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सत्यात् नास्ति परो धर्मः ।

“There is no Religion higher than Truth”

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

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THE MESSAGE OF EASTER

EASTER is a universal festival. The ancient Babylonians, Egyptians, Norsemen and Scandinavians worshipped the Egg. Norsemen exchanged coloured eggs at the time of the vernal equinox in commemoration of the goddess Ostara. The word Easter closely resembles names of different Pagan goddesses—Ishtar, Ostara, and the Greek Astarte. Goddess Ostara of Northland was worshipped as a beautiful Queen of the Spring-time, and from *Ostara*, our word Easter comes. The story goes that when Ostara first came to earth, at the very beginning of the world, she noticed how dark and cold everything seemed. She knew that Life in all things was only sleeping for a while, till it was time to wake up again. Then she realized that she was sent on earth to wake things up. Easter celebrates the awakening of life from its winter sleep.

During the spring festival, the ancients celebrated the renewal of nature, as Christians celebrate on the Easter Sunday the resurrection of Christ, the rising of Christ from the dead. After crucifixion, the body of Christ was taken down from the cross, wrapped in a linen sheet and placed in a tomb dug out of solid rock, and a stone was rolled against the entrance. This was on a Friday, now called “Good Friday.” Three days later, on Sunday, people saw that the door of the tomb had burst open and the body was missing. The story goes that subsequently, Jesus appeared before his disciples. The Bible says, “Jesus rose from the dead.” Theosophy teaches that he rose in his finer body or the *Mayavi rupa*. Resurrection conveys that

everything does not end with the death of the physical body and that there is no such thing as death for the Soul—IT always *is*.

We generally think of Easter as being essentially and solely a Christian festival, because little is known about the origin and the real significance of Easter as a Universal and Spiritual myth. The very story of Jesus is identically the same as that of other saviours and of the Gods. When it is said that Jesus died on the cross, we need to remember that the same is told of Krishna and of Buddha, for the Cross is the Tree of Life (*Eternal Verities*, p. 255). The Symbol of the “Tree” stands for Initiates. Jesus and all the adepts of the good Law are called “the Tree of Life,” while those on the *left* Path are referred to as “withering trees” (*S.D.*, II, 496). Each man, assimilating by self-effort, the knowledge and experience, grows, and depending on the use he makes of his free will, he becomes a tree of life or a withering tree. The Tree of Life symbolizes Unity, realization of which is the Life in and of Spirit. Realizing the unity of all, high adepts and Initiates identify themselves with humanity and therefore, they are able to take upon themselves the part of the karma of the suffering humanity. Taken literally, the whole of the life of Jesus, right up to his crucifixion, is a tale of the great sacrifice which the spiritual beings make in order to help humanity.

What do crucifixion and resurrection symbolize? Is there perhaps a Resurrection into Spiritual life? “Christ—the true esoteric Saviour—is no man, but the Divine Principle in every human being,” writes H. P. Blavatsky. What need we do to have the risen Christ in *us*, whom we have crucified?

Our personal consciousness is a ray of our Ego or Soul consciousness. Like a ray from the Sun, it is pure, but it gets soiled, contaminated, while passing through the atmosphere of the mind, by the moisture of feelings, and the fogs and mists of the senses. Easter is connected with the second birth; it signifies the death of the lower or personal self and the birth of the Soul in this body, before we die. This “Birth” is referred to as the Second Birth.

Here is a very important teaching: He whose body dies *after* the Birth of the Soul in that body during life, he dies not. He, whose body dies without the Birth of the Soul having taken place in the body, really dies. What does that mean? When the lower self is controlled and purified, the Real Soul—*Manas*—shines forth, and a great change occurs in us. Divine knowledge and Divine memory of the Soul come to us, and then mere death of the body makes no difference.

When an ordinary man dies a natural death, he enters a condition which is analogous to sleep, or to dreams; he is caught up in his own fancy, his own images, his own dreams. The great objective universe becomes non-serviceable to him. He is like a man building castles in the air, unmindful of, and unobservant of his surroundings. At best, he is like an absent-minded philosopher engrossed in his problems, careless of what passes without. Theosophy teaches that when we are alive, we must try to conquer our fancies and feelings, our images and thoughts, and then we can remain unaffected by the effects of death.

