ANNEGRET LIEBIG

Compiled from Red and Yellow Folio, Temple Messages, and Convention Master's Messages

Dear Temple Brothers and Sisters, dear Friends,

During these holy days, the Masters are in our midst, wherever we may be, if we attune ourselves to Them with gratitude and listen attentively to Their words. The Convention motto this year is: GRATITUDE AND OBEDIENCE, BOTH INVIOLABLE TO THE CREATIVE LAW.

"The law of Spiritual Development, the One Eternal Law in Nature, that always tends to adjust contraries and bring about final harmonies, the Law of Spiritual Development superseding the physical and purely intellectual, shall free mankind from the false Gods and finally bring it to the point where it – shall find itself – Self Redeemed."

Red Folio, August 21, 1927, "THE NEW DAY," p. 27, MORYA

"Gratitude is one of the surest means of spiritual growth and earns for itself the seal and stamp of the Lodge in decisions that otherwise could not be determined. May each one of you, from your own point of view, deeply absorb this core of Truth. Every one of you – whether leader, builder, worker, scribe, official or helper, whether resident or visiting member – has more reason to be grateful for what has been accomplished during the past year than you could total for the rest of your lives. Your future development will depend upon your ability to feel this gratitude that you have been led to this holy centre, that you have been accepted and found worthy of a service which, at every stage while it is been rendered, and when it is fully completed, is destined to merge into the Infinite. Gratitude toward one another, gratitude toward your own Higher, better Self, and gratitude toward Us and the Lodge – this is the keynote of your lasting security and your progress. You may take it light or think of it only superficially; it matters not. I have spoken."

Messages of Master Hilarion, 1931

"If a body of disciples pledged to action upon the highest principles known to them have decided to tread a certain clearly defined path in a desired end to accept the guidance of those who have trodden the path to its end, that body of disciples as whole owes allegiance, support and obedience to those guides and owe brotherly love and help to their fellow disciples. "

TT II, "First Principles," p. 76

"You should work constructively in harmony with the divine Plan. You should render obedience to the Law of Centralisation and to the laws of discipleship. You should concentrate on the principle, not on personality. You should work for the good of all and prevent everything that obstructs the true mission of the Temple. It was for this work that you were chosen long ago – a work for which genuine devotion and true dedication to the eternal Principles are essential. This work requires spiritual upliftment and a profound dedication to the Master of Masters, the Christos."

Message of Master Hilarion, Convention 2024

"Psycho mental forces are making effort for inroad upon the path of Him who is Light himself. Let not fear overtake you. Protect yourselves by silence, reason, sense, calm in knowledge, poised in faith, strong in the assurance that He who watches slumbers not nor sleeps. No harm shall come to him who walks the way of the Law."

Yellow Folio, February 13, 1927, "FROM THOSE WHO KNOW", p. 103, MORYA with K.H.

"So, must we be serene, strong, indifferent to whatsoever others may think, know, or care, seeing we are what we are, and have obeyed the Voice and followed the light as it was given to hear and see. Even so must we also be brave to meet with tranquillity, fearlessness and

equanimity what is to be, knowing without question that faithfulness to duty, loyalty to truth, however it may present, will always protect and guide aright."

Temple Messages, January 11, 1927, "IMPINGING FORCES," p. 167, MORYA

"With hope, gratitude, and willingness to serve, let your hand now guide those who are nearest to you, so that they, in turn – even though unconsciously – may guide others toward a greater witness to the Fatherhood of God and to their brotherhood with all His children."

Messages of Master Hilarion, Convention 1979

Greeting You, as always with love and united in our common striving,
Yours, Annegret

OLYA SINICHKINA

The theme of our Convention is "Gratitude and obedience, unshaken by the Law of Creation" and I thought that this is the key to that inner freedom that our soul craves, and that this is the indication of the direction in which the disciple goes, striving for the Light.

Often the word "obedience" causes in us an inner protest, being perceived as an infringement of the personality. But obedience is not blind submission, but rather an act of supreme trust. This is the very "school of the heart" where the disciple, throwing off the husk of his "I," learns to hear the music of the Cosmic Will.

