

# **The Theosophical Movement**

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# The Light that was H.P.B.

We pass from what we see to that which is invisible to the eye of sense. Our fervent wish has been to show true souls how they lift aside the curtain, and in the brightness of that Night made Day, look with undazzled gaze upon the UNVEILED TRUTH.

—H. P. Blavatsky

All men are perceivers; yet the perception of no two beings is the same. It is easy enough to see that there is more than one kind of perception. There is physical seeing, mental perception and spiritual insight; any or all of these can be employed for understanding one and the same object.

Theosophy, the Theosophical Movement, the Masters who are behind both, and H. P. Blavatsky, the Messenger of all three, are regarded by the world and by Theosophists in very different perspectives. The right perspective, on which depends our true progress, is of supreme importance to all who would see, and seeing, understand, the Work of H.P.B. To see and to understand this, it becomes necessary to reconstruct our mental and moral nature in the light of her Teachings, to look at ourselves and at the world around us through her eyes. To study her writings in the light of our own heredity, environment, education and experience, to seek in them a fortification of our own preconceptions, whatever they are, to judge her by the habitual standards of human nature—all this is to see in a false perspective, is to colour her impersonal message and mission with the shades of our personal bias. Seeing her Work through her eyes, we shall be in a position to understand it with spiritual insight or intuition.

This insight or intuition is what H.P.B.—the still living, not the dead, H.P.B.—seeks to unfold in all those who energize themselves to become students of her Message. Her object primarily is not to instil so much knowledge and information into those who look on her as a Teacher, but to enable them to develop the *capacity* to know and to understand and thereby to teach and to serve. She came not to show us anything new, but to restate the Ancient Wisdom, to point the way to the Masters, and to teach us a new way of seeing Nature and ourselves.

The faculty of spiritual perception or of intuition is the penetrative quality of the mind. It enables us to penetrate not only into the subject that is being studied, but into *all* subjects. Study of H.P.B.'s works, properly carried on, awakens and sharpens this faculty. Its development naturally takes time. The right use of the Law of Correspondence and Analogy helps, and this is what H.P.B. has recommended. Losely related to the awakening of intuition is the task of activating *Buddhi*, which at present is passive in most human beings.

The occasional perusal of H.P.B.'s works will not develop spiritual insight. But if the student sets aside a portion of his time each day at a regular hour, and contemplates on what he has read, great results can be obtained. Regular study arouses certain vibrations, the Higher Mind responds to these vibrations; its comprehension of great metaphysical and abstract principles is mellowed by the pure compassion of *Buddhi* and clarity of perception results.

H.P.B.'s Work, like that of every true teacher, did not end with the transmission of doctrine. Her Teaching has the power not only to refresh and to energize her true disciples but also to re-create them—year after year, decade after decade. As we re-read her works and reflect upon her cosmopolitanism and the wondrous catholicity and unsectarianism of her Theosophy, we extend and deepen our vision and our understanding of her words and see in them dimensions and subtleties of meaning we had not seen before. In the measure of our own consubstantiality with her mind and heart will be our sensing of her nearness at any time, in any place. When our mind thinks and our heart feels as did her own, we shall be able to intuit her presence and to learn afresh ever new aspects of the old, old teachings.

Occasions such as the anniversary of her passing on May 8 afford fresh opportunities to the student-aspirant to assimilate the real H.P.B. by a constant dwelling on her Wisdom and her Compassion. The Light that was H.P.B. can make clear the spiritual vision of the mind-soul and enable it to perceive with the eye of the heart.

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No science, no philosophy—being at best but a fragment broken from WISDOM RELIGION—can stand alone, or be complete in itself. Truth, to be complete, must represent an unbroken continuity. It must have no gaps, no missing links. And which of our modern religions, sciences or philosophies is free from such defects? Truth is One. Even as the palest reflection of the Absolute, it can be no more dual than is absoluteness itself, nor can it have *two* aspects. But such truth is not the majorities, in our world of illusion—especially for those minds which are devoid of the *noetic* element. These have no substitute for the high spiritual and *quasi* absolute truth the relative one, which having two sides or aspects, both conditioned by appearances, lead our "brain-minds"—one to intellectual scientific materialism, the other to materialistic or anthropomorphic religiosity. But even that kind of truth, in order to offer a coherent and complete system of something, has, while naturally clashing with its opposite, to offer no gaps and contradictions, no broken or missing links, in the special system or doctrine it undertakes to represent.

—H. P. Blavatsky

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## The Spiritual Life

It is a fact of human nature that privation and adversity turn people's minds to the deeper things of life. This is a lesson of social history as well as of actual experience. Not only an individual, but a whole nation tries to reform when suffering overtakes the people. Whether the steps to reform are wise or otherwise is a different matter, but it is a fact that suffering, especially mental and moral suffering, does something to the very heart of the individual or the nation, and that

heart prompts, plans and effects a change. Unless there is the prompting, there is no planning. Unless a reform is planned, it cannot produce any change. In proportion to the extent and depth of the suffering is the strength of the inner urge or prompting towards reform. When the suffering is negligible, the prompting to cure it is weak.

In this connection we might note a singular process. There is no urge to reform, to grow better, to improve matters, when pain and sorrow are not at work. We can take an analogy: when we have a trivial bodily ailment, we do not rush to a doctor; we even refuse to attend to that ailment and say, "I have not time for such a trifling problem." But when the ailment is really serious, we do seek a doctor's advice and a remedy for the sick body. Again, there are times when the ailment is of such a nature as to evoke the doctor's pronouncement. "Well, it must run its course." There is a solid basis of truth in that expression in connection with numerous diseases—it must run its course, *i.e.*, its cyclic or periodic operation. But in such cases the wise doctor keeps the patient under his observation.

What is true of the body is equally true of the soul. There are three states of soul-suffering: (a) when the soul's ailment is trivial and no attention is paid to it; (b) when the ailment is so serious as to cause concern and pain, and then we need a "doctor"; (c) the intermediate state when we ourselves or our doctor-adviser says, "It must run its course"; which means either "I do not know what to do," or "I am doing whatever is necessary, but must wait and watch for the cyclic or periodic effects to bring about the summation of the reform." It is also true that when mental and moral anguish has not caused perplexity, people do not think about the soul. When we are happy and satisfied, we do not think of self-reform and improvement. That is why H. P. Blavatsky said in her Secret Doctrine, "Woe to those who live without suffering." Unless we are in some puzzlement or pain we do not sit up and take notice. We never ask, "Why are things right?" But when things go wrong, we immediately cry out, "How did that happen?" In the Bhagavad-Gita, Krishna names four classes of people who seek the Spirit or God or the Self, and the very first class is that of the afflicted.

Today, all over the world, there is poverty, disease, suffering, and the consequence is—puzzlement. *Why* and *how* are on everybody's lips, and many are the remedies offered. Social reform, political reform, economic and financial reform, and even religious reform is talked about. No one disagrees that whatever the nature of the reform, it must be fundamental and therefore must have a spiritual basis. But there are very few, indeed, who sit down to study and determine what soul is, what spirit is, what real reform means, and what is meant by a spiritual foundation. There is a babel of tongues and of thoughts that is probably more intense than in the Tower of Babel in ancient Shinar. The need of the hour is the philosopher, the mystic, the serene dreamer of accurate dreams.

