

## 2018 Will and Atomic Energy

Will is the 5<sup>th</sup> power we've talked about this summer so we are not quite half way through the powers. But if you've been here for several of the powers you are beginning to see at least a few things. One, the spiritual power can show up very differently influenced by our humanity. Second, we have some ideas about what a power means that are founded on the erroneous human expression and it may confuse us about how we can access the spiritual power. Third, this is just all speculation. The metaphor I use for the spiritual powers is a beam of white light passing through a prism and being split into the rainbow colors. You can see that; measure the wavelengths of the light colors; and repeat the experiment over and over. We can't dissect out our spiritual powers and examine or measure them. Spirituality often defies language so it is challenging to talk about the spiritual powers. Yet, on our spiritual journey, we do experience what feels like these powers and it makes sense that a divine power, like white light, might express differently in us in different situations. So let's engage in our exploration of the power of will.

First I want to point out that in the dictionary there is the word willpower. It is one word, not two. It means *to exert control to do something or control some impulse*. This is often how we think of the power of will—our control. Control feels like more a function of ego. Ego likes to be in control and panics when we are not in control of the environment around us. Our Spirit self, however, doesn't see a need for "control" or "power over" something. When Jesus calmed the stormy sea there was no wrestling match with the gods of thunder or with Satan, just calling forth the peace that was already present and that was present within him. "Peace, be still."

In the Revealing Word dictionary, Charles Fillmore says that will is "the executive faculty of the mind, the determining factor in man. What man wills or decrees comes to pass in his experience." "The will may be said to be the man, because it is the directive power that determines character formation. When man wills to do the will of God, he exercises his individual will in wisdom, love, and spiritual understanding; he builds spiritual character." "All thoughts that go in and out of man's consciousness pass the gate at which sits the will." So will is like the steering wheel of our consciousness. It is that pivot point that aligns our consciousness and therefore our thoughts and actions, with our Spirit Self or the I AM or aligns our consciousness with the sense consciousness and ego self.

I want you to have that image of a pivot point in mind because it is the essence of what we refer to as “free will”. In the Garden of Eden or in the very beginning it was established that this new creation of reflective beings had free will to direct their own actions. It’s easy to blame the snake. We have a lot of snakes we point our fingers at and yet, we are the final arbiter of our choices.

That pivot point is the point of conversation when Fillmore says, “When man wills to do the will of God”. Jesus contemplated whether or not that will was the same thing in the Garden of Gethsemane. “Not my will but thy will be done.” This is not surrendering his will but aligning it with the Spiritual Source of the powerful I AM. That is where our true power comes from—in alignment with the ONE. Willpower or control only gets us temporary results in a temporary world. So our affirmation of Will expressing through us begins with openness. For DIVINE WILL, not willpower, to express through me I must be open to pivoting my will into alignment with the I AM and open to having that direction revealed to me. Sometimes it is difficult to see the direction we need to go. I remember one evening, I’d only had my driver’s license a couple months and I got caught in the worst fog. No lights because I was out in the country. It was not going to lift til morning and the only way out was to drive. I finally discovered that on that back road I could see grass at the edge of the road. I was reduced to going slowly enough to just keep following the edge of grass til I got home. Sometimes staying open is like that; one tiny step at a time until you can see where Spirit directs you.

The second expression of Will is direction. Remember the pivot point, the gate to all our thoughts. The power of Will sets the direction of our focus, the direction of our efforts, the character of our being. Because we have free will, there is no guarantee that our will chooses direction in alignment with the I AM. Paul demonstrated that as well as anyone in the Bible. He began with a passion to destroy the fledgling group of people following the teachings of this man Jesus but his will was turned. Acts chapter 9 describes it this way: “Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. Now as he was going along and approaching Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” He asked, “Who are you, Lord?” The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.”

That blinding light event is what I would call a “galvanizing event”. It set the will of Saul into a new direction and in that transformation he was called Paul. The word “galvanizing” kept repeating in my mind so I had to look it up. It is a process to set and protect steel. Steel is pretty unbending. And then there is another meaning: to cause a force that is capable of causing change to become active. That is what happened to Saul. And this is where we come to our exploration of the history of atomic energy.

You may think that the early discoveries about atomic energy came from this country but that is not so. The earliest study of the energy and power of atoms was in Germany and France beginning around 1895 and becoming more active around 1930's. Names like Wilhelm Rontgen, Pierre and Marie Curie, Ernest Rutherford, Enrico Fermi and Neils Bohr. Beginning around 1909 there was also the establishment of the St. Petersburg Academy of Science in Russia which continued it's own work. World War I and Germany's invasion of Russia turned most of their research towards creating a bomb. In England, meantime, a group of scientists displaced by the war called the MAUD Committee, also were working on military applications. Most of the work was in secret. In July of 1941 the MAUD Committee published two summary reports. One was on 'Use of Uranium for a Bomb' and the other was on 'Use of Uranium as a Source of Power'.

December 7, 1941 Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and the United States entered World War II. It was the galvanizing event for directing the will of the United States related to atomic energy. According to the World Nuclear Energy page on history, “The huge resources of the USA were then applied without reservation to developing atomic bombs.” The first atomic device tested successfully at Alamogordo, New Mexico on July 16, 1945. The first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. Tomorrow will be the 73<sup>rd</sup> anniversary. I wasn't even aware of that when I arranged this series. The second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on August 9. On August 10, 1945 the Japanese Government surrendered.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor activated a powerful wave of fear, anger and a feeling of desperate survival that turned the pivot point of our intellectual research of atomic energy towards the very human objective of destruction. It activated the concentration of our will into the narrowest possible channel. Our will was turned to annihilate the enemy, which included an estimated 225,000 innocent people living their everyday lives in Japan. The chaos was so overwhelming it is difficult to get reliable counts.

