not speak here only of his final days.

He taught me faith. This in some ways was his greatest gift to me because when I first came to him I was impatient and had little faith. I was one who tried to plan and control, as if I could make the world come out the way I wanted it to be.

On a very early occasion in which I had the opportunity to travel with him, simply moving from one village to another across some hills, there was a wilderness between these two cities. I was the only one familiar with that wilderness and so I was asked to accept a place of leadership in terms of pointing out the path. I knew the danger of those hills. There were wild animals which could harm a man. High in the highest reaches of the hills the wind blew cold and rain could turn to sleet. Parts of the way were rocky and steep, dangerous unless it was daylight.

We left the first village early in the morning and if we had walked at a reasonable pace, pausing to rest several times, we still should have crossed the mountains and reached our destination before dark. But he would not be hurried. Early in the walk we came to an old woman carrying a load. She was struggling with the load, walking slowly, going to her home up in the hills. He lifted her burden from her, carried it himself, and slowed his pace to hers for perhaps an hour until we saw her safely home. We paused to rest and have lunch and I urged him, "We must move on. We are not yet across the mountains." We were high up. It was a beautiful view. He said to me, "Relax. We will get there when we get there." That within me which wanted to be safe, wanted all of us to be safe, chafed at his relaxation.

"We must move, we must go!"

"Relax."

We came up to the highest of the hills, a pathway between two peaks where one had to climb up on high rocks. This was the most dangerous part of the walk. We had just moved through the pass and as we came through this opening in the rocks, a bitter wind assaulted us.

"We must hurry!" I said.

"Relax."

We started down, a climb down steep rocks, when we heard a cry, something in distress. Of course, he would not let it be. The rest of the group, there were eight of us, stayed there on the path. He asked me who knew these hills to accompany him off the path. Climbing, we came to a mountain sheep giving birth, but having difficulty with that birth, crying, struggling. He did not even say "Clearly, we must help," he simply went to it. Now, he was not a shepherd, he didn't know how to help.

I said to him, "Creatures live and die in these mountains. You must leave it or we will die. We cannot be up here after sunset or we will die."

He regarded me peacefully and said, "Go if you need to, and take any with you that need to go. I will be safe."

Of course I could not leave him. But I was angry. I argued with him, I said, "We must go!"

"How can we go? You cannot pick up a sheep that's giving birth and carry it along with you. You cannot rush the birth process. Relax."

And so we sat there. He himself went back to tell the others and some of them climbed up that short, steep slope while the rest found some shelter. Because of the knowledge as a shepherd, I knew how to help this creature whose infant-to-be-born did not lie quite correctly in the birth canal. But I still was angry.

For perhaps an hour we sat there, as I offered the help that was needed to this creature. As we sat, the evening grew colder, the wind blew harder, and sleet began to fall, making the rocks icy.

"Why do you do this?" I said. "We will die."

"The sheep needs you. If we leave, she will die."

He was so clear. There was no ego in his desire to stay. Some people think of him as savior but he did not think of himself as savior. He played no role. He did not need to save anybody for his own ego need. He had one role and that was to be a vehicle for the light, a vehicle for love and purity. He understood that he could not be such a vehicle as long as the ego blocked the way.

As we sat there and the stormy evening gathered around us, I truly believe he did not know what would happen. There was not a control of the future, there was simply faith; whatever happens will be okay. One cannot turn one's back on suffering and if one lives one's life true to that path, whatever comes, be it life or death, joy or sorrow, it will be okay.

We did not have much food or warm clothing with us. We had planned this as a day's walk. We did not have shelter with us. This creature gave birth. We had seen its leg was injured and it probably had lost its way from its companions, been unable to follow because it could not walk well. So after the birth, he wrapped the lamb and the mother and carried them down to a more sheltered area where our comrades had built a fire. We warmed up a bit by the fire but there was very little wood; clearly we could not keep the fire going all evening, all night. I was frightened, perhaps more so than any of the others, and I reasoned that my fright was because only I knew the real danger, only I knew these mountains. Without light, the way down was impossible. Up where we were the night would become very cold and we could not survive it. And without fire, animals would attack, especially drawn by the blood scent of the birth.

What happens next reminds me of this story of Hanukkah. As the last of the fire died, the wind broke up the clouds and the full moon began to shine, brilliantly lighting our path. As the last embers faded, he simply stood up and said to me, "Are you ready to continue?" There was no difficulty at all, much to my wonder. The night was as light as day. Different men took turns carrying the sheep, who was quite heavy. He himself carried the lamb. We came down the hills into a valley where a shepherd welcomed us to his home, gave us shelter and food. I believe Jesus didn't know the moon was going to come out, he simply trusted, "What happens will happen. I have done what I need to do. I could do nothing else. And so I give myself in trust. What happens will happen. Thy will be done." Less than any other man I have ever met, he had no self-will. And yet he was strong, for the light of the divine shined through. He was not what you would call a pushover. He knew when to give and he knew when to say no, and both the giving and the firm statement "No" came from a place of deep love and wisdom and deep clarity within him and not from a place of fear.

