

## A Time for Heroes

*Pamela Gray:* It is wonderful to be together on this auspicious New Year 2023. Last night and today, around the world, wishes of good health and good luck have been toasted with hopes of a year of peace and prosperity, but for many people it's clouded with uncertainty. Well, how great to gather today and sound a different tone! A tone of assurance and trust. I asked Chris Foster if I could read a poem of his that speaks to the current world situation, but more importantly, it speaks to our responsibility to shine the light of assurance and trust. I invite you, as I'm reading the poem, to join in a vibration of love throughout the world.

### A Time for Heroes

It's not an ordinary time.  
Not an ordinary time at all.  
It's a time for heroes  
Those who can face facts  
Though they sear like a red hot iron  
From the heart of a Pittsburgh furnace.  
Come close you who dare but unless there are  
    some who do come close  
What hope, oh world? What hope ye lands and  
    seas and inhabitants thereof?  
All will disintegrate,  
All will be gone.  
"Business as usual," is the cry of most.  
As they draw the blinkers more tightly  
Around their eyes,  
Shielding themselves as best they may  
From the heat of the flame,  
Clinging desperately to whatever remains  
Of the familiar world  
Of yesteryear  
Of yesterday.  
Others see the doom that's at hand-  
You don't really have to be a detective-  
But they pour out their life force in protest  
And protest is a deceitful god  
That sucks dry the blood of the people  
And at the end of the day  
Is silent  
And helpless  
As Baal was silent and helpless.  
The infamy has already been wrought

The damage has already been done  
 The evils already are here  
 Hunger and inflation and plutonium and a  
     thousand more  
 Spawn of human arrogance and selfishness and  
     fear...  
 The world as we know it cannot survive them  
 And will not survive them.

All this the hero sees  
 But he sees something else also  
 A way  
 A way through the inferno  
 A way through the desert  
 A way through famine and pestilence, war and  
     earthquakes  
 A hero's way  
 Not a way of survival  
 But a way of life  
 A way of strength and effectiveness  
 A way of assurance  
 A way of calm  
 Born of his unwavering love, for the One who still  
 Even in these turbulent times  
 Especially in these turbulent times  
 Is Lord of Heaven and Earth.

The hero goes quietly to work  
 Needing no chariot  
 No spear  
 No audience  
 No praise  
 No reward.  
 His arena is the circumstance where we are  
 And into that arena we pour ourselves  
 And our own indomitable spirits  
 The building block of a new order.  
 A true order  
 A spiritual order.  
 The old world crumbles under the pressure of  
     what we bring.  
 And out of the confusion and darkness  
 A new world appears  
 Filled with magic and light.

We bring light! Assurance is known in one's own conscious divine presence. And trust is its revelation in all we do, outwardly and inwardly. This is the difference between hope and

trust. Hope is disconnected from oneself—the self with the small “s”—and things happen beyond one's control. In that experience, there is no connection with one's true Self and the world at large—let alone accepting responsibility or stewardship for it.

The United Nations Secretary-General, António Guterres, in his opening remarks at a conference on Biodiversity said, “Humanity has become a weapon of mass extinction.” He goes on to say that we are out of harmony with nature, and playing a different song, “a cacophony of chaos that’s played with instruments of destruction.” That’s an accurate description of the self-centered, self-serving human nature state. As a result, the kingdoms of this world suffer.

Our responsibility, and what we invite this New Year cycle, is to sound the true tone of life in harmony with the cycle of spiritual integration. For me this means cherishing to the core of my being the reality of love and truth. This body temple of mine is an instrument of peace and praise for our creator.

Chris referred to a daring stance. We dare to own stewardship for every aspect of this precious earth. Stewardship happens in consciousness by seeing people and the world as whole. Active divine presence brings light to the world and sends a wave of assurance and trust everywhere.