The first principle of Theosophy as taught by H. P. Blavatsky is that self-reform is the only kind of reform that is lasting and truly beneficial. What does self-reform mean? Reform of the individual by himself. Unless he reforms himself, he cannot reform his family. He who does not know how to control his own passions is not fit to sit in any disarmament conference. He who is a rabid nationalist should not be sent to international conventions or to the United Nations. Theosophy begins at the beginning, and says that those who truly reform themselves, those

who by knowledge and discipline have really transformed themselves, are alone fit to be leaders and guides. Therefore Theosophy advocates individual reform. Each one of us must reform himself or herself; each one must grow in spiritual perception and soul-understanding, and then we shall be fit and worthy to serve all people.

Let us see in as simple and practical a way as possible what the spiritual life is and what it is not. Spiritual life is not aestheticism. In many countries the influence of art is great—poetry and painting, sculpture and architecture, and above all music immensely affect the lives of the people. On the whole, this is good; because it gives to people something other than their own selves to brood upon. But for that very reason, and because it stirs the emotions and the feelings and causes one kind of uplift, the influence of art is called spiritual. That would not be very objectionable, but for the fact that people do not distinguish between the inspiration and influence of art and the inspiration and influence of soul-science and spirit-philosophy. Therefore we must recognize that aestheticism is not spirituality.

The opposite of aestheticism is asceticism; and asceticism also is not spirituality. As The Voice of the Silence points out:

Believe thou not that sitting in dark forests, in proud seclusion and apart from men; believe thou not that life on roots and plants, that thirst assuaged with snow from the great Range—believe thou not, O Devotee, that this will lead thee to the goal of final liberation.

No amount of bodily practices, peculiar diets, dangerous breathing exercises, and so forth, will unfold spirituality.

Then there is religion—ritualism and belief. No educated person really believes today that any one particular church or religious creed is superior to another. Nay more, there is an increasing number of people who even see that formalism in religion, blind belief in religious creeds, and above all intolerance, are verily wombs of mischief and strife. Yet religiosity is mistaken for spirituality. Jesus, for instance, was a spiritual man, not a religious man. The sermon on the Mount is an expression of spirituality; whereas what happens in the churches is rooted in theological dogmas, and that is orthodoxy, not religion. There is idol-worship in Christendom, and it is much more subtle than idol-worship among the Hindus. No, religiosity is not spirituality. It is a kind of psychic Bohemianism. Excesses of sense-life make the "heaven" of the Bohemian.

If we transfer that principle to the sphere of religious creeds, in any land, not necessarily in Christendom, we have psychic intoxication, psychic exhilaration, psychic uplift. This we come across in some measure in every church and temple, in every synagogue and mosque. What asceticism is to aestheticism, that Bohemianism is to psychism. So, either bodily tension, not art, nor a free and easy life, nor orthodox religion, are expressions of spirituality. Each of these has a function and a place and a use, but to confound them with spiritual life is a big folly.

What, then, is the spiritual life? "Life" and "spirit" are words so commonly used that only a few take the trouble to define them. The word spirit is used in the pharmacy for one thing; in the

picture-gallery for another thing. Similarly, in chemistry life is something different from what it is in physics. Again, embryology defines life in one way, astronomy in another way. We live in an age of specialists and the synthesis of knowledge is a much neglected subject. Theosophy synthesizes all knowledge: religion, science and philosophy. Therefore it takes account of the whole man. To the athlete his body is the most important part of him; to the artist his feelings and emotions are the most relevant; to the philosopher his mind is of primary and supreme value; and so on. But Theosophy says: evaluate the different aspects and constituents of man with the aid of synthetic knowledge—all branches of knowledge, not only of the modern but also of the ancient world. That programme of life, what discipline of soul, what policy of spirit, does Theosophy give for practical use to the men and women of this age?

In Theosophical literature, the needs of all people—the learned scholar and the intelligent man in the street, the businessman and the housewife, are attended to. Man is different from woman, an American is different from an Italian, a European is different from an Asiatic, and yet man is man everywhere, the same in his limitations and aspirations, showing the same kind of devotion to duty and also its neglect, expressing virtue and vice, which are the same everywhere. These outer differences illusion people into separative tendencies, and even in matters of spiritual life people talk of eastern and western Occultism. It is an arbitrary division. Spirit is one and spiritual life is the same for all.

That gives us the first necessary qualification of the spiritual life. An individual desiring to live the higher soul-life or spiritual life has to recognize the fact that he may be brown or white, yet his blood is red; we come across the same types of blood in Europeans as in Asians, because feelings and emotions which affect the ingredients of blood are present everywhere. Take an example: anger in an Indian produces the same effect in his blood and on his breathing as anger in a Frenchman; and there are angry people everywhere. Take the mind: scientists of India are not different from Western scientists of the same rank. Behind all differences we see a unity. Theosophy cuts across the numerous classifications and divisions in the human kingdom and teaches that in his innermost essence, in his innermost substance also, man is man, same and identical everywhere. This truth learnt as a scientific truth explains the differences in one way; as a philosophic proposition it reveals the interdependence of man and the whole of nature. By study and reflection upon this truth must the mind learn, for then only we can take the step of practice and make application.

When we begin to contemplate this unifying Principle which makes the entire human kingdom one unit, we come upon some vision of what Spirit is—the indwelling, energizing, fructifying Principle. We also learn what Life is: Life is the manifested aspect of that Principle we name Spirit. Nature or Matter is not a simple Principle; it is complex. The complexity of Life manifests itself as forms of Life—not just as forms of matter.

Applying this to ourselves who desire to live the spiritual life, we come to the conclusion that as Spirit is one and indivisible, and as its energizing and fructifying powers cause the differences, to live in the Spirit means to recognize the unifying aspect as fundamental and more important than the differentiating aspect. In ethical language, we call this the doctrine of Universal Brotherhood. This knowledge enables us to take the first step in the spiritual life. Some people

say, "I do not want to bother with knowledge; I want to be good, I want to live, so that I may attain happiness and freedom." Such talk is childish. As well hope to understand the constitution of the moon by looking at it! So study and knowledge are necessary. A new attitude to Life and in Life comes from a transformed mind; so Theosophy recommends study, grasping the theory of the spiritual life, before talking about living and realization.

When we have grasped the Theosophical teaching about Spirit, what do we do? Of course we do nothing if we are not practical. A practical person says, "If it be true that behind and within all forms of life fructifies one indivisible Spirit, then I must discard the outer appearance of things and seek the forces of the Spirit within my heart. To do this quickly and efficiently, let me take the aid of those who have sought and found the Spirit." Teachers and teachings are as necessary for spiritual training as for any other kind of training.

What is to be done to make this first application? It has been taught by all the great spiritual Instructors: "Come out from among them, and be ye separate." Unless a person rises above the marks that distinguish him from his fellowmen by a correct mental attitude and right moral application, he cannot begin to live the spiritual life. The phrase, "Come out from among them," does not imply running away from the world, nor does it mean that he should feel superior to the world. If he raises himself to any height, it is an inner spiritual height, from which he is able to see not only that all men are brothers, but also that he can himself act out his perception of Brotherhood, and be a brother to all human souls, whatever their domicile and whatever their dress. Domicile and dress are outer symbols, yet ordinarily people judge by that! But when we try to live the spiritual life, domicile and dress are not the factors by which we judge. Applying it to the soul, we make no difference between a soul born in one country or another; for that is domicile. Also, we do not make a difference between a well-dressed or ill-dressed or quaintly dressed person; for dress is like the body: some have coarse and gross bodies and others have sensitive and refined bodies. However, we must not go to the other extreme and say, "It matters not"; for these differences also have their uses, but they are secondary, while the unifying aspect is primary.