As a musician submits his fingers to the strict laws of harmony in order to extract a divine sound, so the seeking spirit submits his self-will to the Highest Law in order to become a tool of the Light.

This is the discipline of the soul; this is the Path of Service and a stage of deep inner work.

Obedience is not a limitation of freedom, but a fundamental basis for the transfer of accumulated wisdom and protection from repeating mistakes.

It is necessary to recognize those who are above, and in joy to follow them, for in this recognition is our own ascent.

If obedience is a discipline, then gratitude is a living flame of the heart.

Remember Prometheus; he carried not just physical fire, but spiritual power, knowledge and hope, which transform a person and give him the opportunity to overcome ignorance and darkness.

How often we forget that gratitude is not just a form of politeness, but a powerful high energy! It can also be said that gratitude is a purifier of the heart. It washes it with dust, making it light, like a bird ready to fly.

Gratitude is also a sister of devotion, which does not ask for anything in return, but itself becomes a source of warmth. Ingratitude is like a desert, where the best accumulations of the spirit are extinguished. Is it possible to go to the Light without feeling the warmth of the hands extended to us from the Higher Realms?

When the heart is filled with gratitude, obedience ceases to be an effort. It becomes natural, like the beating of the heart, and we begin to understand that every Instruction is not an order, but a gentle help.

In this unity of gratitude and obedience, a person is born who is one with the Law of Creation and acts in the same rhythm with it. This is how, I think, his spirit grows, and so he acquires stable supports that give him the strength to withstand difficulties and personal moods, allow him not to lose touch with the higher direction and those forces that lead evolution.

With love, Olya Sinichkina

ELAINE COLE WIGHT

As the Heart and Mind begin to consciously work together, and if we were able to see interiorly, we would be able to observe the Chakras actively realigning. Their swirling energies of light and colour, pure power — beams of light; working through our base — grounding us and rising with each energy centre. The solar plexus of the personality thinking our varied thoughts, up through the heart, gathering up to the throat to give more profound understanding, aligning with the third eye of wisdom, all uniting in the crown chakra … shooting forth with the individual dance of hues, unimaginable to the physical eye for that which is our unique soul.

The Gratitude (just words these but the joy of recognition of realising consciously our part in group soul). The more we actively engage with our true natures can begin in the early morning as we wake up; being grateful for another day, another chance to live in the Story of Life; gratitude for the body we have, listening carefully to what messages are coming from our physical bodies, tuning in and focusing on what feelings are arising in our heart minds; being aware of what we are thinking, being honest with ourselves … slowly putting this all together in a bowl and offering it to our Higher Selves, the Angels and Masters on the interior planes and reiterating our soul pledges and prayers for our life mission.

And then the crucial part of our day's preparation, listening … the word Obedience sounds so harsh to our ears, but listening to our Higher Self, the Angel within is exactly that … Listening and obeying the loving and joyful Creative Law which our Soul lives by and is the most beautiful and free way to live, grasps at nothing but offers what it can to all of our encounters each day in harmless and loving kindness and thereby receiving the same.

We know this is not an easy pathway. The reward which we seek demands we look deep inside of ourselves, touches parts of our ancient natures we would rather sometimes not look at, tests us at every crossroads. Do we continue to make habitual decisions, or can we muster up new energies and alter direction which will offer us more clarity, greater loving relief and a deeper relationship with our Soul.

For after all is said and done we seek the Freedom of the Bindings we have created to ensoul all our bodies, all of our consciousness and live and breathe in the Light of the Creative Law and Truth.

Elaine Cole Wight and London Group 2026

NINA ZALTSMAN

Dear friends, We warmly greet all participants in the Convention.

Our Israeli Society of Living Ethics has long maintained a close and enduring connection with the Temple Teachings. This connection began with the first books published in Russian more than thirty years ago, which we studied with great care alongside Theosophy and the Teaching of Agni Yoga.