**Bill Bahan:** As we become aware of our spiritual reality through the expression of our own true spirit, we realize we’ve been given a commission that is undeniable. We also become aware of the fact that a creative process is unfolding and that we have been drawn together to play our part along with many others. There’s no need to try and figure out ahead of time how everything is working out. We discover what’s working out as we continue in the process.

In the past few years Linda and I have connected with quite a few people that we hadn’t seen in a few decades, including many on this teleconference. We are aware of a strong compulsion in these days to come together and to acknowledge our shared purpose. There’s a great sense of joy in what we’re doing because it’s all based in our love for the truth. Whenever love is in expression there is always joy. If our experience ever seems like a heavy burden then it is simply evidence of the fact that we have forgotten our first love.

I appreciate Chris’ wonderful poem, *A Time for Heroes*, that was so beautifully read by Pamela. I looked up the definition of the word “hero.” There are several definitions and here’s the first one listed in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary: “Hero—a mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability.” As I read this, I immediately thought of the man, Jesus. In the Christian religion Jesus has been worshipped as a hero, a legendary figure of divine descent endowed with great strength and ability. No doubt

we all remember the film and the Broadway musical, “Jesus Christ Superstar,” that first came out back in the 70s. I can still hear the “Superstar” song in my head which is quite a catchy tune.

We realize that the Master’s presence on earth set in motion a cycle of restoration in which we are now engaged that includes the whole body of mankind. He was here two thousand years ago but we’re living in a time for heroes right now. We are aware of the fact that we are also of divine descent and it isn’t only this one man named Jesus who carries this distinction. The Master said, “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.” (John 14:12) Those who call themselves Christians have gotten hung up on the word “believe,” as if all we need to do is subscribe to a set of beliefs and hopefully when we die we’ll go to heaven—whatever needs to happen to bring a new state on earth is entirely God’s responsibility. We know this isn’t how it works!

Linda and I received a Christmas card from a lovely woman in upstate New York with whom she used to work many years ago. The verse on the card read, “Christmas reminds us that wonderful things can happen as long as we believe.” The word “believe” means “to accept something as true, genuine, or real.” It can also mean “to hold something dear.” Therefore, the Master was saying, “If you accept what I have revealed to you as being true, genuine and real and you hold it dear then you can reveal this same quality of spirit.”

It’s remarkable when we look at the influence this one man has had on the world over all these years. We can see how a collective body of individuals letting their lights shine can do the greater works of which the Master spoke. He never tried to set himself apart as the superhero that Christians have built him up to be. According to the written record of the Master’s words he never gave anyone an excuse for not exemplifying the same quality of spirit that he exemplified. The excuses were added later by the crafters of Christian doctrine who distorted the story of the Master’s life and his teachings for their own devious purposes.

Recently I received a handwritten letter in the mail from a woman who identified herself as a Jehovah’s Witness. I was surprised to receive this personal letter since the Jehovah’s Witnesses used to come knocking on our front door. I’d like to read a portion of her brief letter. She says: “Dear William, Surely you can agree that we live in a world filled with suffering. Crime, violence, wars, disasters, sickness and death surround us. It is comforting to know that God cares and will soon act to restore true peace and security to earth. Enclosed is a Bible based tract that discusses this matter and explains why we can be confident of God’s intervention. Sincerely, Dana.” I appreciate her sincerity and desire to offer comfort but I’m not sure how God is going to act soon without *me* taking some responsibility for it.

We understand that the angels of heaven, you and me and many others, have incarnated on earth to let the kingdom of heaven be revealed now by reason of our presence. We know there is no other way by which the kingdom comes. Isn't it great to be on earth at this particular time to bring the radiance of our spirit into all situations and to all who are in our world. Here is the power of love that is bringing the experience of transformation right now. I'm delighted to share this time with all of you today as we welcome this New Year with joy.