It is said in one of the Upanishads that a Deva dies in Swarga or Heaven when a man is born on earth. It means that as long as we are overpowered by our feelings and fancies, by our loves and lusts, by our thoughts of this world, so long we are dead-units, we have not really begun to live. These exert a powerful force to bring us back to earth again and again.

In the Christian Legend, Jesus descended into Hell to save the Souls of the damned. It only means that he came to earth in a body of flesh and blood to preach the gospel of Deliverance for all souls. The meaning of Christ's dying on the cross will now become clear. Christ was not the only Son of God; we are all sons of God in our divine nature. But unfortunately, this divine nature, though all-powerful on its own plane, is quite powerless on our plane. Every time we refuse to listen to our divine nature—the Christ within—we crucify the Christ. So, it is not the personality which suffers but the innocent *Christos* within us. Every time we want *our* will to prevail over the Divine Will, there is a minor crucifixion.

There are four things that thwart the Soul. The first is the Will, that is the starting point, our motives move our Will. If our motive, the purpose of what we are saying and doing, is not clear to our minds, we are of weak will; we do not go forward, we drift. Will has a purpose; it implies an objective, a goal. A weak will implies irresolute nature that clouds the mind.

Ignorance or false knowledge arises to delude the mind. If we know where we are going, what we want to do, and what our goal is, we will seek the right knowledge. Avidya or ignorance is of two kinds. (a) non-knowledge; (b) false knowledge. An ignorant mind or a false-knowing mind makes the feelings go wrong, so we come to Lusts.

Lusts, loves, *Raga-Dvesha*. attraction and aversion bring pains of feelings. We like or dislike without a basis of knowledge, in ignorance or by false knowledge. We are continuously engaged by our feelings, our desires; someone loves us or does not love us; we want one thing and not another; we fear one thing and run after another; we multiply our wants. This is the greatest enemy of man on earth at the present time. And these, many unsatisfied or wrongly satisfied desires produce bodily ailments.

All physical diseases have their super-physical counterparts. Most diseases are caused by feelings of anger, envy, greed, depression, elation, etc. Many others are caused by ignorance or false knowledge, while still others are caused by weak will or weak spirituality.

This is the cross on which the Divine Christ within us is being crucified. What is Resurrection? It is the rising triumphant of our divine nature or the Self within. Metaphorically, we all must be able to throw open our tomb and walk out of it as Jesus did—so teaches Theosophy. It is possible for all of us to do it, because Jesus did it, other Masters did it, and what men have done, that men can do.

To resurrect the Christ *we* have crucified, we must allow the divine nature to control the terrestrial nature and thus raise ourselves to the spiritual level. Spiritual life has been defined as *conscious existence in spirit while we are in this body*. Spirit is eternal, and we

need to become aware of it. Our knowledge of matter has become instinctive, but not so our knowledge of spirit. When that happens, we will resurrect into spiritual life.

To accomplish this, we must recognize that weak Will, false knowledge, pains of feelings and ills of flesh are the four arms of the Cross on which the human soul is tied and nailed. To free ourselves of these four weaknesses, we must begin by examining our motive and purpose before performing any action. It should become our second nature to judge our actions by the light of our motives. We may be surprised to discover that many of our actions are rooted in our likes and dislikes, are purposeless, or are based on selfish fear or selfish attraction.

The next step is to purify our motives, and that can be done by meditation on selflessness, on sacrifice and on justice. In this exercise, we will meet puzzles—what is the right and wrong motive? Who can tell? The voice of desire is powerful and enchanting, it misleads us. Therefore, knowledge is necessary. Universal, impersonal knowledge alone brings the pure motive and strengthens the Divine Will in us.

The study of the fundamental principles, studying the words of Krishna, Buddha and Shankara, which ages have proven to be true, are the only safeguards, because all of them teach the same truth. In the presence of such knowledge, our petty feelings, our narrow views, our small words and acts vanish. Such petty, narrow and mean things pertain to mere feelings.