I will tell you two related stories here. This is another occasion, another location, another year. Again I was walking with him with a small group, traveling from one place to another. We had been warned that there were robbers. He simply nodded, hearing that news. He did not express any real concern. Just an hour into our journey, we were accosted by a large man. We had no valuables with us but we had our cloaks and food and he took them. We walked on through an area which was sparsely inhabited; there was none to feed us and we went hungry that day and slept chilly that night. Early the next day we came to a small village where we were given some food and rags we could wrap around ourselves for warmth because the people had nothing else to give us. Again, an hour into our journey, the same man appeared. The one known as Jesus showed no fear or alarm at all but said to him in a kindly way, "My brother,

how may we serve you today?" He pointed to our feet. "Your shoes, your sandals." And so we all took off our sandals and gave them to him.

Again we walked on, experiencing considerable discomfort as the ground was rocky. By late in the day we again came to a small village, very small village, and out of the skins of an animal we were able to make some kind of footwear. We were given more food and a place to sleep.

Mid-day on the third day, we were just about to eat the food the villagers had kindly collected for our journey, when the large man appeared yet again. "Your food," he said, "Give it to me."

"Of course," said Jesus, "Take what you need."

This robber did not know who Jesus was, but as I said at the beginning of tonight's talk, one could not help but see the light shining out of him. For some, that light was a nightmare, for those who were too much in darkness to tolerate it. But for others who could see it, it had tremendous power of healing. It was a potent invitation to remember their own divinity. This man gathered our food and began to leave, then he stopped and turned back. He said, "There are six of you and one of me. Why have you simply given me what I asked for day after day? Why have you not beaten me or killed me here?"

Jesus simply said to him, "You asked because you had need. Not understanding the nature of your need, you thought you needed our possessions. Now do you understand what it is you really need?" And the man began to weep.

He said, "I have lived my life for so long stealing from others. I want to start anew but I don't know how. I can never be forgiven for the harm I have done. What I need is forgiveness."

Jesus looked at him and asked, "Can you forgive yourself?"

The man wept, "No, I cannot."

Jesus took his hands and said, "I forgive you. Will you walk with us?"

"You really want me to walk with you? I who have stolen from you and abused you?"

"Yes. Will you walk with us?"

And he did. And this man later became a disciple of the master and a teacher of forgiveness to others, able to touch the hearts of those who had withdrawn into their own fear because of the deep insights granted by his own experience.

Each day as we had walked and this man had assaulted us verbally and said, "Give to me," I had wondered why didn't Jesus say no? I understand now that in his wisdom he saw the light in this being and that it was accessible. There was no ego need to save him. There was no fear. He understood this man's soul, and that the material goods he asked for was symbol for what he really needed.

And yet in a very similar situation, Jesus' response was quite different. Another place, another year, another road. We had come to a village. Two there had laid out a meal for us. They were his disciples, who knew him and loved him, and so they offered the

best that they could. As we sat to eat, a man approached on a donkey and bearing weapons. And he said, "You will give me that food!"

"No," replied Jesus.

"Do you know that I could kill you?" said the robber.

"Of course you could kill me. Will that resolve your dilemma? How many of us would you kill? And do you wish to kill?"

Jesus stood up, between us and this man. There was no fear-based anger, but there was anger in his words. There was firmness which said, "No, you may not do this." He was not afraid to say no. The two of them looked at each other in silence for over a minute and then the robber turned and left. I heard later that he had reformed, but I don't know the whole story and cannot tell it. This is not about the results, this is about his ability to trust deeply what lay before him, not to have his ego get in the way but to act on the whisperings in his heart, be the instruction to give or say no.

It seems to me that his faith came from a lack of fear, a lack of fear that is difficult for those of you who are human and attached to your bodies. There was a deep clarity in him, "Whatever happens is okay. I do not need to cling to anything. I as ego self do not need to fix anything." And out of that clarity he had the ability to attend to suffering in the most skillful ways, which was simply to be instrument of his Father's will.

You know he had the ability to heal. Very rarely I saw him bring that ability into enactment, but only very rarely. His choice was always to follow the simplest way. "Never use miracles," he said, "when simple human intervention will do." The human heart acting in a loving way, that is the miracle. Extra power is not necessary.

I was with him in a village where a child was very sick. The father of the child asked him to heal the child, asked him to come to his hut where the sick child lay and heal the child. He came and sat with the child, and the father and the mother, sat all through a long night while the child's fever burned. It seemed to me he took away the child's pain because in the first moments of his presence, the child ceased to cry in pain but seemed to relax. How did he know whether to use his power to heal this child or to simply sit there? The night passed and by morning the child had died. The parents not only grieved, they were angry. "Why did you not save him?" He would not answer them.

Later it was told to us that this man and woman, these parents, fought about everything. They were known in their community for their vicious fighting with one another. They could not hear one another. The man sometimes beat the woman. I watched them as the child died. Their anger first was placed on to Jesus, "Why did you not save him?" and then in their grief they turned to one another, wept on each other's shoulders, supported one another. Together they arranged for the funeral that was necessary to bury the child. Somehow in their grief they rediscovered their love for one another. Did he know this would happen?

I don't think it matters. If he had saved the child, a different path would have been taken. That he did not save the child led to this healing between the parents. One route or another route. I don't think he tried to figure it out. It seemed to me more that he followed his heart. I asked him later, "Did you know what would happen?" and he said, "No, one can never know what will happen." I asked him, "Why did you not save the child?" He said, "What does it mean to save the child? Where would the child go?"

He's alive, the spirit will simply move on, will go where it will go. When it is ready to return, it will return."