There is another point: sometimes it is conceived that because a person throws off the fetters of religion, rises above the conversations of ordinary society, transcends the limitations of superstition as well as of cant and hypocrisy, therefore he can do what he pleases. That is not the teaching of Theosophy. As he unfolds spirituality he shows a deeper feeling, not of creed but of compassion; he has a soul-religion, not a set of beliefs, but rules and laws by which he lives, because he knows them to be true. Dangerous and false is the doctrine that says, "Be free, do what you like." A spiritual man is a man of discipline, a man who lives and works by eternal laws; a man who follows true religion. Similarly, when he breaks social conventions, he is not guided by licence but by soul-freedom. One endeavouring to live the spiritual life shows greater purity, deeper virtues, especially in his contact with his fellow-men. Sex-purity, speech-purity, self-purity are observed to a greater extent than in the conventional world of society and even in pure home-lives.

There is much nonsense talked about self-expression. Self-expression that is truly spiritual does not precede but follows self-control. Selfishness, wrong speech, impure sex life are wrong forms

of self-expression. A selfish person cannot know and realize the Spirit; speech and sex are creative forces and their use follows their due and proper control. These are fundamental aspects of the spiritual life, which is a creative life; and no one can create rightly, without the triple purity: Pride produces selfishness. Lust produces sexuality. Egotism produces injurious speech—false talk, small talk, unnecessary talk. These three are the gates to hell! We cannot control them or kill them without knowledge, and Theosophy is the science of sense-control and soul-unfoldment. These two factors—sense-control and soul-unfoldment—have to be taken into account. The *what* and *how* of both these have been explained. Sometimes people say, "That is another kind of religion." Of course it is; only it is not a religion of blind-belief, but a religion rooted in knowledge and conviction, therefore called Wisdom-Religion. Ethical life, pure daily living, is possible, and is successful only when it is rooted in knowledge, which understood and grasped becomes conviction.

What about abnormal powers—clairvoyance, clairaudience, powers that perform so-called miracles, *i.e.*, produce abnormal phenomena? What about the power to heal the sick, to help the fallen? Theosophy says, these are realities, but if their development is forced, without an ethical basis, they will prove ruinous. These abnormal powers are latent in every single man and woman. Let us not try to force their growth; let them unfold as beautiful flowers. Feed the human plant with the waters of knowledge, give it the sunshine of purity, enrich the soil by a weeding-out process as well as by the use of special chemicals, which are to be found in the Gita, the Dhammapada, The Voice of the Silence. A good gardener takes good care of the soil, the water, the light, the manure, and then his plants grow flowers, beautiful, fragrant, spreading joy and peace among those who behold them. Such also are the true devotees of spiritual life. They control their senses, their passions and emotions, their thoughts and words. They express compassion and helpfulness and humility, and thus they show themselves as a healthy bush. Perfected trees giving shade to the weary, Perfected Bushes full of inspiring fragrance for the Soul who is man, a Perfect Green Lawn which rests the eyes and strengthens them to see the ugliness of the world—these also exist in the Perfect Garden. The Great Souls of the ancient world and their modern heirs form that Garden. We must seek their help and their benediction. Raising ourselves to that true Garden of Eden, strengthening our vision and filling our life-lungs, we will return to this sordid earth to help the struggling souls of our fellow-men, our brothers. Such is the elementary teaching of Theosophy about the Spiritual life.

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Certain professors of education must be wrong when they say that they can put a knowledge into the soul which was not there before, like sight into blind eyes....Whereas, our argument shows that the power and capacity of learning exists in the soul already.

—Plato

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# True Brotherhood

Everything in this great Universe, visible and invisible, is interrelated because each has a common root and source in the One Divine Principle of Life; each form expresses a certain aspect, a particular power of that Divine Life, and therefore the Law of Interdependence is operative everywhere. It behoves everyone to live in accordance with that Law and not to create any disturbance or disharmony.

The term Human Solidarity is a more positive expression of that Law because it depends entirely on human effort deliberately made in the right direction. Each individual is a self-conscious thinker, and as such he has to put himself in unison and harmony with all beings and with the whole nature around him. Man and man alone can realize how essential it is to follow this great Law of Love eternal.

The dictionary meaning of the word "Solidarity" is: "community of interests, feelings and actions." It implies common interests, fellow feeling and unanimity of opinion and resultant action; each acts for the good of all, without thinking of individual rights and privileges.

Great Teachers down the ages have always enjoined the following of this Law of Love. Jesus said: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." This means the giving up of all sense of separateness, individually and collectively, and the recognition of our own good as the good of all. Lord Zoroaster is made to say in one of the Gathas: "Gain for yourselves the life of the Good Mind, through the knowledge of the Wise Ones. Love one another in righteousness and thus be of the Blessed Home." The emphasis is laid on the Good Mind, the heritage of every human being, which, alas, is much abused and misused nowadays.

Another important idea presented in this quotation is: "Love one another in *righteousness*." There is unity even among gangs of robbers and criminals; there are cliques formed by dishonest traders and business people; but such "brotherhoods" are injurious and dangerous to those who belong to them and to society. What is really wanted is true unity through right behaviour on the basis of right understanding of universal principles. It is for that very reason that the first object of the present Theosophical Movement is the establishment of "the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour." This object was based on the First Fundamental Proposition of The Secret Doctrine—Unity of the One Life behind all manifestation.

Thus, students of Theosophy who are bound together on the basis of "similarity of aim, purpose and teaching" have a duty to love one another in *righteousness*. The Chinese Sage Confucius prescribed a simple method for the establishment of true unity in the world. So much time, money and energy are wasted in the maintenance of the defence forces of land and sea and air in every country just because people are distrustful and fearful. If the same time, money and energy were spent in furthering spiritual and moral education, in raising armies of peace and love on the basis of self-discipline and self-control, how different this world would become! The Chinese Sage gives the following advice:

Through the righteousness in the heart the character is made more beautiful. With the beauty of character harmony is established in the home. When harmony is established in each home, order is established in the nation. When there is order in the nation, peace is established in the world.

So we again come down to individual responsibility and individual reform, through which alone Human Solidarity can be formed along righteous lines and a united world can live in peace and happiness. A change of mind and of heart is considered as the first essential, without which it is not possible to establish lasting unity. nor is it something Utopian, because in the early ages, when mankind was in its infancy, such unity did exist. Madame Blavatsky states in *The Secret Doctrine* (II, 272):

No sooner had the mental eye of man been opened to understanding, than the Third Race felt itself one with the ever-present as the ever to be unknown and invisible ALL, the One Universal Deity. Endowed with Divine powers, and feeling in himself his inner God, each felt he was a Man-God in his nature, though an animal in his physical Self. The struggle between the two began from the very day they tasted of the fruit of the Tree of Wisdom; a struggle for life between the spiritual and the psychic, the psychic and the physical. Those who conquered the lower principles by obtaining mastery over the body, joined the "Sons of Light." Those who fell victims to their lower natures, became the slaves of Matter.