We have to watch the pairs of opposites—likes and dislikes. Ambition and pride, “personal” love for others or the desire for “personal” love from others, these delude the Soul. We cannot learn true knowledge when we are surcharged by feelings—loves and hates, lusts and attachments. We must enquire and find out by examination what our personal feelings are—feelings for persons, for objects and things, and we must persevere to remove them, by giving up something to which we are personally attached; by doing something for the one we dislike, by mortifying the small cravings.

THE MESSAGE OF EASTER

The small, everyday things, give us a magnificent field to ennoble our feelings, *i.e.*, impersonalize them. We may try to do for all what we would do for the best and most loved one, but all the time try to act as if we were one universal being, *i.e.*, a channel through which Universal Life is touching all. This forgetting of the lower, lesser self is the cure of ill health, bad health of the body.

What a wonderful imagery the Easter festival is—Conquest of Death, death of weal, of wrong thought, of evil feelings, of ill health. The triumph of Will which worketh righteousness, of knowledge which enlightens all, of Compassion, the one universal feeling which acts with justice, the radiant body, no more a tomb but a temple, no more a prison but a palace, the temple of the priest who is the Soul, palace of the one who is the Spirit. May the Christos or the Christ within us rise triumphant soon, but we must make the great resolve to “Serve All Man.”

THE marks they tell a story
First the left hand and then the right
To watch with pain and anguish
Next the feet without a fight
Others have endured this
Though nowhere can you run
To be raised before the masses
And bake beneath the sun
For one this is an ending
For many a new day
My words would live forever
To show the world another way
Some say a price too heavy
Some say it must be so
The lamb must play its role
If truth the world will know

—ROBERT LONGLEY
“Four Nails”

FOOD FOR THOUGHT DRACULA—II

THE PHENOMENON of vampirism is often attributed to premature burial, in which an animated corpse that remains in the grave during the daytime, emerges to prey upon the living at night. Is vampirism a reality? What is the rational explanation for vampirism? The Hindus, Greeks, Servians and Slavonian nations have always believed in vampires and vampirism. There has been unanimous credence and similarity in details and descriptions from the people who live far apart from each other. The facts of vampirism are constantly being reported and have been testified to by many eyewitnesses. Yet, scientists and the sceptics deny the phenomenon of vampirism point-blank, while a few others believe that such cases are produced by the Devil, who clothes himself with graveyard corpses and roams in the night, sucking people's blood.

Every belief and every custom springs from facts and causes that gave it birth. At the time of death, the astral body is withdrawn from the physical body. The astral body, along with desires and the lower mind, forms the *kama-rupic* shell, generally known as a ghost. The astral form has a natural attraction for the physical body. At death, the astral form exudes from the physical and is held near its old garment, *i.e.*, the physical body; it is held near its old garment by a double attraction, physical and spiritual, until the latter decomposes; and if the proper conditions are given the soul can reinhabit it and resume the suspended life, by a double attraction, physical and spiritual, until the physical body has decomposed. (*Isis*, I, 476)

There have been several reports of death-bed visions, where people have seen the severing of the magnetic cord, which joins the astral body to the physical. A doctor reported having seen the hazy, fog-like human body a few feet above the physical body of his dying aunt. This he called spirit-body. He also reported having seen a silver-like substance streaming from the head of the physical body

and connecting to the head of the astral form. This was the magnetic cord, which seemed alive and vibrant with energy. With each pulsation of the cord, the astral body became more alive and denser, whereas the physical body became more lifeless till at last the connecting strand of the cord snapped off, and the astral body was free.