These stories I am telling here are not about how he knew what to do, which knowing was born of his own clarity and open heart. These stories are about faith. Watching the parents weep and the child move into release of his pain and eventually die, there was fostered in me a deep faith that things happen as they need to happen. When we follow the "Thy will be done" and move by our own innate wisdom and compassion, things move as they need to. The wind blows the leaf; the leaf can but ride with the wind. It is not the leaf's work to figure out where the wind takes it, but only to be the best leaf it can, to do its work on the tree and then to fall, to decay and enrich the soil where the wind takes it.

Many of you have heard me make the statement that we cannot be fatalistic. If the child that can't swim falls off a boat, we can't say that he be left to drown. Perhaps you are meant to save him. I think that for Jesus, his heart was so clear and loving, so free of the dictates of ego and the need to save another to receive praise or adulation, free of the need to fix to alleviate his own pain, that he simply knew what to do. You as humans, can only attempt to follow that path, but you can attempt it with faith, with an open-heartedness that says, "I am the instrument. The divine works through me. Thy will be done."

We stayed in that village for several weeks. He talked there to many people including this man and woman who had lost their son. For many days they came to him with anger, and each time he returned their anger with kindness, simply acknowledging the depth of their grief. Toward the end of his stay they came to him and said, "You have given us a gift. Through all the years of our son's life he was sick, and we blamed one another." The man said, "I blamed my wife that she didn't take care of him," and she said, "I blamed my husband that he did not provide well enough to let us buy medicines and pay for prayers." Each said "I blamed the other. And you have given us a gift, you have given us each other back. You have given us again the opportunity to love one another." I do not know what happened to these people. I suspect that they lived relatively happily together, of course with the dark moments that a couple will always have with one another, with a deeper trust and less fear and need to blame. I suspect that they had other children.

He did not believe that the child should be sacrificed to lead the parents to this healing. He did not look at the child's soul plan and see if the child came to give the parents this healing. He did not try to figure it out. He simply was as present as he could be with pain, as loving and non-judgmental as he could be. He let his heart guide him. Perhaps sometimes his heart led him astray, I don't know. I never saw it happen but it would not surprise me. He was human. But he let his heart guide him and understood himself to be a vehicle for divine love and wisdom. Thy will be done. At this, he was the master. I cannot adequately express my gratitude to him for the ways he taught me these lessons of faith.

I know this talk leads you all as humans into the question, "How do we know? How do we know when to reach out the hand and when not to? When to stay with the sheep and when not to?" You know what to do. Your heart knows what to do. If you always follow the most loving movements of the heart, you know what to do. When you come

to know the arisings of fear and the sensations of that fear in the body, you become adept at recognizing fear and not acting on that fear. He did not save that sheep and its newborn out of fear. He did not let the child die out of fear. In each case he followed the deepest movements of love in his heart. That is all any of us can do. That is all.

**Barbara:** Let's have just a very few questions, ten minutes or so, and then shift into holiday party time ... Are there any questions?

**C:** When Jesus was sitting beside the bed of the sick child ... Aaron talked about Jesus following his heart. The child died. It feels to me as if in a case like that Jesus must have tuned in to the soul of the child and part of the choice must have come from the child.

**Barbara:** Aaron says, absolutely, just as the choice to stay there with the sheep came from the soul-level connection to the sheep. He says, but we must all know that we're capable of that deep connection when we trust ourselves to be.

**C:** Aaron was not talking about that.

**Barbara:** I'm paraphrasing Aaron. He says our fear leads us to doubt ourselves, which doubt leads us further into "self" and away from the clarity of the pure instrument of divine will. When we relax that fear, we do know what to do, we don't have to know about healing connected to the soul level of the other being as a conscious thing, we simply have to trust the deep loving movement of our heart, which we experience in a place free of slavery to the contractions of fear. We may intuitively connect with others; we may not have that capacity. Either way, it must be a movement of love.

He says, if the contractions of fear are there, that's okay. You can know that fear is present and still act from this clear place. You don't have to get rid of the fear to act from the clear place. He pauses.

He says this is such an issue for so many of us because we think we have to get rid of the fear in order to have clarity instead of realizing that the fear is simply part of the human clothing, and we don't have to get caught up and identified with the fear. We don't have to get rid of it, we don't have to enact it. The clarity is always there. Sometimes there's fear.

*(Pause)*

**Q:** Is it OK that this question is not related to Aaron's story tonight? Did Jesus in that lifetime come into contact with disciples of the Buddha? (**Barbara:** Aaron says yes, absolutely.) Could Aaron speak to that and how it impacted Jesus?

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. When you say, "Did he come into contact with disciples or followers of the Buddha" and I said, "Absolutely," but let us give space to this. He did not come into contact with Buddhist monks who identified themselves by this term "Buddhist." He came into contact with beings who were holy men but not specifically monks, beings who had been exposed to the teachings of the dharma. He did practice meditation. Unlike the Buddha who was born as a third density being, ripe for enlightenment but needing to find that realization within the incarnation, the one known as Jesus we would call a Bodhisattva, a being who is already fully realized, and did not really forget who he was.

He still needed a way to marry heaven and earth. He brought the teachings of heaven with him but he needed the tool to bring those teachings into the earth plane. It would have been very easy to fall into the trap of preaching rather than living his truth. And of course, had he not lived it 100 per cent, it would have lost its authority.