**Linda Bahan:** Warm greetings to all of you from Atlanta on this New Year's Day! This is a day in which many people are filled with hope that the future holds better tomorrows. Looking at the state of human affairs in a larger context, we have to admit that for the most part it is a sorry mess. This sorry mess is aptly described in these two lines from Chris' poem, *A Time for Heroes*.

“Hunger and inflation and plutonium and a thousand more  
Spawn of human arrogance and selfishness and fear...”

This is the harsh reality of the human condition, caused by what we refer to as human nature. When we accept our true identity as angels incarnate here on earth, we have the responsibility to simply let this mess pass away.

Bill spoke about how we have been drawn together to play our parts, along with many others, in the creative process which is unfolding today. We gather on occasions such as this to commune together. In the spirit of communion, I would like to share these words spoken by Martin Exeter on May 29, 1983, *The House of Communion*:

“Prayer relates to this matter of communion with God. The effect of communion with God is the experience of being part of the body. Communion: the House of Prayer. Communion with God and communion with each other in the Body of God. Here is the natural experience for human beings, the way by which the creative processes may work as they should. We all have had our excuses for not letting this happen.

“The point is: The House of Prayer, communion with the One whose house it is, that there may not only be an initial awakening to the beauty and the wonder and the glory of that One but to allow that beauty and wonder and glory to intensify in one's own experience and expression of living. When it does, the Tone of Life sounds so loudly that all this stuff in the hog trough—what does it mean anymore? It just simply is dissolved, once there is that strong

awareness of the creative sounding of the Tone of Life: this beautiful, wonderful, glorious outpouring of spirit.

“And if some memory out of the past is triggered, so that something comes up, it just simply doesn’t fit with your character, your nature; you couldn’t accept it; it just drains away. You don’t have to fight with it—perfect love casts out fear. That’s true when there is the experience of the outpouring of that spirit in living. There are those who might say, “Well, I’m stuck with my earthly heredity.” Who isn’t? Jesus had just as much earthly heredity as anybody else. We all have it, but why make such a big deal out of it?

“We know something about this as it relates to these appalling childhoods that we had. I think it’s about time that everyone started to give thanks for whatever happened—everything—because it brought us to this moment. And who can say that if something had been left out, we would be here in this moment and be capable and ready to let the light shine, to dissolve all that nonsensical murk? It has no weight except the weight that we ourselves give it. There’s only one thing that makes a difference and that is to let the light shine. If you are totally occupied with allowing the sun to shine, that’s what you know: the shining of the sun.”

A few weeks before Christmas while I was waiting in the reception area of the hair salon, one of the employees at the salon gave me a Christmas card which I opened immediately. The outside of the card read simply, “Wishing you Joy.” Her personal message began with these words: “Linda, Thank you so much for your kindness, you are always a ray of sunshine!” I was deeply moved by her words, seeing as we don’t often interact directly because she is not my hairstylist. A few moments later she walked by again and I thanked her for her touching words. She opened up about her observation that I greet each person by their name and always have a cheerful attitude. She also commented on how a simple smile seems to be so rare these days. This experience reminded me that when we live in the sunshine, our rays have enormous impact through the simplest of gestures.

One of many circumstances ahead of me this year was announced in the mail a few days ago: a summons to report for jury duty at the end of January. For most people, one summons and experience of this nature is quite enough. However, this will be the third time in three years that I have been called for jury duty. You might say I was a little surprised by what appears to be a new vocation for me! No doubt this will provide another golden opportunity to spread a ray of sunshine in this now somewhat familiar setting.

In closing I would like to read a couple of verses from the song, *Awake! Arise*, written by Lloyd A. Meeker and contained in the book, “Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving:”

The house of God is in the earth today  
 Let men look up and see His perfect way.  
 As through our lives we let the truth shine bright  
 Our yoke is easy and our burden light.

With joyful hearts we praise the King of Kings  
 The Giver and Receiver of all things  
 And gather from each field what Love hath sown  
 The harvest of all hearts unto His throne.

