

सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

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FROM PASSION TO COMPASSION	3
FOOD FOR THOUGHT	9
IF THE BUDDHA CAME TO LONDON	
STUDIES IN THE BHAGAVAD-GITA	13
SACRIFICE AND SACRAMENT—II	
VAYU—THE GOD OF AIR—II	18
THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE—I	24
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS	29
IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY	33

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FROM PASSION TO COMPASSION

THERE IS a difference between “pity” and the passion of “pity.” The first is a virtue, the second, an emotion. In the first case we are moved and are able to help another in the right manner. In the other, we get emotional, which often leads to nothing productive. Likewise, there is “Love” as a feeling, which is different from “Love” as a virtue, which is the result of transformation of natural love.

The seat of emotional love is *Kama*. *Kama* or Passion has hardening quality. Feelings or *kamic* expressions are changeable but throughout the changes hardness remains. This “hardness” is the separative quality of *Kama*, which separates one’s self from others. All *feelings* are separative. There is blind Cupid and the all-seeing Eros, which is the Love that sees and understands, writes Shri B. P. Wadia. That is the reason why H.P.B. mentions that the love for wife and family, the purest as the most unselfish of “human” affections, is a *barrier* to real occultism. That is because if we analyse the love of mother for her child or that of husband for his wife, in that feeling we are able to discern selfishness and separative tendency. For, a mother would not hesitate to sacrifice the happiness of other children in order to see her own child happy, and the same holds true of a husband. This is deemed natural and acceptable as far as the code of human affections goes, but it becomes a barrier in the development of divine universal love, in which the heart is full of concern for *all* that lives and breathes. To cultivate impersonal

love is to expand the circle of love. Human love and affection pave the way for compassion but they are not compassion.

The ancient teaching of India hints at the ladder of love. *He who loves lives*. Without love there can be no unfoldment, no growth. St. Augustine said, after his very beloved friend passed away, that do not give your heart to anyone else but god. If you want to experience happiness and not misery, then give your heart to a beloved that will not pass away. Prof. C. S. Lewis remarks that the message is, do not put your goods in a leaky boat. There is a warning, do not love, this may lead to suffering. A little reflection shows that there is no safe investment. To love at all is to be vulnerable, to open yourself to the possibility of suffering and a broken heart. If you want to keep your heart intact, you must give it to no one. Just indulge in luxuries and hobbies. Thus you will put it into a casket of selfishness, there it will be safe, but there it will also become hard and impenetrable and will at last turn to dust.

He who loves himself lives in hell. A self-centred man, who lives for the gratification of his own selfish desires, who takes all and gives nothing, who is ready to enjoy at the expense of others, by his lustful, egoistic and heartless deeds, is in a state of hell. Bill McKibben, a scholar-in-residence at Middlebury College wrote that disparity between belief and action has led to the paradox of America being professedly the most Christian of the developed nations, but least so in behaviour. Have they got Jesus wrong? A true Christian, in Jesus' words, is one who fed the hungry, slaked the thirst of the thirsty, clothed the naked, welcomed the stranger and visited the prisoner. America is found to be trailing behind in all these categories. We might say the situation is not peculiar to America, as most of us are lacking in selfless love. "Being neighbourly used to mean visiting people. Now being nice to your neighbours means not bothering them," write Jacqueline Olds and Richard S. Schwartz, professors of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. We feel increasingly alone even with the technologies devoted to staying connected. We are caught in a tug-of-war between conflicting desires—we want to

stay connected, and we want to be free. The authors point out that when we experience a feeling of being "left out," we must examine, and then chances are that we would work a little harder to reconnect, instead of sinking into apathy and seclusion.

He who loves another, lives on earth. In loving another, we go over the wall of our selfhood, push aside our own happiness, and effortlessly plant the interest of another in the centre of our being. We have fulfilled the law towards one person. This gives us the foretaste of what we need to do towards all. But generally, it is mutual love, to love and be loved in return—the most common expression of love among present-day humanity, which brings happiness that comes and goes. It is a subtler form of selfishness. Such personal affections must give way to higher form of love.

Even in loving another or other human beings there are ample opportunities to transcend natural love, because there is something in all of us, which cannot be naturally loved. Each one of us has some peculiarity, some habit, which may put people off. And yet, our friends and our loved ones love us in spite of them. There are frictions and frustrations in our relationships, when we have to admit that our natural love is not enough. Something more is needed. There are times when we say that if only my child would not back-answer and study properly, if only my husband would be more considerate, then I would be able to love them perfectly. But we do not wait for them to change. We begin to see that human love is inadequate and therefore, begin to add to it forgiveness, tolerance, forbearance, and gradually transform our love into charity. An element of impersonality gets added quite naturally. Personal attachment and universal love cannot co-exist. As we gradually overcome the sense of separateness, and learn to identify ourselves with the joys and sorrows of others, we rise from the love of one to the love of many.

He who loves others lives in heaven. When we are able to generate unselfish impersonal love for the fellow-men, expanding the circle of love to include, "the great orphan—Humanity," and are able to love without being loved in return, are ready to sacrifice our own

good for the welfare of others, then we find ourselves in blissful state of mind of heaven. But there is a still higher step. *He who silently adores the Self of all creatures lives in that Self: and It is eternal peace.* Even the satisfaction of helping others must be given up, as there is higher life than that of altruism, the life of self-identification with the Supreme, enabling us to recognize the One in the many, and to be the friend of all creatures, and remain in harmony with all that lives and breathes.

Just as it is oil which enables the parts of the machine to function smoothly, so also, it is the oil of compassion which keeps running smoothly the vast mechanism we know as world. The Oil of Compassion flows from the Heart of Bliss. Without such oil the uneven surfaces of human contact would rub against one another, on the physical, mental or emotional planes, producing heat which burns and destroys. It is each one's task to fit in with the other parts of the machine of life. Let us try to see what part of our own surface is in friction with another surface and then smooth our own uneven surfaces so that the whole may work in harmony. Compassion is the LAW of LAWS—eternal Harmony.

According to Buddhism *Karuna* or Compassion is the most spiritual of all the emotions, which characterizes all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, and is especially embodied by Bodhisattva Avalokiteshwara, whose eleven heads represent Compassion that looks in all directions, while thousand arms represent his ceaseless compassionate activity.

The Buddha says that if one has only compassion for the sufferings of other living beings, then in due course all other virtues, all other spiritual qualities and attainments, and even Enlightenment itself, will follow. Compassion is that which seeks to overcome suffering, writes Sangharakshita, a Buddhist teacher. In a moving story from Japan, when a young man having led a wayward, wasteful life, decided to become a monk, he entered a Zen monastery and met the abbot. The abbot on learning that the young man was good at playing chess asked him to play chess against an old monk,

with the condition that he would cut off the head of a person who lost the game. The young man played the game with full concentration and was happy to see that he was winning, but when he looked up and saw the face of the old monk, who was losing the game and may have to die, he thought that the monk had led useful life, whereas his own life had not been of use to anybody. A tremendous compassion welled up in the young man's heart, and he began to make false moves, and thus gradually began to lose the game. Just then the abbot upset the chess-board saying that no one had won and no one had lost. He told the young man that though he had led a wasteful life, but since he was capable of compassion, there was still hope for him.