I think this ability to connect the ultimate and the relative is the greatest lesson he learned from the Buddha. He did not really have to learn it so much as to be reminded of it. The Buddha taught a dharma of liberation and of compassion. But Jesus came into the world specifically because so many beings could not grasp that message of compassion. Many could. There was a great wave of enlightenment at the time of the Buddha, but of those who were left, many were caught up in their own fear and shadow, were still trapped in the teachings of an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, the ancient teachings of fear. These are beings who could not hear the Buddha's teachings. Perhaps they were trapped in the darkness of their own making, and like that robber who I described, they needed a door opened to forgiveness. I emphasize here the need to combine the heart teachings and the wisdom teachings, that neither is sufficient unto itself. The open heart untempered by wisdom can lead one into maudlin sentimentality. Wisdom that is not connected to the heart can lead one into a sterility and escape from the suffering of the world, an escape into ultimate reality that denies relative reality.

When you ask, "Did he encounter the teachings of the Buddha?" yes, both before his incarnation, and also during his incarnation. I think they helped him to see where beings were trapped, how many were trapped in their own self-judgment, and to understand their entrapment was result of all of the fear voices that prior religious experience had dictated to them. And so his prime teaching was one of forgiveness, non-judgment and unconditional love. He did not emphasize the wisdom teachings, he saw that what people needed then in the world of that time were the heart teachings. To open one's heart and truly begin to love the self and one another and to see the divine in it all.

I know he understood the wisdom teachings and at times he shared those with those of his disciples who were ready for such teachings, but his focus was much more on centering of the heart, opening of the heart, dispelling the shadow with the light of love. I pause.

**Q:** Other than this incarnation, did Jesus live on Earth for his own learning?

**Barbara:** Yes.

**Q:** A very long time ago?

**Barbara:** A very long time ago.

**Q:** I would imagine the nature of that life was much different than what we as humans experience. (Yes.) I would be interested in hearing more about that.

**Barbara:** About Jesus' earlier incarnations? Aaron says that this can only be talked about a very little, that there is some cloak of privacy about this.

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## Christmas Memories from Aaron

### December 15, 1999

**Barbara:** I just want to begin by saying what a joy it is seeing all these faces filling the hall, over twenty-five of you. That, "if you build it they will come." This is the first year we've had Christmas stories here in the meditation hall rather than in the living room. Last week we said we'd meet in the living room with a fire. And then this evening I started thinking about the people who had told me they were coming. I realized we were not going to fit in the living room. Aaron will talk out here and then tea and social time will be in the living and dining rooms. There's a fire burning in there and a box of decorations to put on the tree.

**Aaron:** Good evening and my love to you all. I am Aaron. As always it is a joy to be with you. Your joy and love for one another, and your energy, radiate out of this room, truly a beacon of light. It is a blessing and a privilege to share my thoughts with you.

In this last meeting before Christmas, I always share memories of that lifetime when the being I was lived at the time of the one you know as Jesus and at the place where he lived. When I use the word "I," please remember this is not Aaron but a karmic ancestor, one of a great multitude of beings which were the fleshed figures of this karmic stream, now dissolved. There is no karmic stream that continues, but this awareness mind has access to the memories.

In that lifetime I was a poor shepherd. I was not literate, not educated. When I say I was a follower of this great teacher, please do not place me among a select few. I loved him as did many. When he came near to where I lived, then I would leave my sheep in the care of a friend or of my son and I would go to spend a few days with him, walk on the road with him, because when he traveled it was a wonderful opportunity to be with him, just to walk and talk. While these days were very few compared to the many, many days that I did not spend in his presence, they were by far the most transformative days of that lifetime, filled with wonder and learning.

I do not want to present him to you as I, Aaron, see him from this perspective so much as to give him to you through the eyes of that shepherd. Each year I have tried to emphasize some special aspect of my experience of him, tell you a few stories to illustrate that experience.

I often call you "angels in earthsuits" to remind you both of the divine inner essence and of the earthsuit which you wear, the physical body with its pains and illnesses, the varied emotions, impulses, thoughts and confusion that pass through you. I remind you that you must find a balance, must attend to this relative body yet not get caught in an identity with it but remember who you are. But it is so hard for you to remember. Your lives are filled with catalyst. When there is great fear, anger and distortion, it seems natural for the energy field to become contracted, and when it does become contracted, it is increasingly difficult to stay in touch with this divine essence. This is the nature of human experience. When fear takes you, you feel cut off from that remembering, but here is the most important place for that memory of truth, as truth and love are the only things which can speak convincingly to fear. This is the work for

which you take birth: to experience fully as a human and learn from that experience and also, through the human, to express the divine out into the world.

You cannot express that divine if you lose touch with it. When one can point out that essence to you, in effect circle it with a big red crayon and say, "Here it is!" it is ever so much easier to act and speak from that place. Jesus mirrored this divinity to those who followed him, as if he wielded such a crayon. Sometimes one would come along who, in contrast to his shining radiance, saw only his or her own darkness, and to that he would attend with love. But much more frequently one would see his radiance, and it would draw out one's own radiance so that one became capable of love and of kindness in situations where one had never thought one could express such feelings. He never shamed us for our fear or confusion, he simply held the mirror tight, allowing us to see what we could be.