However, so long as the astral form is not entirely liberated from the physical body, there is a possibility that it may be forced by magnetic attraction to re-enter it. Sometimes it will be only half way out, when the body, which presents the appearance of death, is buried. In such cases, the terrified astral soul re-enters the body, and then either the unhappy victim suffers the agony of suffocation, or if the person was grossly material during life, then he becomes a vampire. In the latter case, the body that is buried lies in a cataleptic state, while the astral body robs the lifeblood from living men or animals. The astral body is free to wander about, so long as it does not break the link that attaches it to the physical body. The lifeblood sucked from the victims is transferred to the physical form in the tomb by the astral soul through the mysterious and invisible cord of connection, which perhaps, someday, may be explained, writes H.P.B. She points out that the main difficulty in understanding is how these vampires can quit the tombs and how they re-enter the same without appearing to disturb the earth in the least. She observes that we must understand that there is something like *half-death*, in which the body is virtually dead. If such a person was averagely good, then the astral soul will disengage itself by gradual efforts, and when the last link is broken, it is separated forever from the physical body. It is only in the case of a grossly wicked person, in whom the matter predominates spirit, that the phenomenon of vampirism takes place. Both the Greek and Latin religions think it beneficent to have such bodies dug out and transfixed to the earth by a pole of aspen-tree wood. To put an end to it, however, the body needs to be exhumed and burned. (*Isis*, I, 449-52)

In this connection we may refer to what is written by Dr. Inman, in some other context: “When vampires were discovered by the acumen of any observer, they were, we are told, ignominiously killed, by a stake being driven through the body; but experience showed them to have such tenacity of life that they rose, again and again, notwithstanding renewed impalement,” and were ultimately laid to rest only when wholly burned. (*Isis*, II, 80)

H.P.B. mentions in *Isis Unveiled* a few cases of vampirism. For instance, the spectre or ghost of a village herdsman, in Bavaria, began appearing to several inhabitants of the place, and either as a result of fright or some other cause, every one of them died during the following week. Driven to despair, the peasants disinterred the corpse, and pinned it to the ground with a long stake. The same night, he appeared again, causing panic among people. Ultimately, the corpse had to be burnt.

Cremation, *i.e.*, burning the body by lighting the fire or in an electric crematorium, is considered to be the best method of disposing of the physical body, for various reasons. Primarily, cremation facilitates quick disposal of the physical body, and it is a comparatively more hygienic method. Moreover, it helps to separate the psychic body or *Kamrupic* shell from the physical body. Mr. Judge writes: “Cremation has no direct effect on any of the sheaths or vehicles, but it must have the indirect effect of freeing the astral form from the influence of the material body and thus give the astral a chance to more quickly dissipate. . . . From a sanitary point of view cremation is of high importance, as it does away with injurious matter or matter in such a state as to be injurious to the living.” (*Forum Answers*”, p. 102)

While commenting on an article, H.P.B. remarks that after the higher principles have left, the lower passions and material attractions still remain, and depending upon how much they were developed during earth life, they will act more or less powerfully after the death of the physical body. “Each body as well as each principle has a powerful attraction and craving for those elements which are

necessary for its subsistence. The principles of lust, gluttony, envy, avarice, revenge, intemperance, etc., will rush blindly to the place to which they are attracted and where their craving can be temporarily gratified—either directly, as in the case of vampires, by imbibing the emanations of fresh blood, or indirectly, by establishing magnetic relations with sensitive persons (mediums), whose inclinations correspond with their own.” A vampire craves a human body, “and if it cannot find a human body, it may be attracted to that of an animal. The gospel account of the swine into which Jesus drove the ‘evil spirits’ may be a fable in its historical application, but it is a truth, not only a possibility, with reference to many such parallel cases.” (*The Theosophist*, April 1884)

H.P.B. explains that there is another form of vampirism, wherein some individuals rob others of their vitality. When we hold any object in our hand, we transfer our magnetism to that object. In a healthy and young person, these magnetic emanations are strong, while the same are weak in the case of the diseased or old person. When two such people come in close proximity to each other, there is a transfer of magnetic fluid or vitality from the stronger to the weaker person, which may leave the stronger person exhausted. H.P.B. points out that breeders never herd together young animals with old; intelligent physicians forbid parents to have young children occupy their own beds. When David was old and feeble, his vital forces were replenished by bringing a young person in close contact with him so that he could absorb her strength. As an extreme example, there is the case of the Seeress of Prevest, Madame Hauffe, who repeatedly stated that she supported life merely on the atmosphere of the people surrounding her and their *magnetic emanations*. H.P.B. points out that the seeress was a *magnetic vampire*, who absorbed the vitality of stronger people in the form of *volatilized blood*. (*Isis*, I, 463)

