



An Easter Message  
from Michael Tamura

Dear Friends, Family, and Awakening Souls,

Last night, I fell asleep to a beautiful, “three-days till Easter” night in Mount Shasta. This morning, I awoke to a stunning White Christmas, still in Mount Shasta. Did someone rewind the seasons in the middle of the night or did I mix-up my Holy Days? Rumor had it that Winter was supposed to finish before Spring arrives. Yet, you never know. A foot and a half of sparkling snow covered everything in sight after a couple days of brilliant yellow sun bathing verdant new shoots. You close your eyes for a few moments and it’s all different. Who knows? We may time travel soon or commute between our alternate universes. We live in Mount Shasta, after all, where anything can happen - anytime.

The great thing about the weather here, however, is that it keeps us on our toes - or, in our snow boots. Either way, it helps us wake up! And, stay awake. B-r-r-r-r! I just hope that the Easter Bunny didn’t freeze his nice, fluffy Easter Bunny buns! Which brings up the question: Is the Easter Bunny a he or a she?

I understand that the word “Easter” comes from the name of the Saxon fertility goddess of the dawn and of Spring, Oestre. Bringer of Spring, she’s responsible for making the days longer and warmer after the long chill of Winter. Called Ostara in Germany, it is said, that she had a passion for the birthing of new life.

The story I like about how the Easter Bunny made *his* first appearance relates to Ostara arriving a little late one year, delaying the warmth of Spring. Upon her arrival, she finds a dying bird whose wings had been frozen by the late thaw. Guilty, she saved the bird’s life - and, made him her lover. Having compassion for him that he could no longer fly, she turned him into a snow hare with remarkable speed so that hunters would not be able to catch him. Then, in honor of him having been a bird before, she gave him the ability to lay eggs as well. (This probably wasn’t the first instance of transgender trans-species transformation among ancient gods and goddesses, either!) And, naturally, the eggs he could lay were multi-colored ones!

Well, it seems that all good things must come to an end in these *goddess meets half-frozen bird, goddess falls for half-frozen bird, goddess turns bird into rainbow-colored-eggs-laying snow hare* stories. So, somehow the hare-formerly-known-as-a-bird manages to anger the goddess enough that she casts him up into the skies where, to

this day, he remains the constellation, Lepus, the hare, to hop around under the feet of Orion, the hunter. (These gods and goddesses need some lessons in forgiveness, it seems). She allowed him to come down to earth once every year and only to give away his colorful eggs to children attending the Ostara festivals held each year. In Germany, he is known as the Osterhase.

I suppose I thought of Ostara since I'm preparing for my next big trip to Germany and Switzerland in May. During which, curiously enough, one of my seminar events will be held at the Resurrection Church in Ueberlingen. A beautiful place right on the shores of the Bodensee, by the way.

When I travel, it's never just about going somewhere for x-number of days, doing something, and returning home. It's much more like reincarnation, death, and a resurrection. It's like going to sleep in the Spring and awakening the next morning to find yourself in the dead of Winter. We die in one place believing we're an independent adult, for example, and then we're reborn as a dependent baby somewhere else. No wonder many of us scream "bloody murder" right after we're so rudely yanked out of our comfort zone in our mother's belly. "Hey, what do you think you're doing? I was in the middle of a sweet dream. Don't you know I ruled an empire before? Put me down right now!"

In a way, you could say that we reincarnate to practice learning how to not hang on to our past. It's very humbling, for instance, to go from being a well-respected leader to an 8-pound "bundle of joy" who no one quite understands. Sooner or later we learn that there's really not much room for all the "shoulda, coulda, wouldas" that we tend to do. As soon as we step into a new incarnation, we're in a different universe. It's like that when I step foot into a new place, especially a country and a culture I haven't experienced before. And, the more different it is, the better. Who I was and how I did things before often go right out the window. Step across the cultural line and I'm a newborn baby.

Then, another thing begins to happen. Even though this body doesn't recognize the foreign place, the people, or the culture, I do. Memories begin to surface of another time, of another life in this place, with these people. For a while, I live with one foot in this life, one foot in the other. Sooner or later, however, every lifetime comes to an end. Again, it's the practice of letting go. Letting go of the horrible times and letting go of the great times. We develop our ability to forgive: Loving ourselves as we are, regardless. We wake up to the never-changing, ever-lasting, limitless life that we have within us. And, if we make the choice to live that life now, we resurrect the Christ and start living the miracle. That's always my return trip home.

For many of us, Easter signifies resurrection: "rising from the dead." In terms of nature's seasonal cycles, we could say that Spring is a kind of resurrection: Life raising itself up from the death of Winter. In Christianity, resurrection refers to the good news that "Christ has arisen." Yet, I have to ask, "If Christ is infinite, ever-present, eternal, and immortal, then, from what death is the Christ arising?"

This is the kind of question that keeps me awake at night. It helps keep me awake during the day as well. As it should, since the birthing of the Christ is about waking up to that which was never born and will never die. Christ is eternal, everywhere, all of the time. It is we who become so distracted and tangled up in all the perceptions and the images in our mind that we forget that the Christ, the Oneness, always is. So, first, we need to wake ourselves up to that undivided reality. Commemorating Christmas as Christ's birth as Jesus, the Nazarene, serves as a reminder for us to wake up.

Just because we awaken doesn't guarantee that we will stay awake. At first, we are like newborn babies: we awaken for a short while, then, fall asleep again. As we develop our bodies and mature, we are able to stay awake longer and longer. But, this kind of wakefulness is being more attentive to the world around us. In many ways, the more we become invested in the world, the more we fall asleep to spirit, the Christ. So, when we birth the Christ, we are waking up to our true inner reality: That which has no beginning and no ending.

Each time we awaken more to the Christ, the undivided eternal life, the next step that awaits us is for us to learn to live that eternal life. When we do, we come to the end of reincarnation, the experience of living many, different, and separate lives. In awakening, we become aware that all of our incarnations, in fact, all of everyone's incarnations, is truly one life. When we start living that awareness, we begin to resurrect the Christ.

Jesus became aware and declared, "I am the truth, the way, and the life." He lived the miracle. And, he celebrated his resurrection, saying, "In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer for I have overcome the world."

Now, it's our turn.

Happy Easter!

With my deepest gratitude, appreciation, and love,

Michael