This is the picture given of early humanity. What happened then, remains true for our age and civilization and contains a lesson for all of us. But we have also the glorious example of the Golden Age of Rama when people lived in perfect concord with one another and there was peace and prosperity throughout the whole kingdom. Why? Because all followed the principles of unity and brotherhood and looked to the common interests of one another. In our modern age people pay no attention to self-reform. They seek the cause of all their troubles in the outside world, outside of themselves and outside of their homes. They have to reverse the process. If each individual were to begin with himself and his home, a real and lasting change would be brought about.

Was not the institution of the four castes in ancient India a living fact? Castes were then organized in terms of individual characteristics and temperaments, and were not as they are understood today.

The respective duties of the four castes, of Brahman, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas, and Sudras, are also determined by the qualities which predominate in the disposition of each, O harasser of thy foes. The natural duty of a Brahman compriseth tranquillity, purity, self-mastery, patience, rectitude, learning, spiritual discernment, a belief in the existence of another world. Those of the Kshatriya sprung from his nature, are valour, glory, strength, firmness, not to flee from the field of battle, liberality and lordly character. The natural duties of the Vaisya are to till the land, tend cattle and to buy and sell; and that of the Sudra is to serve, as is his natural disposition. (The Bhagavad-Gita, XVIII, 41-44)

It is necessary to note the distinction made between the four castes according to the predominant qualities of individuals, which prevented the conflict of duties so common these days. Each performed his respective duty cheerfully, skilfully and diligently, and thus served his fellow beings disinterestedly. This is what is meant by community of interests or solidarity. As no one interfered with another's duty, all could live in peace and concord, helping and serving one another without any selfish motive or any sense of separateness.

The ancient caste system was a model of co-operation, whereas today there are constant clashes between employers and employees, the capitalists and the labourers. Each wants to serve his own interests instead of looking to the good of all. Therefore both parties are dissatisfied and the Law of Love does not prevail in the right sense.

The followers of different religions and creeds are at war with one another because of the idea that one's own religion is higher than any other and that the prophet of that particular religion is the chosen of God. The essence of all religions is the perfect harmonizing of the human with the divine in man. If all were to understand and live up to this ideal, the customs and conventions, the ceremonies and rituals in each religion would fall away and all would be able to live as brothers and sisters. Mr. Judge has advised us to meditate on the significant phrase "Thou art That" so that real unity may be realized in a practical way. Distinctions on the basis of sex, colour, sects, etc., are obstacles to Human Solidarity, and as long as these exist, unity cannot be achieved.

The Great Lodge of White Adepts is a model of solidarity. They all work with one mind, one will, one feeling, for the upliftment of Orphan Humanity. There is no other motive. They have renounced their rest and bliss to become human stones in the great Guardian Wall which shields and protects mankind and without which this world would be plunged in greater misery and sorrow. They are the living embodiments of true harmony, and it is study and application of Their philosophy and spiritual service of the human race that will establish peace and good will in the world.

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## **Lessons in Becoming Human–I**

Most of us tend to believe that just to be born in a physical body qualifies us to be regarded as Human. But this is not necessarily true. H. P. Blavatsky, in one of her messages to the American Convention, says that Theosophy helps us to develop the human side of our nature in addition to the animal. Hindu and Buddhist scriptures tell us that it is extremely fortunate to obtain human birth. Many people take this to mean that it is fortunate to be born in a physical body, but it is more likely to mean that we are fortunate if we have those qualities in our being that enable us to understand spiritual truths. A person who lives an animalistic life, only caring about the basic

physical necessities, such as food, drink, clothing, sex, etc., can live from the cradle to the grave without for one instant living in the presence of his or her soul.

The term Human Solidarity is a more positive expression of that Law because it depends entirely on human effort deliberately made in the right direction. Each individual is a self-conscious thinker, and as such he has to put himself in unison and harmony with all beings and with the whole nature around him. Man and man alone can realize how essential it is to follow this great Law of Love eternal.

So what is it that makes us truly human? What are those aspects of our nature that need to be developed if we are to access the real dimensions of our Being? In Buddhism, a person who achieves a certain level of enlightenment is known as the True Man or the True Woman. In Taoism, the term Real Human is used to designate someone who has reached a certain level of enlightenment.

Theosophy give us detailed teachings regarding the evolution of consciousness and how, during one stage of its unfolding, it inhabits a vehicle that is known as Man. Mankind embodies specific qualities, and as we refine these qualities the vehicle that we occupy becomes more ethereal; as it is now it is too gross to express the ideas pouring in from the Universal Mind. So we need a different basis to express these ideas at a certain level of complexity. If one reads The Secret Doctrine, a general idea of the wonder and beauty of this unfoldment can be had. This process is referred to as evolution, but not in the sense that we might imagine, and not, according to Theosophy, in the Darwinian sense. Our teachings tell us that apes were the product of an act that took place millions of years ago when human beings mated with animal-like creatures, and they are not the missing link in the way that some scientists imagine. In reality, consciousness does not evolve, it is always the same; but we are limited in our understanding of who or what we are, and this limitation crystallizes into the form of a vehicle that embodies these misunderstandings. As we take to the Spiritual Path and proceed, as The Secret Doctrine tells us, by self-induced and self-devised methods and by our studies, meditation and practices, we become more aware of our true nature and therefore the vehicle refines itself. Also, the more we progress in our understanding, the more the veils that are removed and the nearer we grow inwardly as human beings. We are only separated by these misunderstandings.

Theosophy also teaches that when we reach the human stage we develop self-consciousness. Animals are said to be conscious, but not self-conscious. The Theosophical teaching that can be demonstrated logically is that the physical vehicle that we have and the modes of communication, etc., can be refined to express more and more of the Spirit within.

Everything depends on whether the mind allies itself to Kama, the animal desires, or to Buddhi, the Spiritual Soul, which is the vehicle of pure Universal Spirit, Atma. So here we have the key to what makes us human beings. It is the orientation of the mind so that instead of being swallowed up by the materialistic world, it actually purifies itself and thereby becomes the True Man mentioned earlier. The upper imperishable triad of Higher Manas, Buddhi and Atma is known in Theosophical teaching as the Individuality. It is the actor on the stage of life, whereas the lower quaternary, which includes Kama and the physical body, consists of the parts played,

the personalities that change from life to life. The higher triad remains constant through all our seeming changes and is known as *sutratma* or thread-soul, because it is like a golden thread that runs through all our lives, which are compared to pearls added to that thread. Hopefully, by self-induced and self-devised methods we can reach a stage at which we flower as truly human. We should constantly meditate on the permanent dimension to our nature by becoming aware how, despite the ageing of our bodies, there is that part of us that does not age. In this way we can drink from the Fount of Eternal Youth.

H. P. Blavatsky said that all our success as regards the practice of altruism is in the recognition of the Higher Self, colourless, cosmopolitan, unsectarian, sexless, unworldly, altruistic, and the doing of our work on that basis. It is the identification of that Higher Self in ourselves and others that makes us more and more aware of the immortality of the True Self. The Bhagavad-Gita tells us that this Spiritual Self is indestructible; fire cannot burn it, water cannot wet it, the sword cannot injure it. It is untouched by any of the troubles of the world, physical, mental and moral. This is a great lesson to learn and to teach.