I don't think anyone had an accurate estimate of the effects of the bombs prior to using them. We didn't have the resources to both test and use the bombs.

Seeing the effects of the bombs, previously unknown, produced a second event, less galvanizing in my opinion than Pearl Harbor. It would turn the pivot of research and intellectual effort, if not entirely at least predominately towards a peaceful use for atomic energy. In the course of developing nuclear weapons the Soviet Union and the West had acquired a range of new technologies and scientists realized that the tremendous heat produced in the process could be tapped either for direct use or for generating electricity. It was also clear that this new form of energy would allow development of compact long-lasting power sources which could have various applications, not least for shipping, and especially in submarines. In 1953 President Eisenhower proposed his "Atoms for Peace" program, which reoriented significant research effort towards electricity generation and set the course for civil nuclear energy development in the USA. In the Soviet Union, work was under way at various centers to refine existing reactor designs and develop new ones. The Institute of Physics and Power Engineering (FEI) was set up in May 1946 to develop nuclear power technology.

The symbol for the International Atomic Energy Agency has a schematic of an atom encircled by olive branches, a symbol of peace. We have not abandoned the use of nuclear energy for destruction. Currently it is believed nine countries possess about 15,000 nuclear weapons: Russia, the United States, China, India, Israel, France, North Korea, Pakistan and the United Kingdom. Iran remains a wild card. Of those, according to the Ploughshares Fund, a global security foundation, Russia possesses 1,790 *operational* weapons and the US possesses 1,750 *operational* weapons. India, China, Israel and Pakistan have 0 *operational* weapons.

When I work with our youth on the power of Will, I encourage them to affirm, "God is my compass". A compass, when it works correctly, will always point to true North. It allows us to navigate wherever we want to go. It would be nice if the power of Will would simply always point us in the direction of Spiritual alignment. The free will of our humanity can blur that direction. Do we have the presence of mind or more accurately, the mind of presence, to open ourselves and seek alignment in prayer when times are challenging and confusing? Jesus went to the Garden at the most tumultuous time in his life. His human mind intuitively sought the Divine Presence to reveal his direction to move forward.

No matter how difficult it might have seemed to let go of human attachments at that point, Jesus words and actions were concentrated in the direction of living a truth of eternal life, not bound by the limits of his current physicality.

As I look at the path of history, it might seem that just a couple tweaks of the pivot of will could have produced a vastly different world today. The Civil War was a galvanizing event, activating a force of change that might have produced a country committed to freedom, reconciliation and equality. Instead, Andrew Johnson became president after the assassination of Lincoln and historians for the most part now agree we could not have had anyone worse for the country. I quote from the Miller Center at the University of Virginia: “Because of his gross incompetence in federal office and his incredible miscalculation of the extent of public support for his policies, Johnson is judged as a great failure in making a satisfying and just peace. He is viewed to have been a rigid, dictatorial racist who was unable to compromise or to accept a political reality at odds with his own ideas. Johnson's strong commitment to obstructing political and civil rights for blacks is principally responsible for the failure of Reconstruction to solve the race problem in the South and perhaps in America as well.” We continue to endure the effects of Johnson’s leadership and the institutionalization of segregation and marginalization of minorities that followed the end of the Civil War. The bombing of Japan with nuclear weapons was a galvanizing event, activating a force of change that might have produced a country committed to peace and abstinence from the destructive power of nuclear weapons. Instead, we continue to struggle with a nuclear arms race in our world and the great uncertainty of the potential for destruction of our planet.

And yet, the possibilities of peace and equality remain. We have people who can see the possibilities and who are willing to live into those possibilities. There are people whose will is turned towards justice, compassion and constructive, healing and creative uses for nuclear energy and paths to racial equality.

“We the people” is a collective phrase and the reality is that the power of Will lies within each one of us. When the nation pivots its will, it is the collection of many people moving their alignment and concentration in a specific direction. Sometimes it is in response to an event that activates a time of great chaos and uncertainty. It is the direction the will turns that determines the course forward no matter what the nature of the event.

Right now seems to be a tumultuous time. Perhaps in every generation a tumultuous time arises. Maybe that is the nature of our temporary lives.

History may look back and point to a galvanizing event unfolding now. The question we need to consider now is: in difficult times do we have the *mind of presence* to stop and seek to align ourselves with the will and direction of Spirit. Can we open our minds to what Spirit's guidance is in an environment that tends to seal off options and point to one way? When Spirit points to the rocky and steep path, can we concentrate our efforts there, even though ego mind finds an easier, gentle path? None of these questions can be answered except in your own heart and only IF you are willing to stop and question what you are thinking and doing. IF you are will*ing* to maintain the mind of presence and if you are will*ing* to live the will and the way of Spirit, you will find the direction you seek. The power of will needs the power of wisdom, love, faith and strength to function properly. We have all those powers within us. Let us **use** them to do the will of Spirit.

**Divine WILL expresses through me as openness, direction and concentration.**