Compassion is all-seeing Eros and is described in Vedic philosophy as Supreme, Divine Power or *Kamadeva*. It is the primeval Desire which initiates manifestation, and is the propelling force in evolution. *Kamadeva* is described thus:

The first conscious, *all-embracing desire* for universal good, love, and for all that lives and feels, needs help and kindness, the first feeling of infinite tender compassion and mercy that arose in the consciousness of the creative ONE FORCE, as soon as it came into life and being as a ray from the ABSOLUTE. (*The Theosophical Glossary*)

Compassion is universal, intelligent, dispassionate love, which arises by the harmonious union of the heart and the head. In one aspect, it represents unselfish and unconditional giving, but in another aspect, it is like Karma which gives to each his rightful and necessary place in sun or shade. Karma is merciful law. Another meaning of mercy is compassion. It aims at "Universal" good. It cannot make "B" happy at the expense of "A." Compassion is that aspect of the law, which desires growth of every being—even if it entails suffering. The ultimate aim of this law is that all creatures acquire perfection. Pain that is experienced in the process of growing up must be seen in the correct perspective. Happiness or unhappiness should not be our criterion for judging the law. Mr. Judge writes:

“Nor is the shielding from necessary pain true mercy, but is indeed the opposite, for sometimes it is only through pain that the soul acquires the precise knowledge and strength it requires.”

Compassion is not a “feeling,” a human emotion, and cannot be placed in the hierarchy of *Kama*. “It is a Power, a *Shakti* born of *Buddhi*, which when active, uses *Manas*; it is *Buddhi* using Knowledge, which means understanding expressing itself as helpfulness,” writes Shri B. P. Wadia. Knowledge and good works are called purifiers and they tend to soften *Kama*, transforming love into Compassion. Detachment is the key to developing Compassion. The *Gita* speaks of exemption from self-identifying attachment for children, wife and household, which also explains the seemingly terrible exclamations of Jesus, “He that loveth his father and mother more than me is not worthy of me,” and to his mother, “Woman, what have I to do with thee?”

Shri B. P. Wadia describes Compassion as *understanding feeling* and *understanding helpfulness*. When feeling-feeling decreases, understanding-feeling grows. Wherever there is restlessness of body or mind, there Compassion cannot exist because understanding is absent. Compassion arises from true understanding, and therefore, he suggests that before helping another try to understand; before explaining to another, try to understand; do not make a sacrifice before you understand, and likewise, do not attach or repel before you understand. It is equally important to understand one’s feelings. “Equipose of mind, non-agitation of brain and senses, are a reflection of the Quiet within which is Compassion, understanding and helping all,” writes Shri B. P. Wadia.

The Buddha is called *Tathagata* or “the one who has followed in the footsteps of his predecessors.” But etymologically, the term *Tathagata* also includes *gata* and *agata*, signifying that he is someone who goes out of this world with *wisdom*, but comes back to it with *compassion*, renouncing the peace and bliss of Nirvana, again and again, to help the world of deluded mortals.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT IF THE BUDDHA CAME TO LONDON

[Reprinted (abridged) from *The Aryan Path*, pp.491-93 for November 1936. The author is Mr. A. M. Hocart, who had experience of German University life, in addition to Oxford. It is an imaginary conversation taking place in London between the Master Gautama Buddha and the beloved disciple Ananda. But the writer’s imagination is not merely speculative and fanciful; he has drawn upon authentic teachings of Buddhism.

What is written about London is true of every so-called “prosperous” country of the world. Our national and racial Karma has now entangled us in mechanistic and sensuous ways of progress. Our civilization is suffering from a grave disease and numerous remedies are suggested by many doctors for its critical state. Our advertisements, wealth, amenities, or medicines, will not remove our poverty and hunger or make us happy citizens. There is only one sure remedy offered by the “Incomparable Physician,” the Buddha, in this imaginary conversation.]

THUS, have I heard. The Blessed One was once sojourning in London, in Royal Park. The Venerable Ananda bowed down before him, and said to the Blessed One: “The Blessed One has chosen well. This is a royal city, mighty and prosperous, and full of people, crowded with men, stocked with all kinds of food and drink, gay with rich and variegated raiments, alive with many wonderful engines that speed over the earth and through the air, conveying men and wealth, and the noise of it reaches to heaven. Surely this city was founded in an auspicious hour on an auspicious spot to bring happiness to its inhabitants.

“Say not so, O Ananda. Say not that this city is fit to bring happiness to its people. Truly this is a royal city, mighty and prosperous. Many indeed are the wonders to be seen in it, but happiness is not one of them. Consider, O Ananda, what is the condition of happiness. The condition of happiness O Ananda, is contentment, and the first condition of contentment is freedom from

tormenting desires. The people of this city, O Ananda, are not free from tormenting desires. The fire of innumerable desires burns within them, consuming their minds.

“This royal city is indeed stocked with all kinds of food and drink, yet the people are always seeking new kinds. Therefore tempters come and perpetually stimulate their senses with pictures and with writings, saying, ‘Eat this and live,’ ‘Drink this and be strong.’ So that they are perpetually desirous of more, thinking, ‘This will make me live,’ ‘This will make me strong.’

“This royal city is indeed gay with rich and variegated raiments, but they are never so rich or variegated as to satisfy their desires. No sooner has one donned a new sort than he begins to desire another; and always pictures are set before them depicting better than they have, so that they are no longer pleased with what they have, but grieve over what they have not.

“This royal city is indeed alive with many wonderful engines; but why, O Ananda, do they rush ceaselessly this way and that way? Sensation causes desire, and desire sets in motion towards the object of desire. If desires are ceaseless the motion is ceaseless. Therefore the people rush this way and that way in an unending quest, thinking of the speed they would like to achieve. The condition of contentment is the absence of fear. The people of this royal city are not free from fear. There are five kinds of fear, O Ananda, the fear of death, the fear of old age, the fear of loneliness, the fear of poverty, the fear of war.

“The people of this royal city, mighty and prosperous, are afraid of death, O Ananda. Only the spirits who are free from passion bear the thought of it calm and self-possessed, mindful of the saying, ‘Impermanent indeed are all things in this world. All things contain within themselves the inherent necessity of dissolution.’

“The people of this mighty city are afraid of disease, because disease is the beginning of dissolution. The fear of disease gives rise to disease, but they do not understand the cause of their disease. They think it comes from the body, whereas it comes from the mind.

Therefore, when someone says, ‘I have medicine that will cure your disease, will keep away death,’ they buy the medicine; but it does not cure their disease or keep away death; they try another and yet another, but the mind cannot be cured by drugs.

“The people of this royal city, are afraid of old age, O Ananda, they cannot face old age, and they hide old age from their sight. Therefore, O Ananda, their old men play like boys, and their old women paint themselves like the young girls, thinking, ‘We *do* like the young, we *look* like the young, we *are* young.’ Thus, they deceive themselves. Therefore if one arises and says, ‘I will free you from old age; I have an elixir that will stave off old age,’ they listen eagerly, hoping to be freed from old age. But no elixir can free from old age, only right thinking can free from the fear of old age.

“The people of this royal city, so crowded with men, are afraid of loneliness, O Ananda. They jostle one another in the streets, yet they know not one another. They seek the crowded streets, they seek the contact of bodies, but loneliness is not removed by the contact of bodies, but by the contact of minds. The contact of minds, O Ananda, is through harmony of thoughts. The people of this city are not harmonious in their thoughts. Divergent desires destroy the harmony of thoughts, and so destroy the contact of minds. Failing to establish harmony of thoughts with men, they seek to establish it with the *shadows* of men. They throng, O Ananda, to see the shadows of men and to hear the shadows of voices, acting and speaking as if they were real men, but all is illusion, for shadows cannot think. Not by chasing shadows is loneliness overcome, but by pursuing right thinking is loneliness overcome.

“The people of this royal city, stocked with all kinds of food and drink, gay with rich and variegated raiments, are nevertheless afraid of poverty, O Ananda. They are very rich, but think themselves very poor, and so they are poor; for *poverty is not the lack of wealth, but the lack of ideas*. He who has much but wants more is poor, while he who has little but wants nothing is rich. The people of this city have more than they need, but fear to have less. The greater

their wealth, the greater is their fear of losing it. One man covets the share of ten men, and when he has that he covets the share of a hundred men, and when he has that he covets the share of a thousand men. Thus conflict arises, and out of conflict war, and out of war poverty. Thus the fear of poverty leads to poverty.