It is important, then, to realize practically that there is a part of us that does not alter despite the changes around and within us. That is one of the most important teachings of Theosophy or of any genuine spiritual movement. It is certainly the most important as regards Buddhism and Vedantism. They both emphasize the transience of the physical body and the personal self, but point in their own way to an Eternal Dimension. It is a lesson of great hope to everyone and should be spread over the world to counteract all the violence and depression that has followed materialistic teachings and propaganda. It is obvious that all is not well with the society that we live in now. It is riddled with deception, vice, illness, brutality and so many other negative vibrations. No wonder the weather is deteriorating, natural disasters are on the increase, wars and confrontations are mushrooming, and new illnesses, physical, mental and moral, springing up every day. Even the orthodox medical profession is beginning to admit that physical illness follows in the wake of wrong thought, that it originates in the mind. Well, Theosophy teaches that we are all ONE, so we must think of the results of the negativity in the COLLECTIVE mind of humanity.

It is important that all of us, who are capable of an unselfish impulse, try to awaken to the Divinity in ourselves and in others. It is essential to develop Love in its true sense. Cold intellectual study of the Teachings will not get us anywhere. It does not matter if one is a Buddhist, a Hindu, a Muslim, a Pagan, a Christian, or whatever; these can be just names that separate us—illusions created by the lower mind that likes to imagine itself separate and so builds its own world, based upon the great dire heresy of separateness. One of the most subtle of these chimeras manifests in the form of exoteric religions.

To flower into truly human beings, we need to come together as just that, as humans, beyond religions and philosophies, political organizations, etc. Let us read all scriptures as One Scripture, see all people as One Humanity. Let us feel and see the spiritual beauty of this world, deep in the core of our hearts and therefore in the heart of all things.

The Master K.H. once said that "the greatest consolation in and the foremost duty of life is not to give pain, and avoid causing suffering to man or beast." In this world of illusions and false values that go under the name of "religion," we fall far short of possessing those qualities that cause us to flower into humanity. In our heart the lower nature weaves its web of deceit and we justify acts that have nothing to do with us as human beings. We compliment ourselves on being uncaring or harsh, or asserting ourselves at the expense of others, on indulging in all those things that fall under the heading of self-esteem, while the real esteem should be for the Self, the Higher, Imperishable Self, and for that dimension to our being that is shared by everyone, black or white, rich or poor, male or female, good or bad. The mistake that is made is that esteem of the modern psychologist and therapist is for the personal self.

It is this worship of the physical that is the cause of most of the troubles in modern society. It is said that the Atlanteans brought about their own destruction because they degenerated into worship of the physical and all that goes with it. Let us make sure that we do not go down the same road.

Fortunately, we have an answer. Theosophy gives us that. It is altruism.

Confucius said, "There are only two paths: human fellow-feeling, true humanity, or the absence of human fellow-feeling, the absence of humanity." Master Zhou, commenting on this, added: "If you leave the former, you enter the latter. If for a day or for an hour you do not recognize human fellow-feeling, then for a day or for an hour you are not truly human. Without human fellow-feeling, we are not human." This is because if we labour under the illusion of separateness, we grow to believe that we as temporary personalities are the be-all and end-all of existence. The key to being human is this realization that we are all brothers and sisters under the skin. This has nothing to do with any sentimental ideal or with political diplomacy, but is a fact in nature. Even materialistic scientists are coming to terms with the fact that we share with others the very physical atoms of our bodies, so how much more is this true on higher levels! As above, so below, and *vice versa*.

Rumi, the Sufi poet, says that: "Love rends every instant a hundred veils." It alone can rend the veils that we have created through selfishness, through building a society diametrically opposed to the words of all those Great Ones who have come to earth to awaken us to who we really are.

That is why these Great Souls were sent to this earth—whether Jesus Christ, Krishna, Gautama Buddha, or the myriad other Christs, Buddhas and Krishnas throughout the ages. In Theosophy we learn of a secret Brotherhood of Adepts who constantly look after humanity and are concerned with its welfare. They have renounced the bliss of Nirvana to remain in contact with the world, and out of an intense and undying love for poor orphan humanity try ceaselessly to awaken our benumbed souls to some inkling of the beauty and depth of our true nature. At their head is the "Silent Watcher"—a Being who, out of compassion, watches over this earth-plane ceaselessly.

This protection takes the form of a "Guardian Wall" which has been "built by the hands of many Masters of Compassion, raised by their tortures, by their blood cemented," and it "shields mankind, since man is man, protecting it from further and far greater misery and sorrow." So says The Voice of the Silence. The Theosophical Movement was started by members of this Brotherhood with the express intention of helping humanity to become aware of its Divine Nature. These exalted beings are the unvanquished friends of mankind, those who help us to find our humanity, to find that humane nature that will transform us into the Children of Light that we truly are.

So it is important for us to realize that this Hierarchy of Compassionate Beings is endeavouring to bring further help to us all, and to continue the work of the Buddhas, Christs and all the lesser lights. We should all take great hope from that, from the fact that there is a "Silent Watcher" who supervises the welfare of this planet. Also greater hope can be had from the realization that each one of us has his or her own "Silent Watcher," who is none other than the higher imperishable Triad of Atma, Buddhi, Manas. This Watcher *does* watch over us, protect us, guide us, although we may not be aware of it. Of course we have to be somewhat awakened to its presence to be the better able to receive its humanizing and civilizing influences. We can shut ourselves off from its Light and wander in the darkness of our own making, which, unfortunately, most of society does, and suffer terrible consequences. Yet, there is something beautiful, good and kind in this world that is always leading us deeper into the centre of our very own being. This centre is identical in each one of us. It is the awakening that humanizes our nature, that slowly transforms us from animal beings to true humans.

So there is always reason to be cheerful, despite the darkest phases of our life. All the above-mentioned enlightened beings, such as Buddha and Christ, started off very much like us. They were saddened and sickened by the state of the world at the time. We probably all know the story of Gautama Buddha, how he was protected as a Prince until curiosity drove him to sneak out into the city, and there he saw old age, sickness, and death; all of which turned his mind and fired him with the quest to find permanency among all these changes. This is also the story of everyone. It is when we as individuals become aware of the impermanence of our personal selves and all that is around us that we start the journey to our true Selves.

*(To be concluded)*

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Jesus said: Whoever knows the All but fails to know himself lacks everything.

—The Gospel according to Thomas

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# Logic and Wisdom

Why did H.P.B. write in *The Key to Theosophy*, in the sub-section on "Theosophy and Education," about the value of logical thinking? She wrote there that true education "should produce the most vigorous and liberal mind, strictly trained in logical and accurate thought, and not in blind faith." She wrote also: "If we have to believe in a divine principle at all, it must be in one which is as absolute harmony, logic, and justice, as it is absolute love, wisdom, and impartiality."

Can we, by combining logic and wisdom, find a way to understand what logic is? Does it require us to proceed from universals to particulars or from particulars to universals, or to combine both procedures? Do we take one fundamental fact and try logically to fit other facts to it, or do we from the many facts logically determine the one source?