Let me illustrate this with some examples. Leprosy in those days was much dreaded, there was no cure. Those who contracted this disease were cast aside, ostracized, forced to leave their families and their homes and go and live in their own communities where life was constant pain and struggle. The disease was contagious so people were terrified to come in contact with lepers. It was a deeply rooted prejudice taught early to young children.

One day as we walked, another man and I were right beside the Master, the others ahead or behind. There came a cry from high rocks that we passed on our left, a cry of a human in pain. She did not cry out to us; I doubt that she knew we passed. She just cried out. Without even breaking his stride, he turned off the path and headed up the steep slope from whence the cry had come. We two followed him, others behind us, up a path around a few boulders, up a very steep hill. There behind a rock was a very small cave, really just an overhang. Five humans dwelled there, all of them lepers. I had not known there were lepers in this area. We stopped, we froze in our tracks, all except for him. There was a mother with her daughter, both of them ill. The daughter was not even fully grown, just in her late teens, but already touched by this disease. Perhaps she had contracted it by staying to care for her parents. The daughter wept in pain and the mother held her.

He did not pause. I feel certain he had no fear for himself as we did for ourselves. He asked for water and clean cloth, but there was no clean cloth. They brought him water and again he said, "I need clean cloth." And as he said it, he looked me in the eyes. I know he would not have shamed me, he would not have forced me. But this direct eye contact drew me so deeply into him that my fear simply vanished.

Most of you have worked with this instrument on the practice of clear comprehension, beginning with clear comprehension of purpose. She asks you to reflect upon the question, "What is my highest purpose here? Is it to be safe, to be comfortable? To win the esteem of others? Is it to be an instrument of love?" When one acknowledges that one has fear, that there is the part of one that does want to run, does want to be safe, and there's no shame in that but one does not need to act out that fear, in this way one touches deeply into one's divinity and the essence of being which is the voice of love.

I would not say that my fear dissolved as I looked into his eyes, only that in that moment I saw that I did have a choice, that there was that in me that was far more fearless,

more loving and noble than I had ever realized. I did then what was perhaps the first fully selfless act of that lifetime. I took off the soft cloak, the cape that I wore, which was quite clean. I not only brought it to him, but was able to stay there with him, of my own will for he would not have made me stay, I could have handed it to him and walked back to safety. He never pushed another beyond their limits but he invited each to explore his or her limits and extend them.

He saw my moment of hesitancy as I handed him the cloak. He gave me a beautiful smile, said "Thank you." And then again he looked into my eyes and again I saw the essence of divinity in him reflected back to me, and I knew that I also could make the choice to stay. Touching on that divine essence is the strongest voice to balance fear. It does not deny fear but says, "No, I will not enact my fear." I simply nodded to him and he said, "Cut it in strips." Someone gave me a knife. There was just a moment's hesitation, to take that knife from this maimed hand. And then I looked in the eyes of the one who gave me the knife, and in his face was such hope and beauty. I found it easy to take the knife, to cut the garment into strips to make bandages, to wash and bandage the wounds that were so painful.

This man could work miracles. I have no doubt but he could have instantly cured all of these people. He did not often work such miracles. He did not want to create a specialness around him but to demonstrate the power of human love, that which was possible for ordinary people and not just saints. He wanted to empower people, not to disempower people who would feel helpless before his great mastery.

I don't know what happened to those people. We shared food with them. We sat by the fire for some time. The young woman who had been weeping in pain, lessened her weeping. She came and sat next to him and he took her hand, not as man to woman of course, but as father to child. As her pain decreased, she also ate. My guess is that all of them began to heal, if not in the physical body, certainly in the heart.

But for me it was a magic moment. It was the first time in that lifetime that I was not ashamed of my negative attributes, not ashamed of my fear or selfishness. Finally I could see these as expression of the human, know I did not need to enact them in the moment but could honor the human feelings and still come back and act from my highest self. I have thanked him often for being such a mirror of human divinity.

This was my first direct experience with this mirror which he provided. Because of what he taught, some people did not like him, people who were afraid and felt that power was their only path to safety. In that world the predominant teaching was an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. If someone attacks you, fight back. To that he said, "Turn the other cheek." People who were consumed by their fear could not turn the other cheek. They did not want to hear his teachings of love. They felt shamed by him and they felt rage at him for bringing such a teaching to the world. He knew this, yet in his great mercy, he still offered his truth out into the world.

Again, we were traveling, another year, another place. We had settled for the night in what was somewhat of a wilderness. Some distance away we could see the firelight of the village but we were higher up in the hills. It was close to dusk and we were eating our supper when people approached. They were rough looking men. I guessed from their appearance that they were brigands. They saw us gathered there and one of them recognized him. "Ah! It is the one they call the teacher, the rabbi." The one known

as Jesus sat there with bread in his hand. He had been eating. One of this rough looking band came up and grabbed him by his shirt and snatched away the piece of bread. He didn't take it into his mouth as he would if he were hungry, he just ground it into the earth. "Aren't you going to stop me?" he taunted. "Turn your cheek, that's right; turn your cheek."

And then his comrades began pulling food away from the others. Now, it so happened that in this group there were several children because there were people like myself who sometimes traveled with their sons. I regret to tell you that the world was organized in such a way in those days that daughters did not accompany their fathers on such trips. An injustice your own times thankfully have righted. But there were boys there including my own son, Mark. They pulled the food away from us, expecting a response, trying to get us into a fight, but of course none of us would fight.