“The people of this royal city, mighty and prosperous, are afraid of war, O Ananda, yet they cannot achieve peace. They forever do those things that lead to war, for their desires are endless, but the means of satisfying them are few. Thus they are as a vast multitude of men that crowd at the narrow door of success, and they push and jostle one another to get in; and out of this pushing and striving arises conflict, and out of conflict war. If the senses are controlled, the desires are controlled, the actions are controlled, so that there is no action that is unjust, no action that is hasty, no action that is unbalanced. The senses and desires of this people are not controlled, so that they desire what is not lawful, take what is not lawful, and so conflict arises, and out of conflict war. Then the strong prevail and the weak look about them for means to overcome the strong, and they make themselves terrible machines, engines of death to kill hundreds, so that they become strong in their turn; and then the strong having become weak look about them for means to overcome the weak that have become strong, and they make themselves terrible machines, engines of death to kill thousands. Thus in seeking peace they lose peace. For peace comes from the mind, and not from machines; it can only be achieved by the mind.

“All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts.

“When the people of this city, mighty and prosperous, know this, when they make their thoughts harmonious with the world, harmonious with men, then they will attain to the highest happiness, O Ananda; then may you say, O Ananda, this city was well founded in an auspicious hour on an auspicious spot to bring happiness to its inhabitants.”

STUDIES IN THE BHAGAVAD—GITA SACRIFICE AND SACRAMENT—II

The greatest example of sacrament is that of Krishna himself. Krishna has kept on revolving the wheel of time, in order to help all other human beings. At any stage, whatever our physical surroundings or circumstances may be, we can begin to make of our duties, sacrifices, and then offer our sacrifices as sacraments. But this requires the understanding of a metaphysical doctrine, known as the *doctrine of Maya* or the *doctrine of Illusion*. This doctrine is mentioned in this very Discourse. In verse 15 we read: “Truth is obscured by that which is not true, and therefore all beings are led astray.” In the Fourth Discourse Krishna has already said that the path of action is obscure. Every single phenomenon in this manifested universe is in itself, *per se*, an illusive appearance. All the objective things that surround us, *i.e.*, that aspect of a thing which is tangible and visible, is continuously hiding and covering up the real essence or real nature of things. This is really what is meant by Truth being covered by that which is not true. The One Self is everywhere, and everywhere it is covered by the illusive objective side of the Universe, and it is because we identify this illusive aspect of everything with the thing itself, that Krishna says, we are led astray, because we mistake the appearances for reality.

What is it that we should do to discover truth which is everywhere present, and not allow it to be obscured? We know that when we meet a person, for instance, and if we judge that soul from the personal point of view, we are only looking at the illusive or the unreal nature of the soul, that which is covering the soul up, and therefore is not the higher Self. And the same applies to everything and everywhere. The teaching is that every single object in this Universe is but a symbol, but a copy or reflection of some great spiritual principle. In other words, the things that exist on this physical plane, on this material plane, are the types derived from the great metaphysical and abstract archetypes or prototypes. It is in the discovering of this

symbolism of Nature that really lies the understanding of what the Spiritual Life is. In every object that we contact or in every being or creature that is in this world, there is a hidden message from the Spiritual World to be grasped and understood by us, *i.e.*, if we see in the spiritual life, we see that all things are our teachers. The wise man tries to realize the underlying universal and spiritual principles that are in all things, and tries to grasp from what spiritual archetype or idea, the many types we see have sprung forth. When we do this, we are able to read the language of nature, and nature speaks to us through these phenomenal things, which are objects, which are symbols.

We see in the Day and Night of Brahma, whole periods of manifestation and non-manifestation, but we fail to apply the same principle of this law of symbolism in all departments of nature. Philosophically, we all admit that if there were no archetypal world, no inner objective esoteric or metaphysical region in the Universe, there would naturally be no phenomenal world. Thus, if we are able to have tables on this earth and use them, it simply means that there is in this inner world *tabularity* as a spiritual principle. We know that if we can trace an infinite number of triangles on this earth, they are but representatives or symbols of the great idea of *triangularity* which exists in the noumenal world. Now this can be carried on and applied to the very expression of our own feelings.

Let us consider the love of a mother for her child. Maternal love is but the symbol or the copy of that greater spiritual love, which is pure and compassionate love, which the great Elder Brothers of Humanity have, for us, Orphan Humanity. If there is such a thing as a marriage tie in this world, it simply means that there exists that greater spiritual archetype, the union of the Higher Self with the lower, or the relationship that exists between a Guru and his chela, between Krishna and Arjuna. If there are in the world secret societies and private fraternities, it simply shadows and mirrors the great truth of the Brotherhood of Perfected Beings which is a spiritual reality. Likewise, the rites and ceremonies that these societies use in the

world, for instance masonry, are copies and reflections of the true rites of initiation which are necessary for the spiritual entrance and admittance into the Great White Lodge of Adepts. That shows that there is not a single feeling, event, or thought in our own life which is not a messenger of God in disguise. It is for us to look beyond the disguise, and realize the truth we are contacting. It is this practice which enables us to change the unreal aspect of our own lives and make them spiritual lives. We must see the Supreme Being in all things, and all things in the Supreme Being, and this we can only do when we have understood that through the symbols we can arrive at the archetype, the ideas, and principles of the universe. This means in familiar language that we must consecrate our duties at every step of our life, every moment of the day.

What do we mean by consecrating our duties? Let us understand it by using illustrations from nature. All of us ought to begin our day by taking a bath. Now we can take that bath with different attitudes, thereby changing the very nature of that bath. We can dislike the performance as some children do, or we can, on the contrary, enjoy it physically. Most of us take our bath with absolute indifference. It is one of our daily obligations, part of our regime, and we can do it indifferently, so to speak, automatically, and mechanically without giving the event consideration or thought. If we are not using the symbology, we fail to derive the spiritual benefit of the counterparts or archetypes. If, on the contrary, in taking our physical bath, we remember what spiritual cleanliness means, and we put our attention and thought on the great spiritual archetype, we are actually doing something more than cleaning our physical body. We are helping to clean our own psychic and *kamic* natures. Our bath, then, becomes not an obligation, a duty, but a sacrifice, a real sacrament. Take the very simple action of turning on the light in a room at night. We do it absolutely unconsciously and mechanically, yet physical light, electric light is but the shadow or the reflection of true spiritual light, which is the light of wisdom or the light of *Atman*, the Self. If we give a thought to the Higher Self and the Light of the Higher Self in

pressing the button to light our rooms, we are making of that simple action a sacrifice, a sacrament. Take the case of coming to the meetings of the U.L.T.; the fact that we attend classes, meetings and lectures does not indicate or signify that we have become spiritual. We may continue to come until the end of the *Manvantara* to the Lodge and be only present in the physical body. Unless we have prepared our attitude inwardly, we cannot give any help or receive lasting benefit from the attendance. When we come with the idea of not only giving what we have, but the idea of sacrament, that is the giving of all we are to the service of humanity, then the Lodge meetings become sacrifices and sacraments.