Yet even earlier, Yevgenia Benderskaya, the founder of our Society, had received a small, beautifully produced book in English, published by the Temple at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The theme of this Convention is very close to our hearts, for the importance of these qualities is more evident today than ever before. Without them, it is impossible to become a disciple of a spiritual Teaching — or even to approach the energies of the New Era.

In my understanding, another concept closely related to obedience is humility. Obedience and humility carry kindred meanings.

The root of the Russian word *smirenie*, meaning humility, is *mir* — peace. When we attain inner peace and stillness, we become capable of hearing both the earthly teacher and the Heavenly Teacher, and of comprehending the meaning of life.

In the Teaching of Agni Yoga, these qualities are indeed closely connected. They are understood not as passivity or humiliation, but as manifestations of conscious spiritual strength:

Gratitude purifies and opens the heart.

Humility subdues the ego-self and the lower nature.

Obedience brings human free will into harmony with the Higher Will.

Let us consider them in turn.

Gratitude

Gratitude is not merely a moral sentiment; it is a real fiery energy capable of purifying the human being, strengthening our bonds with other people and with the world, and accelerating the refinement of our own nature.

“Great is the healing power of the emission of gratitude.”

— Agni Yoga, §31

“Gratitude is a great motive force.”

— Aum, §454

Let us again turn to the roots of this word in the Russian language, for the Teaching of Agni Yoga was given in Russian. The word *blagodarnost*, gratitude, unites *blago* — goodness or blessing — and *dar* — a gift.

Thus, the word itself already implies spiritual energy and an open heart in which this energy may abide. It also implies the ability to direct one’s consciousness toward another person and their circumstances, so as to understand and appreciate an action or a gift of talent, and to give thanks.

Gratitude is also the capacity to give the energy of one’s heart — to bestow good upon those around us. It is likewise the ability to send this heart-energy of gratitude to the Teacher.

This heart-energy sustains the living bond of the Silver Thread. Without the energy and the thought of gratitude, this bond receives no nourishment and may eventually be broken.

This is why gratitude is so important, both for the individual and as a foundation for communication within a family and for cooperation in every sphere of life.

A grateful spirit more readily receives new and higher energies. It preserves and strengthens its bond with Hierarchy, making it easier for the worlds to draw closer together.

Obedience

Every process of learning is built upon obedience: to listen, to repeat, to come to know, and finally to apply independently. These are the stages of learning.

In Russian, the word *poslushanie*, obedience, is rooted in the verb *slushat* — to listen. The ability to listen means setting aside, for a time, one's personal and already established knowledge, so that something new may be received, understood, and mastered.

It also means consciously accepting the Guidance of Hierarchy — Guidance founded upon love, trust, discernment, and free choice.

> *"Complete obedience to the indications and the precise execution of them gives health and leads to great victory, to great Light."*
>
> — Helena Roerich, letter of January 7, 1931

Helena Ivanovna Roerich also wrote:

> *"Obedience and the curbing of one's own self-will will be the first step toward self-discipline."*
>
> — Helena Roerich, letter of January 7, 1931

Therefore, true obedience is possible only where free will exists.

It is not the renunciation of free thought or independent inquiry. It is the renunciation of self-will — and its result is the assumption of responsibility.

A person accepts Higher Guidance, but must also exercise discernment, initiative, and independence, and carry out what has been entrusted with the highest possible quality.

Humility

Within this understanding of obedience, I return to humility as one of its facets — a facet through which self-renunciation and selflessness are revealed.

We must distinguish between an affected display of humility, which may conceal pride, and true humility:

> *"For only self-denial and self-sacrifice can give understanding of humility."*
>
> — Fiery World III, §24

True humility is not passive submission to outward circumstances, but the inner power to overcome them and triumph over them.

Thus, it is not the human spirit that is humbled, but the ego-self: self-will, astral desires, pride, and the lower sheaths.

True humility is the power of the spirit over oneself.

It does not bow before evil, yet it can accept a trial without complaint and pass through it courageously.

Conclusion

All these qualities, whose true nature is the energy of Light, neutralize egoism and selfhood within us. They purify us, strengthen the will, and make us capable of conscious Service.