The leader of the men then grabbed my son, who was perhaps a lad of 10, literally lifted him off the ground. I tensed. I felt Jesus' restraining hand on me. Jesus rose and approached this man who towered over him, a very tall and hefty man, holding the boy up in the air. He looked at him and said in a voice whose mix of command and compassion I have never heard before or since, "Put him down." He looked at this man, not with hatred, which would have only pushed the man further; not with pity, which also would have pushed him further into darkness; but he truly radiated the divine essence out of him so that none who were there, either his followers or the brigands, could miss it. "Put him down."

Have you ever seen ice melt when you pour hot water on it? First it's solid, then it begins to form holes and decayed spots until it's gone. This man's attitude of negativity dissolved in just that way. I never spoke to him afterward, I don't know what he experienced, but tears came into his eyes. He put the lad down gently. Before he could say anything, Jesus said to him, "Do not be ashamed. Lifting him in that way was your fear and anger speaking. Setting him down was your love speaking. And you have just proved to yourself which is the greater voice in yourself." The man only nodded. And they went on their way.

I know that somehow that man had gotten in touch with the divinity in himself, that again this great Master had been able to reflect that divine essence out to him so that perhaps for the first time in his life he had been able to break through his own fear and anger and touch that divinity, that innate goodness.

Before him I saw grown men weep. Not all; some would push on with their anger. They were not yet ripe to open. For a mirror to work, one must be ready to look in the mirror. He did not manipulate people. He did not force anybody to be where they were not. But for all those who were ready to choose love over fear, he provided the mirror.

One more story. I pause, it is hard to choose, there are so many. One day as we walked we heard loud voices and the sounds of scuffle in the road ahead. We came around a bend and found a group of men beating up several other men. The group who was doing the beating was far larger, perhaps seven against three if I remember it accurately. He didn't pause. He walked up and laid a hand on the arm of one, the other hand on the arm of another. "Why do you beat them?"

"They stole from us. They came during the night and they stole from us and we have just now caught up with them."

Remember, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

"What do you hope to gain by beating them?" he asked.

"They are thieves, they must be punished."

"Why would anyone steal from you if he was not terribly confused or hungry, fearful or needy? How would it be to you," he asked, for these were obviously comfortable men from whom the goods had been stolen, "how would it be to you if you did not have money to feed your families? If you did not have warm clothes to wear? If you had been raised to hatred and treachery instead of kindness?"

Those who were delivering the beating paused a moment to listen, but not for long.

"But they deserve beating. It's their fault they are afraid and hungry. They too could be prosperous if they lived differently."

"Could they?" he asked. "If you grew up without a trade, if you grew up without kindness in your lives, where would you learn what you needed to survive?"

And so the talk went, back and forth. He kept inviting them to open their hearts in compassion to these men. "Is not their suffering enough punishment? They came to you hungry and when they leave you they will still be hungry. They came to you feeling as outcasts and when they leave you they will still feel that. Is this not enough punishment?"

There is that in every human which wants power, which wants revenge, for in these things we feel ourselves to be strong and therefore safe. And there is also in every human the heart of compassion. Without that compassionate heart we would not be human, but so seldom do we touch that compassionate heart, we may forget that it exists. Two thousand years ago, it was invited to the forefront with much less frequency.

In his face shined compassion for both sides, for those who were needy and indeed had done harm to others, and for those who were afraid that their power, honor and safety would be violated, that if they let some tiny niche into that armor, it would begin to disintegrate and their whole lifestyle that had established safety to their families and communities, that it all would rot away.

"You want to be safe; all men want to be safe. Safety cannot be built with a closed heart, a hateful heart. Safety can only be built on love. Only in your true love for these men is there safety." He was starting to get through to them.

"How can we love them?" they asked. "Our anger is our strength and our protection."

"Do you know these men?" he asked the ones who had been robbed.

"We have seen them here and about. They live in shacks far beyond the village."

"Do they have families?" he asked. Nobody knew.

"Do you have families?" he asked the robbers. A few of them nodded yes. "Do you have means for support?" Nods of no.

"Since they are in need," he asked those who had been robbed, "would you be willing to give of yourselves to ease their need? Do not just give them food, give them a sheep, a sheep ready to bear young. Give them seeds and a bit of fertile land. Help them build a warmer shelter." As if inspired, he asked, "Who will do this with me?"

Of course we, his followers, all nodded. Two and then a third of the seven nodded slowly. He was getting through to them.

"Let us go and see what they need."

Now, the ones who were being beaten were quite uncomfortable. They were proud. They didn't want charity. So he had not only to deal with those who were defending themselves with strength but with those who were in need and felt they could only meet their needs through strength.

Looking at these, he asked them, "How would it be if you had a way to feed your family?" There was some looking at the ground and shuffling of feet. "You know you are capable men," he told them. "Do you want to live your lives harming others? I do not ask you only to receive; to support yourselves means an end to harming others, a true gift to all." And on he went, inspiring them to be the best they could be. In the end four of the seven accompanied us to the country far beyond the village where these men lived. They talked to these men's children. They saw the squalor in which they lived. They were filled with sadness that they had so much while others suffered. In all of these men, the ones in need and the ones who had much, he awakened a sense of their own deepest truth, to live together in love and cooperation, to touch within themselves that which was innately fearless, generous and kind, to touch within themselves that which was fearless enough to give and to receive, for both are equally difficult.