The same truth can be applied not only in the daily actions that are performed, but to any object we have to use during the course of the day. When we look on the clock, for instance, it should represent to us the great law of cycles or periodicity, and make us think of the spiritual value of time. We could give innumerable examples of objects becoming sacrifices or hidden messengers, and entering into the soul of the objects we can really see their truth. There is change of attitude when we begin to read the book of nature, and that is the great change that takes place in our attitudes in reference to work. We have been classing different professions and tasks calling some superior to others, and the others inferior. When we have realized this doctrine of sacrifice, we know that every toil or work has its Higher Self, so to speak, and is therefore noble and sacred and invests a character of real sacredness. The Gardner, for instance, who is hired to weed out the garden is simply preparing in his own humble way to learn how to weed and purify his *kamic* nature, and therefore in course of time that very gardener will be able to show others how to weed out their *kamic* natures. And the cook who is preparing the physical nourishment for the body is simply preparing herself or himself for the greater task of feeding the spiritual nature of mankind, and the care-taker, who is taking care of the household of someone else will in course of time through natural law evolve into the expounder of the Eternal Message of

Truth or Wisdom. The laundryman who takes our dirty clothes every week and returns them in a purified condition, simply represents and copies, on the physical plane, the great forces in nature which are known in Hindu religion as the *Devas*, or Gods who take care of our physical vehicles. When we have discarded it at death, they take these vestures into the laboratory of nature and return them to us in a better condition, so that when we return, we get vehicles that have been to the laundryman. The scavenger, for instance, who is cleaning our path is surely making our physical path easier, and we can walk with greater comfort because of his daily toil. What does he represent if not really the spiritual sacrifice of making the spiritual path of others less difficult by clearing it of all rubbish or impurity? So, there is not a single task inferior. No honest work can be inferior, no routine drudgery, because every piece of work has become divine. Those of us who have read *The Light of Asia* will remember the story of Sujata, and how she glimpsed the great truth. The Great Lord said: "Thou teachest those who teach, Wiser than wisdom is thy simple lore. Be thou content to know not, knowing thus Thy way of right and duty: grow, thou flower!"

Now people will say, "That is very easy to practise, but there are such complicated experiences and positions in our life that we cannot see what the spiritual sacrifice can be." This is because our knowledge is limited, but if we keep on practising these great universal truths in the things that are already clear, and easy for us, we will in time have more knowledge and understanding. The things that are complicated today will be read in terms of symbols. But even this naturally requires a tremendous attention and concentration because we must continuously remind ourselves of the spiritual sacrifice in ourselves and all creatures. How to attain concentration which will help us in becoming one-pointed and therefore in being able to apply the great truths in our every-day life, is the subject of the Sixth Discourse.

(Concluded)

VAYU—THE GOD OF AIR

II

SAMVARGA VIDYA occurs in chapter IV, sections 1 to 3 of the *Chhandogya Upanishad*, and king Janasruti was initiated into this *vidya* by sage Raikva. *Samvarga* implies absorbent into which everything enters, that which sucks everything into itself. Raikva says that there is great cosmic air or wind (*Vayu*) which is an absorbent of everything. Everything is absorbed into it, everything rises from it, everything is maintained in it, and everything goes back into it. This great wind or *Vayu* represents the great Being. It is this cosmic “wind” or great Being which compels the planets, the stars and the sun to direct their courses in a given manner. Cosmically, *Vayu* is the absorber, the Supreme deity into which everything—Fire, Sun, Moon, *Parjanya* (rain or water)—gets merged. However, *Samvarga* or supreme absorbent is cosmic as well as individual. Individually *prana* is the ultimate absorbent, because the Supreme Deity works as *Prana* in an individual, and regulates everything. When we go to sleep the mind is withdrawn by the action of *prana*. The speech and senses are all drawn into it. Every organ, eye, ear, etc. which operates during the waking state is withdrawn. The Supreme Being, the great absorbent, works outside and also inside. Outwardly, it is cosmic *prana*, *Vayu*, or *Hiranyagarbha* which absorbs everything into itself, and inwardly it is *Prana*. In meditation, the inward and outward must be brought together, and envisaged as One single Reality, explains Swami Krishnananda.

Vayu, the God of the winds is considered to be one of the storm-gods. He is often associated with Indra, regarded as one of the forms of Indra, or even identical with him, and thus ruling over the atmosphere. In the *Secret Doctrine* (II, 378), *Vayu* is equated with Indra. H.P.B. mentions that in the *Rig Veda* Indra is the highest and greatest of the Gods, and his Soma-drinking is allegorical of his highly spiritual nature. In the *Puranas* Indra becomes a profligate, and a regular drunkard on the Soma juice, in the terrestrial way. We

find a peculiar account of the birth of storm deities called “Maruts” in the *Ramayana* and the *Puranas*. They are shown as allies of Indra, and at the same time they are also described as “sons of Rudra.” Who or what are the Maruts?

In the *Ramayana* and in the *Puranas* Diti is described as daughter of Daksha, wife of *rishi* Kasyapa, and the mother of the *Daityas*. *Vishnu Purana* narrates that having lost her children, she begged of Kasyapa a son of irresistible prowess, who should destroy Indra. The boon was granted, but with the condition: “If, with thoughts wholly pious, and person entirely pure, you carefully carry the babe in your womb for a hundred years.” She assiduously observed the condition. But Indra knew what was going to happen so he approached her and attended upon her with humility, waiting for his opportunity. In the last year of the hundred years, one day Diti retired to rest without washing her feet. It is said that using his power, Indra shrunk himself to a tiny size and entered her womb. With his thunderbolt he divided the embryo in her womb into seven portions. Thus mutilated the child cried bitterly, and Indra being unable to pacify it, became angry and divided each of the seven portions into seven, thus forming swift-moving deities called Maruts. The name “Marut” is derived from the words, “*Ma-rodih*,” means “weep not,” used by Indra to quiet them, who in compassion converted them into Maruts. According to another account, Parvati pleaded with Siva to transform these lumps of flesh into boys. He accordingly made them into boys of like age and form, and gave them to Parvati as her sons, whence they are called “sons of Rudra”.

In the *Secret Doctrine* (II, 613-615) H.P.B. explains the inner, occult significance of this account. She points out that Diti is Aditi or *Akasa* in her highest form, *i.e.*, the sixth principle of metaphysical nature. Diti, as the mother of the Maruts, is one of her terrestrial forms, and which represents the divine Soul in the ascetic, as also the divine aspirations of mystic Humanity towards deliverance from the webs of *Maya*, and final bliss. Indra, who was one of the greatest gods of Hindu Pantheon has now fallen and become an opponent

of asceticism and an enemy of holy aspirations. Thus, now, Indra is the cosmic principle *Mahat* and hence the mind in man which is dual: one aspect aspires to connect with *Buddhi*; the other is dragged down by passions and desires. Indra, as representing the lower mind in man, entangled by passions and desires, seeks to save himself from destruction, by seeking to destroy the coming “babe” who was destined to destroy him. The “babe” in the womb of Diti represents the steady will of the Yogi, determined to resist all temptations, and thus destroy the passions within his earthly personality. But normally the personality gets the upper hand, and flesh conquers spirit. This is represented as Indra succeeding in dividing the embryo. Thus, higher aspirations and Will are frustrated giving upper hand to passions and desires. Thus, the Maruts represent, (a) *mystically*, the *passions* that storm and rage within every spiritual aspirant’s breast, when preparing for an ascetic life (b) actual conscious Existences, Beings of a cosmic and psychic nature.

During *Dwapara Yuga* when the Fourth or Atlantean Race was flourishing, there was much materiality and degradation of spirituality, and when fourth race perished few elect in that race were saved to lead the Fifth Race humanity. Thus, we might say, Indra succeeded in dividing the “Embryo” of the new divine adeptship, begotten once more by the Ascetics of the Aryan Fifth Race, into seven portions. This has reference to seven degrees of Adeptship and also to seven Root-races and each root-race having seven sub-races in a Round. Every Round starts with globe A with its Root-Manu. For each globe in a planetary chain which produces seven root-races there is a minor Manu, produced by the Root-Manu of that Round. There being (7 x 7) 49 such minor Manus in a given Round, corresponding to 49 portions into which the embryo was divided.

In occult parlance, Maruts represent the Egos of great Adepts who remain in the invisible atmosphere of the earth to help mankind, by voluntarily renouncing *Nirvana*. “Therefore are the Maruts

shown as the sons of Siva-Rudra, whose ‘*third eye*’ [awakening of spiritual intuition], mystically, must be acquired by the ascetic before he becomes an Adept,” explains H.P.B.