Thank you for your attention.

Nina Zaltsman
Head of the Israeli Society of Living Ethics

LARISSA HEINRICH

To me, obedience is the highest expression of faith in God and in the Supreme Good. It is not blind submission, but a conscious alignment of the Heart, Mind, and Will with the Divine.

As we affirm in the Temple prayer, ***"I am one with God and All Good."***

These words remind me that true obedience is living in harmony with the Divine Will, trusting that the Creative Law always leads us toward the highest good. For me, obedience is expressed in the words, ***"Thy will be done, not mine."***

They reflect spiritual humility, surrender, and complete trust in the Higher Wisdom. Our personal desires are transformed when they become one with the Divine Purpose.

Gratitude, for me, is much more than saying, "**Thank you."** It is a state of the Heart that inspires loving action and selfless service. It is a **Spiritual Force** expressed through our thoughts, words, and deeds, independent of circumstances.

As Radhanath Swami said: *"Real wisdom is… to see the hand of God, to see how to reciprocate with the hand of God, and to be grateful. A grateful heart can recognize the blessings in everything … Gratitude is one of the most essential human virtues for real inner prosperity and inner happiness and especially connects us to the Divine."*

These words deeply resonate with my understanding that gratitude is a way of recognizing the Divine Presence in every circumstance.

For me, **gratitude and obedience** cannot exist separately. **Obedience** without gratitude becomes mere duty, while **gratitude** without obedience remains only a feeling.

Together, they become a living path of faith, humility, joyful service, and conscious cooperation with the **Creative Law**, leading us toward deeper union with **God and All Good.**

Larissa Heinrich

SAN JOSE GROUP

Our understanding of the conference theme:

Why are gratitude and obedience so important, and why are they a necessary part of the Law of Creation?

Gratitude is the feedback loop between the Source and the human being.

Since all energy that creates worlds descends from the Higher Source, gratitude is the magnet that maintains the connection between a person and the Higher Forces.

When a person remembers the Source, the flow remains pure.

When he or she forgets, the flow becomes distorted and often leads to the loss of orientation, self-centeredness, and pride.

Without gratitude, any act of creation can become unstable.

Gratitude is the law of circulation: energy comes, is used, and ends with gratitude. This closes the circle.

Gratitude is the mechanism of connection between the Source and the form.

What it does in creation:

- Maintains the connection with the Source; purifies intention.
- Makes energy stable; prevents power from becoming personal property. This represents the vertical axis of creation.

Without it, the form cannot be filled.

Obedience

Obedience is the acceptance of everything sent by Karma or the Higher Forces.

Obedience is not weakness or lack of will; it is the ability to hear and understand that what comes is ultimately for our benefit.

Why is it essential? Because creation is not only energy, it is also timing.

Everything is born — in a specific rhythm, in a specific cycle, in a specific phase of space.

Obedience is the ability to: act at the right moment; not act prematurely; not go against the rhythm.

What happens without obedience?

If obedience is absent, action occurs at the wrong moment

The form breaks; energy is wasted; the person goes against evolution; creation becomes chaotic.

Obedience is the mechanism of alignment with the rhythm of time.

What Obedience Does in Creation

Obedience aligns action with rhythm, makes the form stable, allows energy to enter correctly, prevents destruction.

Thus, obedience is the mechanism of the precise moment.

Why are these two laws the foundation of creation?

Because they create a double axis: vertical (energy) — horizontal (rhythm).

Gratitude is the pure source of energy, and obedience is the correct understanding of the Higher Law.

Without gratitude and obedience, the mission does not unfold

Energy cannot be held; creation does not occur; the person loses connection with the Source.

With them, the channel to the Higher opens. Direction comes.

Strength appears, harmony arises, creation becomes possible.

Gratitude holds the Source.

Obedience holds the direction.

Together they create the possibility of creation.

The very structure of creation is arranged so that without these two functions, energy cannot be held, form cannot be born, and the intention cannot be fulfilled.

Why are they connected with the mission of Unity?