In this respect, it is interesting to read in *Transactions of the Blavatsky Lodge* (page 58):

Q. Apparently, then, the whole basis of occultism lies in this, that there is latent within every man a power which can give him true knowledge, a power of perception of truth, which enables him to deal first hand with universals *if he will be strictly logical and face the facts* [Italics ours]. Thus we can proceed from universals to particulars by this innate spiritual force which is in every man.

A. Quite so: this power is inherent in all, but paralyzed by our methods of education, and especially by the Aristotelian and Baconian methods. Hypothesis now reigns triumphant.

The questioner goes on to say:

It is curious to read Schopenhauer and Hartmann and mark how, step by step, by strict logic and pure reason, they have arrived at the same bases of thought that had been centuries ago adopted in India, especially by the Vedantin system. It may, however, be objected that they have arrived at this by the inductive method. But in Schopenhauer's case at any rate it was not so. He acknowledges himself that the idea came to him like a flash; having thus got his fundamental idea he set to work to arrange his facts, so that the reader imagines that what was in reality an intuitive idea, is a logical deduction drawn from the facts.

H.P.B. adds:

This is not only true of the Schopenhauerian philosophy, but also of all the great discoveries of modern times. How, for instance, did Newton discover the law of gravity? Was it not by the simple fall of an apple, and not by an elaborate series of experiments?

Should, therefore, experiments be performed to *prove* a logical deduction from known facts instead of "to see what happens" as is so often the case? Is the latter the reason why, for instance, so many new drugs are discarded? Certain facts are observed and experiments are made without logical thought working to a conclusion by taking in *all* the known facts. A drug brings down the body's temperature. Logical thinking stops there, whereas the thought should be continued: What is the cause of the rise in temperature? What other symptoms are there? What organs are affected? What effect does the drug have on other organs? These questions are not logically worked out, but experiments are made to the detriment of so many men and animals. In the case of the drug thalidomide, used by pregnant women as a tranquillizer, did the manufacturers and the doctors who prescribed it try to find out logically what the result on the unborn child would be? No; one fact alone mattered to them: it was a tranquillizer. Are there not other methods, harmless to mother and unborn child, which would make the months of pregnancy pass smoothly? As it is, the result of indiscriminate administration of the drug has been that thousands of children were born limbless or otherwise deformed.

Do we not ourselves suffer in life through lack of logical thought which takes in all aspects of a subject?

Logic has to be such that it will bring us wisdom. And wisdom is not only the knowledge of all the facts of a case but also intuitive understanding of them. The question arises: How shall we reach intuition? Is it not reached by realizing that logically love produces harmony, justice produces impartiality? Both justice and love are built upon accuracy of detail; harmony is only possible by impartiality. Cogitation along these lines is very helpful.

Consideration of the First Fundamental Proposition of The Secret Doctrine is a good exercise in logical thinking. First we have the fact given us of the One Absolute principle, beyond human thought. We have to prove this to ourselves by logical thinking. Let us say to ourselves, "If this first fact is true, then this Absolute Principle must be the root of all. But, if it is beyond thought, it must be the unknown or rootless root. And, since we are dealing with the unthinkable ALL, there can be no attributes, for attributes can be thought of. Again, if it is the Absolute ALL, it cannot be affected in any way, for there are no parts in it to affect or to be affected by one another." We are forced, logically, to the conclusion that all we can say about it is, "IT IS" or, "It is Be-ness."

How shall we understand Be-ness? How shall we symbolize it? How shall we understand the ALL? We ask ourselves, "What is it that we know that is unaffected by anything within it, that has no limits, yet contains all?" We answer—"Space." But space can be measured as being the distance between objects in it, as far as we can see space. So we must stretch our idea of Space, and think of the absolute abstract conception of Space which is unthinkable, being unlimited, for thought divides as it deals with forms. In this way we get into the habit of logical thought.

It is also necessary to learn that logical thought is accurate thought. Hence we see the necessity of being accurate in learning our Fundamental Propositions. For example, if we do not see the straight, uninterrupted line of thought from the absolute Principle to the last phrase in the Third Fundamental, we have only grasped words and have not exercised logical thought. If in the

Third Fundamental we miss the import of the two great phases of progress, first through natural impulse, and then through self-induced and self-devised efforts, we shall not understand how our goal is to be reached. If we forget that the progress of every being is "checked by its Karma," we miss the logical line of thought which would include Karma and Reincarnation as the necessary laws of our evolution. If we miss out the significant fact that each soul is one with the Universal Over-Soul, itself an aspect of the Unknown Root, we fail to see that logical line from the First to the Third Fundamental and our relationship to the ALL.

In ordinary life we often fail to work out our ideas to their logical conclusion and so get caught and say, "I did not intend this to be the result of what I did!" We do not consider the possible consequences of what we plan and we miss out vital facts so that even our premises are sometimes wrong.

When we find "misstatements" or "errors" in our Theosophical literature, they only *seem* to us so because we judge on insufficient knowledge. So often we pass on cursorily and say, "Oh, an error!" when a little logical thinking would show us otherwise. We need to remember that accurate logical thought leads us to knowledge. Combined with harmony-love and impartiality-justice, it will lead us to wisdom, *i.e.*, the understanding of facts, not their mere collation.

Let us above all learn accuracy!

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Before Pythagoras, the followers of science were called, not philosophers, but wise men....Pythagoras, being asked if he called himself a wise man, denied himself that name, and said that he was not wise, but a lover of wisdom. And thence it happened afterwards that all students of wisdom were called lovers of wisdom, that is, philosophers; for *philo* and *sophia* in Greek are equivalent to love and wisdom. Whence we may see that these two words make up the name philosopher, that is to say, lover of wisdom; which we may observe is not a term of arrogance, but of humility.

—Dante

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## Soul's Instruments

The mind is the instrument of the Soul and therefore properly subservient to it. The Soul, however, requires the mind in order to manifest on this plane and to attain concentration. But the mind must be thoroughly united with the Soul before "Self-Knowledge" which is interior illumination is achieved. The ultimate conquest of this high peak of progress demands not only protracted striving but also struggles upward many times renewed.

The Voice of the Silence tells the beginner to seek to blend his mind and Soul. Even temporary success in uniting them, as in daily earnest self-examination in the light of our highest perception, makes it possible to see honestly and to judge impersonally not only our words and deeds but also our feelings and our thoughts.

Patanjali's system calls for hindering the modifications of the mind in its caseless motion towards the objects giving rise to pleasure or to pain. The mind is naturally drawn hither and thither by its response both to external things and to internal images. But when freed from desire and the objects of desire, whether observed, recollected or imagined, the mind can, as Mr. Judge puts it, be "stilled into a state of absolute calmness." This tranquillity possible to the controlled mind is referred to in The Voice of the Silence, where the tranquil mind is associated with bodily activity as well as with the "Soul as limpid as a mountain lake."