The Trinity of the modern Pantheon, namely, Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiva, the destroyer are but reflection or copy of the original Vedic trinity, *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Surya*. Brahma, Vishnu and Siva are considered to be the three attributes or *gunas* of the universe. Brahma is considered to be the personified embodiment of the quality of *Rajas*, which is the quality of activity and the desire for procreation, which causes the manifestation of the universe. Like Brahma, *Agni* may be taken to represent the quality of *rajas*. Vishnu is considered to be the embodiment of *Sattvaguna* which is the quality of preservation and restful enjoyment. *Surya* may be taken to represent *Sattva* quality. Siva is considered to be the embodiment of *Tamas*, which is the quality of decay leading to destruction. *Vayu* may be taken to represent the quality of *Tamas* embodying the forces of disintegration.

The Theosophical Glossary mentions that in esoteric interpretation, the vedic trinity of *Agni*, *Vayu* and *Surya* are the three cosmic principles, and correspond with the three human principles, *Kama*, *Kama-Manas* and *Manas*, the sun of the intellect. Thus, *Vayu* corresponds to *Kama-Manas*. Probably this may help us to understand why Hanuman is called the son of *Vayu*. H.P.B. explains that “Hanuman is the personified symbol of ‘the earthly man,’ who in spite of his animal nature, unfolds his spiritual nature by personal effort and, having overcome the former, emerges as the intellectual victor over all things earthly, finally becoming a god-like individual worthy to walk arm in arm with Rama, the embodiment of the highest divinity” (*From the Caves and Jungles of Hindostan*, p. 589fn.). *Kama-manas* is the incarnated mind entangled in passions and desires. But whenever that mind is able to free itself from the clutches of desires, it becomes an organ of free will in man and the guide of highest mental faculties. In the light of this we can understand why the *Ramayana* says, “The chief of monkeys is perfect; no one equals

him in the *sastras*, in learning, and in ascertaining the sense of the scriptures. In all sciences, in the rules of austerity, he rivals the preceptor of the gods.” (*A Classical Dictionary of Hindu Mythology and Religion*)

The *Vishnu Purana* makes *Vayu*, the King of the *Gandharvas*. *The Theosophical Glossary* describes *Gandharvas* as the celestial choristers and musicians of India. In the *Vedas* these deities reveal the secrets of heaven and earth and esoteric science to mortals. They had charge of the sacred Soma plant and its juice, the ambrosia drunk in the temple which gives “omniscience.” Narada is also considered to be the leader of the *Gandharvas*, and *esoterically*, the reason for it is explained by the fact that the *Gandharvas* are “the instructors of men in the secret sciences” (*S.D.*, II, 584). Elsewhere H.P.B. explains that Narada—a great Rishi and virtually a Kumara—is one of the 10,000 sons of Brahma, brought forth for the purpose of peopling the world. Narada persuaded these sons to remain celibate and holy ascetics and twice frustrated Daksha’s aim. We may perhaps connect *Vayu* also with the *Kumaras*, as both *Vayu* and *Narada* are described as leaders of *Gandharvas*, and *Narada* is connected with *Kumaras*, who lighted up the mind of man.

Gandharvas represent various things at various levels. Thus, *Cosmically*—the *Gandharvas* are the aggregate powers of the solar-fire, and constitute its Forces; *psychically*—the intelligence residing in the *Sushumna*, Solar ray, the highest of the *seven* rays; *mystically*—the occult force in the Soma (the moon, or lunar plant) and the drink made of it; *physically*—the phenomenal, and *spiritually*—the noumenal causes of *Sound* and the “Voice of Nature.” Hence, they are called the 6,333 “heavenly Singers” and musicians of Indra’s loka who personify (even in number) the various and manifold sounds in Nature, both above and below. (*S.D.*, I, 523 fn.)

Exoterically, *Vayu*, like Indra, is also fond of the Soma juice. But esoterically and mystically, *Vayu* is the occult force in the Soma (the moon, or lunar plant) and the drink made of it. Soma is another name of the moon, and it is also the juice of the plant of that name,

used in the temples for trance purposes; a sacred beverage. In *Isis Unveiled*, explaining *Manticism*, H.P.B. mentions that when the initiate sparingly drinks of the sacred soma-juice, he is put in communication with not only minor gods, but with his own divine nature, so that his soul receives direct illumination from the divine essence itself. He experiences ecstatic visions and is able to make prophecy. Soma, the moon, is the symbol of the Secret Wisdom.

There is the allegory of Tara, Soma and *Brihaspati* (Jupiter), wherein *Brihaspati* represents *dead-letter* and ritualistic or ceremonial worship. Tara, his wife, symbolizes a person, who although wedded to dogmatic worship longs for true wisdom. She is *carried away* by Soma—who initiates her into mysteries, *Gupta Vidya* or esoteric Wisdom. This is represented by saying that union of Tara and Soma was *Budha*—(Greek Hermes or Mercury), *i.e.*, God of Wisdom or Ganesa. Hence the incarnated consciousness of the aspiring soul unites with *Buddhi* giving rise to wisdom. In India the initiated received the “Soma” sacred drink, which helped to liberate his soul from the body. Thus:

The real property of the *true* Soma was (and *is*) to make a new *man* of the Initiate, after he is *reborn*, namely once that he begins to live in his *astral* body; for, his spiritual nature overcoming the physical, he would soon snap it off and part even from that etherealized form....The partaker of Soma finds himself both linked to his external body and yet away from it in his spiritual form. The latter, freed from the former, soars for the time being in his ethereal higher regions, becoming virtually “as one of the gods,” and yet preserving in his physical brain the memory of what he sees and learns. Plainly speaking, *Soma* is the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge forbidden by the Elohim to Adam and Eve. (*S.D.*, II, 499 & fn.)

(*Concluded*)

THE INSTITUTION OF MARRIAGE

I

THE WORD “marriage” comes from the Latin root *maritara*, meaning, “to provide with a husband and wife,” and *maritari*, means to get married. It is a provision of natural law that a magnetic attraction exists between opposite sexes in all the kingdoms of nature. This too, as every other phenomenon, in the grand scheme of nature, serves a definite purpose. In the animal and vegetable world it is a means for evolution of species through reproduction and multiplication. In the human kingdom too the same law operates which, besides serving the purpose of generation of progeny, also fulfills the deep emotional need of men and women to enjoy each other’s companionship fostered in a bond of love and friendship, and provides for healthy all-round growth of children into adulthood as responsible individuals in society, in an atmosphere of mutual love and affection, trust and devotion, of family life. Home is the first and basic school in which children learn their first lessons of life, and their character is shaped by the parents and the elders of the family. Thus marriage has always been an institution to build homes. It is held from remotest antiquity that healthy homes formed the basic building blocks of a healthy society and a wise and prosperous nation. In such a healthy nation woman naturally comes to occupy the most honoured place in society as a builder of home together with her life partner. This was so in the ancient civilizations.

At this time of history, however, the sanctity of marriage as an institution to build homes has been lost to a great extent. In the East, the ancient traditions, rich with wisdom of hoary antiquity, as in India and China, for example, is fast eroding, and in many quarters almost extinguished. With accentuation of individualism and selfishness, closely knit extended families have broken into nuclear families, and marriages are reduced to mere marriage of personal conveniences, material interests and pleasures alone. Divorce, broken homes, violation of dignity and modesty of women, child abuses,

orphaned old people, same sex marriages, and a host of other concomitant social evils are all the inevitable bizarre outcome of the fall of the institution of marriage. These negative trends are the inevitable outgrowth of the false notion that the human being is a product of animal evolution and that man’s ancestry is traceable to savagery. This is taught in the face of overwhelming evidences to the contrary. It is an ancient psychological truism that man becomes of the nature of the idea he holds to be true, and on which his faith is fixed. Hence there is tendency to animalism, which is the necessary outcome of materialism.