The beauty of it was that they never knew that he did it. And in effect, he did not do it, he simply invited the situation where it might happen and trusted the best in each. Inviting kindness to the fore so the others could see it. This was a great talent of his. He did not do in such a way as to be a doer; he never claimed a credit. He did not want others to bow before him or worship him, he simply wanted to invite their loving hearts to open, wanted to invite them to get to know this divine essence of themselves. And because he reflected it so profoundly, you could not be with him and escape experiencing your own divinity unless you were quite deeply enmeshed in negativity.

I think this is what eventually led to his crucifixion. He inspired hatred as deep as the love he inspired, for those who could not see their divinity reflected in his divinity experienced terrible shame. I do not say that this is his fault in any way. Rather, he had courage to do what was needed in the face of human fear and confusion. He opened a door. Many beings were able to walk through that door; others were not yet ready. Perhaps they needed to experience that depth of shame and look deeply into the shadow within themselves before they were ready to express the light. Herein is his willingness to die, without blaming others but having already offered forgiveness and asked forgiveness. He offered his own life as witness to the inner divinity of every being.

So many of those who opposed him were amongst the most shaken by his death, for they saw that this direct expression of divinity which had walked amongst them now had ceased, and that they would have to work harder to uncover that divinity in

themselves. They saw the terrible loss. Thus many who had opposed him came to mourn him when he had died.

I have known many great teachers in my lifetimes and I am grateful for what each of them taught me. But I have special love for this one, for this man known as Jesus, for it is he who truly taught me that I am divine, that there is that of the divine in everything. He awakened that knowledge in me. I hope my stories will more deeply awaken that awareness in each of you. You do not need his physical presence. This divine energy is everywhere. If you cannot see it in yourself, turn and look at your neighbor. Each being has the ability to reflect that divinity, but to reflect it, you must first know it in yourself. And you must open your eyes in order to see it. And then you must have the loving courage to make the choice to enact that goodness in the world, even though fear, pain, greed or anger are present. In this way you honor him and what he came to teach.

When he said, "The way to the divine is only through me," he did not mean only through his personal, living human presence. To what does "me" refer? Not specifically to Jesus the man but to this Divinity which he carried, which each of us carries. The path to the divine is through this Christ Consciousness or Buddha Nature and the revelation of it in oneself. Coming to know that divine essence of the self, you are forever changed. Your negative thoughts and emotions do not cease just *snap!* suddenly. But they begin to lose their power. Each time you say no to the negativity that has arisen in you, you plant a new seed, begin a new karmic path, enhancing the way of kindness and love, and leaving behind fear.

I wish to each of you all the joy and beauty and wonder of this path. Each of you is a vehicle for the divine to express on the earth plane. If I might use a metaphor, the sun cannot come down onto the Earth and touch the Earth with its heat and light. If the sun collided with the Earth it would destroy the Earth. The sun must manifest its energy from afar. It needs some kind of vehicle to express its power and so it moves its energy through the atmosphere as warmth and light. Each of you is such an expression of the divine, of the highest and most beautiful in the universe. Each of you has the opportunity to bring that true nature into expression on the earth plane, and because each of you is unique, each of you does it in your own way. In this way, you bring light where there is darkness, love where there has been fear.

I thank you for your presence and for allowing me to share these thoughts with you. It always gives me so much joy to speak about this Master and the memories I have of that lifetime. That is all.

**C:** Through the stories Aaron has told us, Jesus has become much, much more clear to me in this lifetime. As he has spoken this evening, Jesus taught through awakening the divine nature in those who experienced him. These stories do help to awaken our divine nature simply by hearing them, hearing the stories.

I wonder if Aaron has any thoughts about other ways of calling to Jesus, of connecting to that divine nature in the one who is still Jesus, which I understand is also simply calling to our own divine nature. I'm asking for Aaron's words. I wonder if he understands my question.

**Aaron:** I am Aaron. First, in metaphysical terms, this being is of the highest sixth density, and would be able to move into seventh density if he so chose. From this density he would no longer be available directly to beings. Seventh density energy, of course, doesn't go anywhere. It simply becomes the drop of water feeding back into the sea, and informs the sea. If you put one drop of blue water into a clear bowl, all the water becomes touched by that blueness. If it is a very large and powerful drop of blue water, it can have a tremendous effect on the water of the entire vessel. His loving energy moving into seventh density would certainly touch all beings, but no longer in a personal way. For this reason, he has made the choice to remain in sixth density and thus available.

Other great masters also remain available, such as the one known as the Buddha. Each of you reverberates most closely to certain masters more than others, beings who have touched you most directly in past lives. So you must turn to the master with whom your energy most resonates and pray to him or her for help, help in expressing most clearly your own pure awareness self, your own clearest and purest essence. You do not have to experience the master consciously. Some of you may, others won't. But I promise you that if you ask, the guidance will come to you in some form or another. And always it is the doing of these great beings. Your asking opens the doorway. You always have free will. You ask for the door to be opened. Then you have the free will choice to step through or not to step through. They hold open the doors. But you must ask.