The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali plainly show the need, the possibility, the method and the fruits of control. They show also that the student of Theosophy cannot receive full benefit from the Teachings without a concentrated mind. We miss out much through inattention—hints and warnings as well as sidelights that would illuminate many points that now may seem obscure. There are two main sorts of concentration, as Mr. Judge brings out in his article on "Meditation, Concentration, Will": "One is the use of an already acquired power on a fixed occasion, the other the deep and constant practice of a power that has been made a possession." (U.L.T. Pamphlet No. 12)

Patanjali's system calls for the control of the mind by the help of the will. He does not actually refer to the will which is a universal power, devoid in itself of moral quality, which only man can impart to it, but the right following of his system will develop it. Mr. Judge in his Preface states that one reason for Patanjali's silence on the subject is that he and his school

well knew that the secret of directing the will with ten times the ordinary force might be discovered if they outlined the method, and then bad men whose desires were strong and conscience wanting, would use it with impunity against their fellows; or that even sincere students might be carried away from spirituality when dazzled by the wonderful results flowing from a training of the will alone. (p. XV)

The will is described in The Ocean of Theosophy as the greatest power in the human assemblage of complicated instruments. It is potentially all-powerful, being the very "force of Spirit in action," but it is, like the mind, properly an instrument for the Soul's use. It cannot, however, do its work if the imagination be at all weak or untrained.

Mr. Judge quotes an old Kabalistic maxim, "Behind Will Stands Desire," explains that

the desires always drawing the man hither and thither, cause him to commit such actions and have such thoughts as form the cause and mould for numerous reincarnations, enslaving him to a destiny against which he rebels, and that constantly destroys and re-creates his mortal body.

Substituting for the present multiplicity of desires, however, a few which are high, pure and altruistic will strengthen our power to call on the will which is ours, which has its seat in the higher EGO.

Whereas the will guided, with ordinary men, by desire, "in the Adepts' case the will is guided by Buddhi, Manas, and Atma, including in its operation the force of a pure spiritual desire acting solely under law and duty," writes Mr. Judge. Mr. Crosbie calls "the real and true Will...the Spiritual Will, which flies like light and cuts all obstacles like a sharp sword."

If we realize that we are *Spiritual* beings and think and act in the right direction, at once the Spiritual Will begins to work, the power of Concentration is strengthened, the feeling of responsibility grows, the whole nature begins to change, to be transformed—the Great Transition is going on.

Patanjali's system, Mr. Judge writes,

postulates that *Ishwara*, the spirit in man, is untouched by any troubles, works, fruit of works, or desires, and when a firm position is assumed with the end in view of reaching union with spirit through concentration, He comes to the aid of the lower self and raises it gradually to higher planes. In this process the Will by degrees is given a stronger and stronger tendency to act upon a different line from that indicated by passion and desire. Thus it is freed from the domination of desire and at last subdues the mind itself. But before the perfection of practice is arrived at the will still acts according to desire, only that the desire is for higher things and away from those of the material life.

Each one, H.P.B. tells us, "makes himself in the image of his desires, unless he creates himself in the likeness of the Divine, through his will, the child of the light."

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A man is the creator of his own fate, and even in his foetal life he is affected by the dynamics of the works of his prior existence....This human body entombs a self which is nothing if not emphatically a worker. It is the works of this self in a prior existence which determine the nature of its organism in the next....What is lotted cannot be blotted. A frightened mouse runs to its hole; a scared serpent, to a well; a terrified elephant, to its stake—but where can a man fly from his Karma?

—Garuda Purana

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# In the Light of Theosophy

The publication of the findings relating to the decade-long Human Genome Project—analysis of the complete set of human DNA—has fuelled unprecedented interest in genetics. The findings have many implications, but the most important one is that all human beings share 99.99 per cent of all genetic material. From the genetic perspective, therefore, there is not much difference between one human being and another. Race has no scientific basis, despite the manner in which it has been used for narrow political ends. Unity is in, bigotry is out, says Mani Subramanian, one of the senior scientists working on the project.

Genes do not explain everything. Genetic inheritance, scientists now believe, contributes less to behaviour than was thought at one time; environmental factors count for more. Neither nature nor nurture determines behaviour on its own; the two interact.

"We stand on the brink of a continent of new knowledge," writes Matt Ridley in *Discover* (January 2001):

The medical possibilities and ethical fears that dominate the debate are by no means trivial. But there is a larger philosophical truth missed. The genome represents an unprecedented draft of self-knowledge for humankind with implications that stretch far beyond medicine. It promises to tell us new things about our past as a species, and it promises new insights into philosophical conundrums, not least of which is the puzzle of free will....

Science has a habit of addressing problems raised by philosophy. It may not be too much to claim that the mystery of free will has been recast by recent discoveries in genetics, which have exposed the myth that genes are puppet masters and we are their puppets....In attempting to answer the question of whether we possess free will, the Scottish philosopher David Hume impaled himself on the following dilemma: Either our actions are determined, in which case we are not responsible for them, or they are the result of random events, in which case we are also not responsible for them. But the CREB (cyclic-AMP response elements binding protein) genes show how to escape this fix. If genes are at the mercy of behaviour, but behaviour is also at the mercy of genes, then our actions can be determined by forces that originate within us as well as by outside influences. The will is therefore a mixture of instincts and outside influences. This makes it deterministic and responsible, but not predictable....

The human genome opens a world of medical opportunity, of commercial promise, of ethical danger, and of social challenge. It is also a cornucopia of scientific possibilities that ranks alongside the revolutions wrought by Euclid, Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, and Einstein. It is a fitting bang with which to start a new millennium.

Studies in human genetics have still a long way to go and raise more questions than they answer about what makes man what he is. Matter alone is not operative in the process. The physical, Theosophy maintains, evolves from the spiritual, the mental and psychic. There is a permanent conscious Force within matter which by the evolutionary process strives for ever fuller self-expression and self-realization. Science tells us that DNA transmits the hereditary pattern, but that pattern, Theosophy insists, is not mechanical and is instrumental rather than causal.

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The series on science and religion presently being published in the American journal *The World and I* reflects the current perception that we can enrich our lives by blending scientific genius regarding the physical world with profound religious insights into the nature of man and God. In the February issue, Carl Feit presents science and religion as two worldviews with one unified vision. Feit, who is a cancer researcher and occupant of the Ades Chair of Health Sciences at Yeshiva University in New York, as also an ordained rabbi and a Talmudic scholar and teacher, believes that "the full coexistence of two rich but somewhat different worldviews can lead to creative interaction and mutual enrichment":

Unquestionably, modern Western society has been enormously influenced by the scientific worldview. We have come to envision the universe as governed by mathematically based principles, and we believe that nature's most intimate secrets will ultimately yield to our conscientious probing....As we score ever-accelerating technological breakthroughs, many of us see in the here-and-now world of our senses the totality of human experience.

For others, however, this is hardly a complete story. The outstanding public issues of the day point to the need to resolve moral quandaries, express internal values, and explore spiritual meanings. Solutions to such daunting problems as corruption, poverty, racism, and violence will not come with more powerful microscopes or particle accelerators but require a more powerful vision of what it means to be human. Knowing *how* to clone a human being does not help us decide whether we *ought* to do so.

Thus in the course of human history, both science and religion have provided important models to help us understand and relate to our universe. At times, the two worldviews have been at odds with each other, each jockeying for primary attention. At other times, they have worked hand in hand....

A recent survey suggests that roughly 40 percent of active scientists attest to some sort of belief in a personal deity. Nevertheless, many respected scientists are outspoken atheists and use their science as the basis for disbelief. Are they misguided individuals, perhaps so blinded by an *a priori* commitment to a materialistic philosophy that they don't see what is right before their eyes? Why don't they see the Designer behind nature's design?....