Therefore, restoration of the sanctity of the institution of marriage and building of home through diffusion of theosophical education are the first prerequisite in any effort towards social reform and rebuilding of nations. We have to study the timeless Wisdom-Science of ancient Teachers and Guides of mankind and discover therein great truths of life and its purpose. The knowledge of the laws of life which promoted the higher evolution of humanity was taught and inculcated by high and exalted Beings, who were perfected men from prior periods of evolution, and who watched over the childhood of humanity. The truths they imparted remain as innate ideas to this day in the human soul, and it is to this that the origin of the idea of marriage as a religious and social institution of great sanctity is to be traced. This law, or, order of nature, was perfectly known to the ancient peoples. In ancient India it was known as *Dharma*, in ancient China as the Law of Virtue, the Way of Truth, the Way of Heaven, by Jesus as the Kingdom of Heaven. Though the spiritual and moral bearings of the institution of marriage are to a large extent lost in the modern world, yet traces of it are to be found in the religions, customs and traditions of ancient peoples, such as, the Hindus, the Parsis and the Chinese, and so forth. Even in the newer nations and more recent religions, certain sanctity is attached to the institution of marriage, and is also subjected to regulations of civil laws in matters concerning mutual rights and obligations of spouses and their children.

There have been many kinds of marriages from ancient times. Monogamy has been the most common system of marriage though polygamy is not infrequent in many cultures. Polyandry, group marriages and forced marriages are relatively rare, and are not legally recognized in the civil laws of most nations. There also have been many ways of entering into marriage tie. In the Ordinances of Manu eight kinds of marriage rites are given in the order of their relative quality and merit, applicable to four castes, as also the Karmic effects to which each leads, as every human action is productive of many good and evil consequences which binds man, to enjoy or suffer.

The Ordinances of Manu lays down laws relating to the social organization based on character, quality and merit of individuals classified into four main divisions, specification of their respective duties and obligations, and regulation of the four stages of the life cycle of individuals, all of which have a firm foundation in *Dharma*, the Moral Order of the Universe, and all tending to one lofty goal, namely, freedom of the Soul and human perfection. It is true that some parts of the scripture have been interpolated by Brahminical priest class over centuries for their selfish ends. However the grandeur of the spirit of the laws is still discernible in what remains. One finds in them, when sifted and studied in the light of Theosophy, invaluable guidance in the conduct of individual, family and social life, which tend to highest happiness and freedom.

If these ancient laws have been neglected, misunderstood and misapplied giving rise to superstitions in India, it is because of the loss of the life-infusing light of Theosophy which can illuminate the *Shastras*. Only the dead-letter is adhered to at the present time, where they are observed at all, and wholly neglected, and even ridiculed, by the modern educated classes, the children of materialism and skepticism of the times, on the other.

In the traditions of ancient China of hoary antiquity Fu-hsi or Po-hsi is regarded as the first human ruler, the Krishna of China, and contemporaneous with him (about 5000 B.C.) to whom the spread of science and arts of all aspects of civilization is traced. The

great personage was an advocate of pure family life and dignity of home. Confucius appeared about the 5th century B.C. who gathered together and codified metaphysics, philosophy, history and folklore of the past ages. Like Manu of India he lays down laws of life encompassing all aspects of human life. Confucius, speaking of the Moral Order of the universe, equivalent of *Dharma* of the Hindus, says that it is the Law of laws, and absolutely binding. Thus:

How active it is everywhere! Invisible to the eyes and impalpable to the senses, it is inherent in all things, and nothing can escape it for one instant; “a law from which we can escape is not the moral law.”

The Moral Law, called by him as *filial piety*, is comprehensive, encompassing the individual, family, nation and all of humanity, by a knowledge and application of which inferior man becomes a superior man. Individual is the builder of the state and the empire through the family by following filial piety. This inner moral law flows from the heart of man which frees man from grief and fear, which means liberation and human perfection, as shown by Manu. Taoism of Lao Tse, contemporary of Confucius, essentially teaches the same path to perfection by following the classic path of Virtue. Lao Tse speaks of cycles of enlightenment and darkness succeeding each other, like day and night, and says that in the age of Virtue, the Path of Virtue is perceived and followed, and that in the vulgar age it is neglected. But, he teaches, the embodied Tao—the silent Teachers and Their Teachings—is always in the world and that those who discern them and apply themselves the precepts, begin for themselves and the world the cycle of Wisdom.

Zoroastrian religion also teaches the great sanctity of marriage and sacredness of relationship between husband and wife.

I say (these) words to you, marrying brides and bridegrooms! Impress them upon your minds; may you two enjoy a life of good mind by following the law of religion. Let each one of you clothe the other with righteousness. Then assuredly there will be happy life for you. (*Yasna*,

53:5)

“Following the law of religion,” and spouses “clothing” each other with “righteousness” have precisely the same significance as raising the family in accordance with the moral order of the universe.

In India there prevails a mistaken notion for long centuries that family life (*Grihasta Dharma*) is a hindrance to spiritual culture, and many an aspirant, to this day, retires from the world and takes to monastic life. The folly persists despite unequivocal proclamation of the *Shastras* that of the four stages of the cycle of man’s life—student-life of *Brahmacharya*, *Grihasta* life of the married person, *Vanaprastha*, the contemplative life of the middle age, and *Sannyasa*, the last stage of total renunciation of the world in old age—the *Grihasta Dharma* is the most exalted, as it alone brings forth, supports and sustains the other three orders. Theosophy teaches that one cannot become a practical Occultist unless one has gone through the discipline of Married life and learned the lessons of right performance of duties, self-control and sacrifice. The holy scriptures of the Zoroastrians teach the same thing.

O Spitama Zarathushtra! Indeed, I thus recommend here unto thee, a man with wife is above a *magard* (an unmarried man) who grows up (unmarried); a man with a family is above one without any family, a man with children above one without children....That place is happy over which a holy man builds a house with fire, cattle, wife and children and good followers. (*Vendidad*, 4:47 and 3:2)

In all the ancient venerable cultures we see that the purpose of marriage is cultivation of Virtue and building of character, which form the foundation of a high civilization. Confucian tenet of good society rested on filial piety. Devotion to one’s parent was associated with devotion to the State. “The ceremony (marriage) lies at the foundation of government.” (*Li Chi*, Book xxiv–11)

(*To be concluded*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

[In this section we seek to answer frequently asked questions, at U.L.T. meetings or during private conversations and discussions with people who seek the answers in the light of Theosophy. Answers given in this section are by no means final. Only a line of thought is being offered by applying general principles of Theosophy.]

Question: *Yana* means vehicle. Why does H.P.B. say in the *Secret Doctrine* (I, 39) that *yana* is a mystic expression? Can we say *yana* also means path which takes us to our destination?

Answer: *Yana* means Vehicle or *Vahan*. In the *Theosophical Glossary*, *Vahan* is defined as a vehicle, the carrier of something immaterial and formless. All the gods and goddesses are represented as using *vahanas* to manifest themselves, which vehicles are symbolical. For example, during *Pralaya*, Vishnu is depicted as sleeping over Ananta “the infinite” (Space), symbolized by the serpent Sesha, and during the *Manvantaras* he has Garuda, the symbol of the great cycle as his vehicle. On the other hand, we may say that vehicle is the basis or bearer, which is more substantial than that which it bears. Thus, our brain is vehicle or *vahan* of superphysical thought. *Buddhi*, the spiritual Soul, is the vehicle of *Atman*, the purely immaterial principle. In Buddhism, the Hinayana School is “Little Vehicle” and the Mahayana School is the “Great Vehicle,” of Buddha’s thought. Both the Hinayana and Mahayana Systems are the vehicles through which teachings of the Buddha find expression, but while the former gives out the exoteric teachings of the Buddha, the latter gives the teachings which he gave to his close disciples; but the present day Mahayana System may not contain all the esoteric instructions. All religious systems have their exoteric and esoteric side, the greater and lesser mysteries. Depending upon the extent to which the vehicle is able to give expression to the true, esoteric teachings, it may be called greater or lesser *yana*.