*John Gray:* Thank you, Pamela, Bill, and Linda. As Bill mentioned earlier, there's a strong compulsion to come together. I think we'd all acknowledge this compulsion to be together, but what is it? In our most quiet and tranquil inner condition, what do we sense is the nature of this compulsion? As we feel it deeply, it becomes more and more familiar until we know it to actually be ourselves.

Today is New Year's Day 2023—according to the Gregorian calendar, anyway. Of course, in every moment, Planet Earth is both completing and beginning a revolution around the sun, right? So, it's always Happy New Year! Lots of people compose resolutions this time of year about things they intend to do or not do during the coming terrestrial cycle. A minority even keep them. Such self-improvements can have their value and benefit, but only to the extent that they serve a purpose larger than the strictly personal.

At the moment I'm thinking of the word *resolution* in another sense. According to my online dictionary, one meaning of the word is, “the degree of detail visible in a photographic or television image, such as in *a high resolution monitor*.” In this sense, resolution is about sharpness and clarity of vision.

The constantly emerging new heaven—the finer realms of creation—are resolving into sharper focus every moment. The essences of the new heaven have been here all along, but most people have been in the dark. Some 2000 years ago the greatest One for our world pierced the darkness by his illuminating presence and that light has shone without ceasing ever since. Especially in recent decades, it has intensified and been amplified by the spiritual expression of many people who, at least to some extent, knew and know themselves as transcendent beings in human forms.

All that has gone on throughout the history and prehistory of humanity is in the process of resolving. An essential part of this resolution involves the passing of the old—the making

right again of the effects of millennia of errant ways—but I see the coming of the new as the vastly predominant aspect of what's happening.

“Behold, I make all things new.” (Rev. 21:5) Behold: *see!* Let's resolve to so live that our clarity and sharpness of vision increase. Thus we ever more accurately see and participate in the creative process that is constantly making all things new in our hearts and before our eyes. Being emissaries of divine light, we see and know these things.

The context of the proclamation, “Behold, I make all things new” is found in the first five verses of the 21st chapter of Revelation:

“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

“And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

“And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

“And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

“And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.”

This is a time for heroes. Ours is not a mission to accept, it's a compulsion to live by. To conclude, I'll re-read the closing stanza of Chris Foster's poem:

The hero goes quietly to work  
 Needing no chariot  
 No spear  
 No audience  
 No praise  
 No reward.  
 His arena is the circumstance where we are  
 And into that arena we pour ourselves  
 And our own indomitable spirits  
 The building block of a new order.  
 A true order  
 A spiritual order.  
 The old world crumbles under the pressure of  
     what we bring.  
 And out of the confusion and darkness  
 A new world appears  
 Filled with magic and light.



Thank you, Chris Foster! This is indeed a time for heroes.

### Following Comments...

*John Gray:* Chris, we've heard your voice today through your poetic words written some time ago. If you would like to add something now, please do.

*Chris Foster:* Thank you John. I love these words, "Behold, I make all things new." It's an opportunity that is available to all of us in each moment, isn't it, whether it's something seemingly trivial and small, or whether it's something important. How wonderful it is that the Law works, and most of all, that our own lives can be made new in each moment. I'm very happy that I was able to play a part in this time together, along with Pam, who did such a beautiful job reading my poem, and yourself. My blessings to each one who has shared in this gathering today.

*John Gray:* Thank you Chris. You have blessed us all, and for a long time! The creative apex of the world transformation that is occurring is led by those who accept, assume, and personally let in the One who sits upon the throne, the One who says, "Behold, I make all things new." We know what is truly transpiring in these days because we welcome and accommodate its coming in our own minds and hearts and bodies.

*January 1, 2023*

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### Pre-Service Music

*Gott ist mein Hirt, D. 706* (Psalm 23: The Lord is My Shepherd)

Composed by Franz Schubert and performed by Raphaël Pichon & Pygmalion

### Concluding Music

*Auld Lang Syne*

Traditional performed by James Taylor