In conclusion, it is entirely in accord with our human nature to explore the natural world and have dominion over our environment through scientific and technological endeavours, and to couple them with our pursuit of inner communion with the transcendent Being. Indeed, to fulfill our potential, we must harmonize these tendencies in our lives. A religious perspective helps us understand the spiritual dimension of science, and grappling with scientific questions provides deeper insights into religious traditions.

Indeed, the time has come to view science and religion not as antagonistic but as complementary to each other. As W. Q. Judge wrote at the very outset of his *Ocean of Theosophy*:

No science is complete which leaves out any department of nature, whether visible or invisible, and that religion which, depending solely on an assumed revelation, turns away from things and the laws which govern them, is nothing but a delusion, a foe to progress, an obstacle in the way of man's advancement toward happiness. Embracing both the scientific and the religious, Theosophy is a scientific religion and a religious science.

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Questions pertaining to the origin of the universe are being debated. How, when, why and out of what it arose, is arousing interest as never before. Human beings alone can raise such questions about the universe and therefore have a unique role to play. What is that role? asks Swami Sunirmalananda (*The Times of India*, February 15), and answers:

That unique role is to know. We humans alone can know....We can think of God, we can think of the Infinite, while other living beings cannot. But what's the use of knowing? Knowledge brings liberation from existential suffering.

How do we know? There are two methods: one of science, and other of religion. Science is the study of the external; religion is the study of the internal. The first is objective while the second, subjective....Scientists thought they alone were right, but many are differing now. Consciousness and universe, they say, are interwoven. Down the centuries, science has accumulated much knowledge about the earth, solar system, stars, and galaxies.

And it has propounded many theories. However, yesterday's theory is today's junk! Why, because the more we study, the more it is confusing, and more is left unknown. Secondly, the instrument, the mind, can't find answers to all our questions through the five senses.

This leads us to the second path—religion. Religion has declared that the universe is only an objective manifestation of the subjective....Religion is the study of man—an in-depth study....It was Swami Vivekananda who expressed the grandest truth that "the microcosm and the macrorosm are built upon the same plan." To

know the human being is to know the universe. But to know the human being you don't need instruments. The fine instrument called mind will suffice. Using it, we have to dive deep into ourselves: we should meditate. Meditation leads us to the hitherto unseen universe within. The inner universe, say saints, is astounding. This universe will reveal all the knowledge we need. This, again, will free us. The knowledge of why, who, how, what, etc., will all become perfectly clear once we look within. Sri Ramakrishna declared: "A man attains everything when he discovers his true Self in himself. That also is the purpose of assuming a human body."

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The idea that animals panic before earthquakes is an old, old one. While the recent Gujarat earthquake has sparked interest in the ability of animals to predict natural disasters, scientists say that the evidence remains inconclusive. "The possibility, however, remains very much wide open," says Asad Rahmani, director of the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS). The BNHS has been compiling information on earthquake-related behaviour of animals for the Union ministry of environment and forests. (The Times of India, February 17)

The BNHS's call for information from natural history amateurs in Gujarat elicited a mixed response. While some noticed no changes in the behaviour of animals before the quake, others recounted stories of agitated dogs and birds. In Teras, 80 km. to the west of Bhuj, it was noticed that peacocks were screaming hysterically the night before the big quake, and donkeys were braying and dogs barking prior to smaller tremors later in the day.

The details of this phenomenon of animal behaviour have been well studied by Chinese scientists in particular, and a booklet published some time back by the Seismological Office of Tientsin, in China, states: "It is easy and simple to use animals to predict earthquakes....In general certain organs of animals acutely detect various underground changes before earthquakes. Both historical and recent surveys of large earthquakes prove that animals have precursory reactions."

There is a mysterious sympathy between all things in nature, and animals being psychically more sensitive than humans can feel the pulse of the Earth more clearly. The Astral Light is a reflector not only of past events but also of events to come, the causes for which are sufficiently well marked and made, and it is not surprising that animals with their instinctive clairvoyance, of which there is sufficient evidence in other respects as well, can sense a natural calamity hours before it actually takes place.

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Blind people can pick out the meaning of a spoken sentence more quickly than those who are sighted, researchers in Germany and the U.S. have found. This adds weight to the notion that the blind can hear better than others, their hearing compensating for the loss of their sight. (Neuropsychologica, Vol. 38, p. 1482)

"They process language faster than sighted people," says Brigitte Roder from the University of Marburg, Germany, who discovered the effect with her colleagues at the University of Oregon in Eugene. She says it may explain why some blind people are so fast at "reading" books recorded on tape.

"This, to me, is a very remarkable finding," says neuroscientist Steve Hillyard at the University of California, San Diego. "I would have thought that language is such a highly over-learned skill in both sighted and blind individuals that the timing of their language processes would be similar."

The researchers also found that in blind subjects, areas at the back of the brain normally devoted to sight were taken over in part by auditory information processing. Roder suspects this might be partly responsible for speeding up blind people's ability to process language.

Experiments have repeatedly shown that those deprived of one sense have other senses more acutely developed, bearing out the Theosophical teaching of the correlation and interchange of the senses. Mr. Judge states in his Notes on the Bhagavad Gita:

The eye cannot see nor the ear hear, of themselves. In the Upanishads the pupil is asked: "What is the sight of the eye, and the hearing of the ear?" replying, that these powers reside solely with inner organs of the soul, using the material body as the means for experiencing the phenomena of material life. Without the presence of this indwelling, informing, hearing and seeing power—or being—this collection of particles now deified as *body* is dead or blind. (p. 12)

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The variety and number of micro-organisms that inhabit the body of a healthy human being are truly mind-boggling. They are known as the normal microbial fauna and come in two different types—those that are permanently resident and those that are transient. Any number of nasty parasites can also join this microbial community and make the human body home.

In his work *Life on Man*, bacteriologist Theodor Rosebury gives a full biological and historical account of the microbes that live on the average human body. He counted 80 distinguishable species living in the mouth alone and estimated that the total number of bacteria excreted each day by an adult ranges from 100 billion to 100 trillion.

Rosebury estimates that 10 million individual bacteria live on the average square centimetre of human skin, while inside the body, on the surface of the teeth, throat or alimentary tract, these concentrations can increase a thousandfold. However, while the total number of organisms living on us appears huge, when one considers the volume of the human body, the volume of species using us as home is not so great.

Barring a few nasty ones, these micro-organisms and parasites are not our enemies and their role and intimate relationship with their hosts needs to be understood.

Science, dimly perceiving the truth, may find bacteria and other infinitesimals in the human body, and see in them but occasional and abnormal visitors to which diseases are attributed. Occultism—which discerns a life in every atom and molecule, whether in a mineral or human body, in air, fire or water—affirms that our whole body is built of such lives, the smallest bacteria under the microscope being to them in comparative size like an elephant to the tiniest infusoria. (The Secret Doctrine, I, 225 fn.)

We are taught that every physiological change, in addition to pathological phenomena; diseases—nay, life itself—or rather the objective phenomena of life, produced by certain conditions and changes in the tissues of the body which allow and force life to act in that body; that all this is due to those unseen CREATORS and DESTROYERS that are called in such a loose and general way, microbes. (Ibid., I, 262)

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If a man does away with his traditional way of living and throws away his good customs, he had better first make certain that he has something of value to replace them.

—Basuto Proverb