In a sense, words, phrases and symbols are “vehicles” used for suggesting the ideas that are new to the mind. When there is insistence on words and symbols, irrespective of the ideas, they degenerate into dead letter dogma and lose their vitalizing power. They cease to be vehicles of spirit. Says H.P.B. in the article, “Thoughts on Theosophy,” that appeared in *Lucifer* (October 1887) that the “letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” Theosophy is the vehicle of the spirit that gives life, hence nothing *dogmatic* can be truly *theosophical*. In other words, symbols and words are important only in so far as they convey the idea. Also, certain teachings are metaphorical, and accepting them in dead-letter form could be dangerous. *The Voice of the Silence* suggests: “Give up thy life if thou wouldst live,” which only asks us to give up the life of personality to be able to live the spiritual life. In *Koran* and in *Bible* there are incidents where the devotee is asked by the god to sacrifice his beloved son or daughter. When this is taken in dead-letter form, it leads to human and animal sacrifice, whereas what is suggested is to cultivate detachment towards people, places, or things we may be extremely fond of. Mr. Judge suggests that we must read the *Gita*, and which applies to all the scriptures, by the light of the spiritual lamp within, *i.e.*, with the help of spiritual intuition. We must read between the lines and within the words, to get the hidden meaning not conveyed by the words.

Truth is beyond all formulations. We have to go beyond the forms. The *Gita* points out that for a truth realizing *Brahmana*, there are about as many benefits in the Vedas, as there are in a tank stretching free on all sides and from which water has run out. When Buddha was about to reach enlightenment, Mara commanded all his evil powers—Ignorance, hatred, lust, delusion, pride etc.—to keep the Truth from the Buddha. All these evil powers came to Buddha—*personified*—to prevent him from attaining to Truth. One of these powers was the power of formal religion, which supports and nourishes form side that includes ceremonies, rituals, prayers, etc. This power of formal religion is termed *silavrata-paramarsa*, and

this personified power challenged Buddha and said, “Wilt thou dare, put by our sacred books, dethrone our gods, unpeople all the temples, shaking down the law which feeds the priests and props the realms?” To this the Buddha replied that these are all forms and they must pass, while truth always remains. Buddhism mentions ten fetters which binds a person to the wheel of life or *bhavachakra*. One of the fetters is *silavrata-paramarsa* or tendency to regard ethical rules and religious observances as ends in themselves. Buddha always said that the ethical precepts, religious observances and even study of the scriptures, are like a boat, a means to an end. You do not carry the boat on your head once it has served the purpose of enabling you to cross the river!

Yana or vehicle seems to be different from the path that is walked by the disciple to reach perfection and refers to the journey from one point to another, involving various stages, in which vehicle can be used. The Spiritual Path represents journey or progress from our present state of bondage to the state of enlightenment.

Question: When a person dies unnatural death, such as, in accident or suicide, what kind of astral body remains—*Kama-rupa*, *mayavi-rupa* or something else?

Answer: In *Raja-Yoga or Occultism*, H.P.B. describes three kinds of astral bodies. She speaks of *Linga Sarira* as the “Double” around which physical body is formed. This double is born with man and dies with man and can never separate itself too far away from the body. It disintegrates *pari passu* with the body. She calls this “double,” as *Linga Sarira* or Protean body or Plastic body. The *Linga Sarira* is connected by a material cord with the physical body, so that if *Linga Sarira* is hurt then by repercussion the physical body is also hurt.

The second kind of astral body is called “Thought” body, or Dream body or *Mayavi-rupa*. During life the *mayavi-rupa* or “Illusion-body,” is the vehicle on which thoughts as also the passions and desires get impressed. The third kind of astral body is the true Ego, called Causal body. H.P.B. hastens to explain that in reality

there is only one astral body, with three aspects or phases: the most material portion disappears with the body; the middle portion survives as temporary entity in the astral region; and the third is the immortal aspect, which survives throughout the *manvantara*.

In case of natural death, after the death of the physical body, there is segregation of impressions made on *Mayavi rupa* or Thought body. The impressions of higher thoughts on *Mayavi rupa* merge after death entirely into the causal body or Ego, and the Ego goes to *Devachan* with the aroma of last personality. However, an aspect of *mayavi-rupa* with the impressions of lower, material thoughts and acts, as also lower desires, forms *Bhoot* or *Ghost* or *Kamarupa*, after death.

However, in case of unnatural death, such as, accident, suicide, etc., the person finds himself in the astral atmosphere only partly dead, only minus the physical body. In order to distinguish it from *Kamarupic* shells, these are designated as *shades*. If the person committed suicide at the age of thirty and his natural life term was seventy then the astral entity will remain in the astral atmosphere for next forty years, only after that there is final separation of the Ego from the lower principles, leading to the formation of *kamarupic* shell, as the Ego departs to *Devachan* clothed in Causal body.

The term *Mayavi rupa* is generally used to describe astral body that is the result of conscious or unconscious exercise of thought or *Kriyasakti*. It is, in fact, described as “walking thought.” When thoughts are intense, they become objectivised. However, for an ordinary man, the *Mayavi rupa* does not speak; it only appears to oneself (as in autoscopic experience) or to another. H.P.B. gives several instances of *Mayavi rupas*. In one case, the exhausted professor who longed to get back home and rest, unconsciously sent out his *Mayavi rupa* which reached home before him. When he reached home and knocked at the door, the surprised maid told him that she had already let him in, sometime back. Upon entering the house, he saw himself (his *mayavi rupa*) sitting in the room!

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Is time an illusion? All the religions of the world are mystified as to the purpose and meaning of time. Many ancient cultures, such as the Incan, Mayan, Native American, Buddhists, Jains and others have a concept of a wheel of time, implying that they regarded time as something cyclic consisting of repeating ages. The Judeo-Christian world-view regarded time as linear, beginning with the act of creation by God and ending with the present order of things. Kabbalah, the mystic discipline and school of thought, which originated in Judaism, views time differently, regarding it as an illusion, wherein both the future and the past should be recognized to be simultaneously present. The concept is similar to Krishna’s revealing his *vishvaroop*a to Arjuna, in which he shows that all of time is contained in him, in which past, present and future were eternally fused together in stasis. Modern researchers also seem to subscribe to this view when they say that all points in time are equally real and exist as a “togetherness of things.” It is called “block time” or “block universe” in which past never finishes, and the future is already present.

British Physicist, Julian Barbour, posits that the universe may well be static, and motion and the passage of time may be an illusion. In his book, *The End of Time*, he writes: “It is utterly beyond our power to measure the changes of things by time. Quite the contrary, time is an abstraction at which we arrive through the changes of things.” Such change merely creates an illusion of time, with each individual moment existing in its own right, complete, whole and happened. Such ideas would have been no better than philosophical views, but recently, Ekaterina Moreva and his team, who performed first research test of these ideas at the Instituto Nazionale di Ricerca Metrologica in Turin, Italy, confirmed that “time is indeed only an emergent phenomenon that comes about because of the nature of something called quantum entanglement. And it exists only for observers inside the universe. Any god-like observer outside sees a static unchanging universe,” writes Mukul Sharma. However, it

seems totally counterintuitive, because we are born, we grow up, we die; galaxies collide to form new galaxies, etc. Could it all be merely an illusion through which we can continue to perform our lives? asks Sharma. (*The Speaking Tree, Sunday Times of India*, November 22, 2015)

Time is an illusion produced by succession of states of consciousness and where there is no such consciousness in which that illusion could be produced, there Time “lies asleep.” H.P.B. points out that actually the division of time which we call as present is momentary, and the sensation of “present moment” comes because of the blurring of the momentary glimpses, of the things which are passing from the region of the ideal, or yet to be, or future, into the region of past or memory. Time is a function of consciousness. If we had no consciousness (for instance, we are unconscious on the physical plane, when we are asleep), we would not be subject to the time process. Similarly, if we had all-consciousness, there could not be a time sense. In *devachan (Swarga)*, there is no sense of the lapse of time.