In the asking you strengthen the part of you that aspires to goodness, purity and love but you must be very careful not to create a duality that feels shame for the shadow aspects of the self. You must embrace everything. No teaching of love can be enhanced when any one part of the expression is touched with hatred or shame. So you must open your heart fully to everything in yourself. This is the difficult practice, to deeply embrace even that which seems unembraceable. You embrace it with compassion and make the promise not to enact that negativity in the world but to move beyond it and cut your self-identity with it. When you seek to do this, these great masters will always be present and ready to help as will your own guides.

My deepest love to each of you. Please remember him as you celebrate his birth, and feel Love with you, always. That is all.

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# Deep Spring Publications

## NEWSLETTER

**Deep Spring Center for Meditation and Spiritual Inquiry Newsletter:** 8 ½ x 11, stapled, 20 pages

The newsletter, published three times a year, is offered on a donation basis. Our cost to print and mail this to you is \$7/year (\$10 Canadian).

## BOOKS

*We offer books at our cost, including mailing. All our books are 8 ½ x 11 and Cerlox bound.*

**Aaron:** 1995 expanded edition, 123 pages. Includes many new chapters and a new format. \$10 (\$14 Canadian)

This is a basic book of Aaron's teachings, with selections taken from the most frequently asked questions: Who are we? Why are we incarnate? How can we best do the work we came to do? How can we live our lives with more wisdom and love?

**Christmas Stories, A Collection of Memories from Aaron:** Newly updated, 97 pages. \$6 (\$8 Canadian)

Aaron's inspiring memories from the past life in which he was a "simple shepherd" who knew and loved that teacher we call Jesus. Each year at Christmas Aaron has shared memories with us as "teaching stories."

**No Chain at All:** 150 pages. \$12 (\$15 Canadian)

This is very much the heart of what Aaron's been teaching. While you can just read through it, the book is really a workbook which invites your participation. To quote Aaron, *"I find the expression of this law of dependent origination to be one of Buddhism's most valuable contributions to the planet. It is called 'The Chain of Becoming.' Teachings speak of the way we have each become caught in this chain, moving blindly from one incarnation to another, never able to find freedom from suffering. This is real, on one plane. Yet on another level, there is no **chain at all**, nor has there ever been. You are free. You have always been free. In the coming months we will explore these truths and come to see that they are not contradictory ..."*

**The Path of Natural Light, Parts 1 and 2:** Part 1, 224 pages. Part 2, 230 pages. \$14 each part (\$20 Canadian)

These are **complete** transcripts of the 1993-1994 Wednesday night classes on relative versus ultimate reality, and light/energy work. From the book: *"I see our work then as finding that balance between relative and ultimate—the horizontal plane of healing and the vertical plane of knowing there was never anybody that needed to heal. With wisdom and pure awareness, that sense of self dissolves ... the whole notion of fragmentation was an illusion, but it is the illusion of the relative reality, and the suffering*

*within that illusion must be attended. The human manifestation needs healing ... In past months we have been discussing the light body, the perfect, unwrinkled sheet of paper, the illusory wrinkles and how the physical, emotional and mental bodies reflect those wrinkles ... We move ahead with this caution: what I teach is not escape from your humanness, but deeper embracing of that humanness, wrinkles and all ... again, I remind you, you are not getting rid of. There was nothing there to get rid of. Rather, you are freeing yourself of the delusion that there was something that needed to be gotten rid of."*

**Seven Days: A Journey Into Awareness, Days One to Three, Part One:** 105 pages. \$9 (\$12 Canadian)

There have been many requests for a book from Aaron about meditation. This book offers in-depth material on meditation practice with specific "how to" instruction. In November 1996, Barbara and Aaron offered a three day workshop/retreat in Mexico City. In April 1997 they returned to lead a four day silent residential meditation retreat. This book contains the transcripts of all of the talks and instruction, offered by both Aaron and Barbara, during the first three of those seven days. The first days deal more with spiritual inquiry and basic instruction in vipassana or insight meditation. There is a progressive deepening of instruction. There is also considerable discussion of working with heavy emotions and the various painful catalysts of our lives, with specific instruction offered for meditation with heavy mind states, resistance, restlessness, physical pain and other difficult states of mind and body. "Days One to Three" is the November workshop. "Days Three to Seven," the April retreat, will be available later.

**The Awakened Heart:** 147 pages. \$12 (\$15 Canadian)

Approximately 1300 years ago, the Buddhist Indian monk/poet Shantideva wrote "The Way of the Bodhisattva," elucidating an important part of the Buddhist path. "The Awakened Heart" is not commentary on the poem, but uses it as background. In Aaron's words: *"For many years you have heard me talk about making space for the heavy emotions. A primary emphasis of my teaching has been that it is not bad to feel emotions, that when certain conditions are present, certain emotions will arise ... I teach people to make more space around the emotion ... If you don't want those emotions to arise you must begin to look deeply at the conditions out of which they arise, primarily the conditions of fear, of the illusion of separation—separation from other beings, separation from the divine ... Through a series of practices and exercises, one could more deeply open to that highest aspect of the self which does not choose to invite in the conditions which give rise to such painful emotion. This is not a 'getting rid of' anything, rather we note that side by side there is the tense and frightened human and there is the innately loving, open-hearted human. You have a choice: you can enact your fear or you can choose to note your fear, to observe that the loving Awakened Heart is always present, to nurture it, and to enact that loving heart. You always have a choice."*