Unity is the result, while gratitude and obedience are the necessary conditions. Gratitude connects with the Source. Obedience connects with the rhythm. Unity connects people and space.

San Jose Group

DAMIAN ROLLISON

I would say that I have a complex relationship with the concepts of gratitude and obedience, and I would offer that I am probably not unique in this. People raised in the United States are taught the values of self reliance and individualism. We are told that success in life is measured by how far you rise above your inherited circumstances through your own initiative. Yes, we are asked to be obedient to the law and grateful to each other on Thanksgiving, but for the most part these values lag far behind those that emphasize independence.

After all, the country began with a Declaration of Independence that told us we were free from the bounds of obedience to monarchy, and regardless of how the systems of power have reasserted themselves over the course of time and have, in many ways, restored us to a state of servitude, we are still taught to think of ourselves not as a collective but as revolutionary individualists.

But when invited to think about gratitude and obedience, we can begin to question these assumptions. A common trait of these two concepts is that they both imply a giver and a receiver. We offer gratitude and obedience *to* something, so already, in contrast to the actions of the individual ego, we are working within the bounds of a relationship. Moreover, we can think about what or whom might be the object these concepts point to. We might be repulsed by the notion of offering gratitude and obedience to an earthly power, but we may have the opposite reaction if the object is the collective of humanity, life itself, the Masters, the Higher Law, or perhaps all of these taken together.

By this definition, I feel gratitude for the gift of life itself, for the opportunity to be of service, for the many people and forces that have helped me, and for realizing the opportunity to be on the Path, not as a lone individual but as one of many working toward a state of Unity with all. I would suggest that obedience in that light becomes very easy. Rather than thinking of obedience as a relinquishment of one's will out of fear or weakness, we can think of obedience to the All as a natural outcome of the understanding that also sparks our gratitude. Obedience is, in other words, just an acknowledgement of our alignment with the Higher Self, not as a separate power that dominates us but as our own center point and inheritance.

IULIANA PERELMAN

Beloved Brothers and Sisters, I congratulate you on the opening of the 127th Annual Temple Convention!

"Gratitude and Obedience, both inviolable to the Creative Law" is an important theme.

Every day we read: "Help us respond daily with Gratitude and Obedience, unwavering to the Law of the Universe, which from transcendent heights illuminates the dark depths of our own creation."

In Kabbalah, these concepts are associated with the main process—the transition from the "desire to receive" (egoism) to the "desire to give" (altruism). Gratitude as similarity to the Creator. Kabbalah teaches that the Creator is absolute bestowal. Gratitude restructures the vessel (the soul) of a person. It transforms the receipt of blessings into an act of giving, making a person similar to the Source.

Obedience is not fear of punishment, but conscious adherence to spiritual Laws.

The merging of human will and higher powers. In Kabbalah, this is the alignment of a person's intentions with the Creator's plan, which enhances the flow of light.

With love,
Iuliana Perelman

MARLA LOWMAN

What is gratitude? How do I achieve an attitude of gratitude? These are the questions I continue to ask myself each day in my morning meditation.

As I go through my day I live my life choosing to do what's right. This doesn't mean I take the path of least resistance. It means I try to live by the golden rule in every aspect of my life. Making sure to stay in conscious contact with a Power Greater than myself.

Gratitude aligns our minds with the source of our Higher Power. There are actions that undermine gratitude.

1. Self pity
2. Complaining
3. Comparing
4. Isolation
5. Fast paced life

6. An entitlement attitude
7. Lack of sleep

Then we have the 4 A's of gratitude that support and grow our gratitude.

1. Appreciation
2. Approval
3. Admiration
4. Attention

These are imperative in our continued spiritual growth.

Now what is meant when we are asked to practice obedience?

Obedience is the First Law of Heaven, the cornerstone upon which all righteousness and progression rest. It exists in compliance with Divine law. Obedience must be voluntary, it must not be forced. It means conforming your daily choices to the Higher Order of Creation instead of following the chaotic choices.

While gratitude sets correct mental attitude, obedience ensures your practice steps match that mindset to make the creation real and lasting in your life.