The Secret Doctrine mentions (I, 43) that the three periods—the Present, the Past, and the Future—are in the esoteric philosophy a compound time. A compound is different from mixture in that the constituents of a mixture can be separated, such as in rice mixed with wheat. But the compound is made by complete merging of one constituent into another, so that the constituents in a compound are indistinguishable from each other. In the real or noumenal world, there is only Eternal Now.

However on phenomenal plane, these three are composite numbers. A composite number is a number greater than zero, which is not a prime number and is divisible by some number other than 1 and itself, and hence is the result of multiplication of two or more numbers. In other words, of past, present and future, each contains the other two. The past is the child of future and present, as the future becomes present and then moves into past. The present is the link between past and future, and holds the “seed” from the past,

and the tree or fruition of the future. That which we call future arises from the past and present *and is continuous with it*. Between the past and the future there is continuity of change and continuity of causation. Without continuity of causation we would be at a loss to anticipate future.

Are some people luckier than others? Richard Wiseman, professor of psychology and author of the book *Luck Factor*, believes that unlucky people can change their fortune. After studying 1,000 people he came to the conclusion that it is resilience that turns bad luck into good one. “Lucky people are not always lucky—they handle adversity better.” All good things—including luck—begin with a positive thought. Life coach Malminder Gill believes that all things begin with a thought, which leads to an idea, and acting upon this idea brings it to life. Thus, when you think yourself lucky, you increase your self-confidence. Wiseman writes in his book, “Lucky people create, notice, and act upon the chance opportunities in their lives.” It is important to be prepared when opportunity strikes. Thus, for instance, if one wins a travel coupon to an exotic location, and needs to leave in the next few days, but has not got his passport ready, then he is someone who is not ready for the opportunity and hence considers himself unlucky. We forget that we create our own luck and our own reality.

Research conducted at the University of Cologne, Germany, revealed that believing something is lucky for you, positively enhances your thoughts and efforts to the extent that luck actually starts favouring you. Thus, for instance, Supermodel Heidi Klum, popstars Madonna and Rihanna wear a hamsa necklace for luck. Winston Churchill petted black cats to obtain good luck. “A talisman does not bring one any luck by itself. It is perhaps your belief and feeling of positivity when you use that lucky charm which does the trick.... The danger, however, is in becoming too dependent on the lucky charm and forgetting to stay alert and positive.... Dealing with

negativity [in others around you] and still hanging on to your positive spirit is the stuff that good luck is made of,” writes Vinita Nangia.

One must try new things instead of getting stuck in the routines; one must dwell on the good fortune instead of dwelling on the ill fortune, and learn to listen to hunches. These are some of the suggestions for a person who wants to be lucky, writes Nona Walia. (*Times Life, Sunday Times of India*, November 8, 2015)

Generally, we look upon lucky people as those who are favoured, failing to realize that the “luck” which manifests in advantageous surroundings or in having all things going smooth and right, is the result of his Karma of this or previous lives. Often, it results from the attitude of complete resignation to whatever comes in life. “Lucky” people are often those who are not anxious but display faith in the law. “Anxiety” puts an invisible obstacle in the path of what we want done. In the absence of anxiety, there is clarity of perspective and it facilitates to turn the tide in a favourable direction. At times, it is not as if the person is advantaged, but he has the knack of turning to his advantage whatever comes his way. The most arduous task is done with such pleasure that it can make others feel that he is lucky to be doing it. For instance, when Tom Sawyer was asked by his aunt to paint the compound wall, he began doing it with such interest and pleasure that other boys actually bribed him with apples, shiny buttons, souvenirs, etc., to allow them to do his work! Often it is the case of “the grass being greener on the other side.”

We must not be in a hurry to judge everyday circumstances as “lucky” or “unlucky.” Often, an obvious setback proves to be an opportunity in disguise, and *vice versa*. While it is true that so-called luck or advantages are the result of Karma, whether they are conducive for spiritual progress or not is determined by the way we handle them. It appears that seldom have we the wisdom to use the advantages beneficently. On the other hand, what the world considers as disadvantage is the real “advantage” from the point of view of soul. Struggle, adversity, poverty, etc., help in gaining strength and

building of character.

It therefore depends on us how we define personal luck or ill luck. One person who “misses the bus” may growl at his bad luck, another who is used to taking everything in his stride moves on without wasting energy in complaining. Even when good fortune smiles on him he is doubly cautious to use the opportunity advantageously for himself and for others, since the higher goal of life is ever kept in sight.

In both Latin and Greek, the word “ego” just means “I”. Freud describes it as a mediator between instinctual urges (*Id*) and the reality (*Superego*). More commonly we use the word “ego” to mean self-identity or self-importance. Usually it is associated with arrogance and selfishness. The problem is not the ego itself, but how it is used. After all, “I am just I” and no one else. But that “I” can be the best or worst me. It all depends upon how I see myself in relation to others and events.

In a hypothetical situation, a person standing in a queue in a supermarket, who has to get back to office in fifteen minutes’ time, finding that he is standing in a longer queue which seems to move slowly, may jump to a shorter queue. However, when he finds that the queue he just left has begun to move faster, while the shorter queue is just not moving due to some problem at the counter, he begins to fret and fume, and ultimately begins to shout, blaming the system, etc. But when he notices that a person in front of him, waiting patiently, is a blind person, he feels ashamed. In this situation, the person saw only his own needs and was totally unaware of the needs of the blind man. The myopic sees the world as a function of itself. This limited Ego is a sun and other people and things revolve around it. In the Jewish tradition, this ugly side of the ego is described as a giant at the cross-roads, threatening people with a huge axe. The impatient ones succumb to it and do what it wants, but the observant ones notice that the giant does not have any feet and hence

remain unconcerned with its threats.

It is important for us to learn to expand the sense of “I,” and begin to be aware of greater sense of self. It is important to realize that “I am a spiritual being.” As such, I am a child of the source we call God, Allah, Jehovah, Shiva or whatever. I must see others in their own right and not as a function of my needs and desires. Spiritual effort, therefore, is not to annul the ego but to really elevate the sense of self and see things as they are, writes BK Ken, Sao Paulo, Brazil. (*Purity*, November 2015)

Theosophy teaches that there is a personal “I” and an individual “I” in man. The feeling of personal “I” arises out of identification with name and form. Each one regards himself as separated from the others. It gives rise to Egotism—*Ahankara* and selfishness. The Individual “I” is the sense of “I am I,” or egoism. Even in case of loss of memory, a person may forget his name and address but he still feels that “I am myself and no other.” When we are able to transcend the self-identifying attachment to not only family and loved ones, but also to physical form, ideas, desires, emotions, etc., we succeed in merging the personal “I” into Individual “I.” But even then there remains a subtle sense of separateness. When the universe grows “I,” and there is the realization that “I am verily that Brahman,” then the separative feeling is transcended.

Light on the Path advises that every person must begin to regard himself as a part of the vast multitude; like a grain of sand which is washed hither and thither, and which, now and then, gets a chance to lie for a moment in the sunshine. In other words, there must be willingness to suffer and be inconvenienced like any other person in the world. Thus: “When a man is able to regard his own life as part of the whole like this he will no longer struggle in order to obtain anything for himself. . . . The ordinary man expects, not to take equal fortunes with the rest of the world, but in some points, about which he cares, to fare better than the others.”