In the article, “The Magical Evocation of Apollonius of Tyana,” we read that certain Kabalists believe that incurable insanity is an incomplete but *real* death, which leaves the earthly body under

the exclusive control of the astral body. When the human soul experiences a shock too violent for it to bear, it will separate itself from the body and leave in its place the astral body, which reduces that human being to a state which makes him “in one sense less living than even an animal. Dead persons of this kind can be easily recognized by the complete extinction of the affectional and moral senses; they are not bad; they are not good; they are dead. These beings, who are the poisonous mushrooms of the human species, absorb as much as they can of the vitality of the living; that is why their approach paralyzes the soul and sends a chill to the heart. These corpse-like beings prove all that has ever been said of the vampires, those dreadful creatures who rise at night and suck the blood from the healthy bodies of sleeping persons. Are there not some beings in whose presence one feels less intelligent, less good, often even less honest?”

Of the ten precepts of Buddhism, “taking what is not given” is the second precept. It means not taking or appropriating that which another is not willing to give. Interestingly, it includes not just things, property and wealth of another, but even taking the time or energy of another person against his or her wish. One forces oneself upon another person to such an extent and compels him to listen to one’s complaints, or tirades, or appeals for so long that one eventually reduces the other person to a state of physical prostration, emotional exhaustion, and even nervous collapse. At the end of such a draining session, the person is often heard to remark, “I really enjoyed our little chat.” Human vampires of this sort are sometimes quite oblivious to the damage they have done, writes Sangharakshita, a Buddhist teacher. Then, there are emotional vampires who tend to drain us emotionally, as they are constantly seeking approval, love and attention. Mostly, they are found among our friends, neighbours and loved ones. But we must learn to be prudent and conserve our psychic energy while not being rude or unkind in giving emotional support.

(Concluded)

IMMANUEL KANT TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM—I

IMMANUEL Kant was an eighteenth-century German philosopher who put forward the doctrine of Transcendental Idealism. His predecessor, Descartes, put forward “problematic” idealism, which questions or doubts the certainty of the existence of an external world, and asserts that we can have direct knowledge of our own mental states or representations. On the other hand, Berkeley’s idealism posits that reality consists solely of minds and their ideas, summarised as “to be is to be perceived,” asserting that objects only exist if they are being perceived by a mind. He argued that material substance does not exist independently and that reality is entirely mental or subjective. In philosophy, “idealism” is a philosophical perspective asserting that reality is fundamentally mental, constructed by the mind, or rooted in ideas rather than material objects.

According to Kant’s Transcendental Idealism, given in detail in his work *Critique of Pure Reason*, humans can only understand objects as *phenomena* (appearances), which are perceived through the mind’s sensory and cognitive structures. The *noumena* (things-in-themselves) exist independently but are unknowable. Also, the objects of sense, which are mere appearances, are based upon a thing in itself. However, we do not know this thing as it is in itself; we know only its appearances. Kant claimed that man’s speculative reason can only know phenomena and can never penetrate to the noumenon. However, transcendental idealism does not mean that the world is merely a figment of the imagination, but that the structure of reality we experience is dependent upon how we acquire knowledge and process it through thought, experience and the senses.

The general understanding of “things-in-themselves” is given as independent reality, or the objects as they exist outside our experience, minds, or observations. Human experience is not of things as they are in themselves, or noumena, but as they appear to

us, or phenomena. Our minds process sensory input using inherent frameworks like space and time, *i.e.*, we know the world as filtered through human cognition. For example, when looking at a tree, one sees it in space and time, but according to Kant, those dimensions are added by one's mind and are not inherent to the "tree in itself" or noumenon. If one has been wearing blue-tinted glasses from birth, one would perceive everything as blue, yet that blue colour is not the property of the objects themselves but is the condition of one's perception. Similarly, Kant argued that space and time are the "glasses" of human cognition structuring all sensory input. In essence, while the world exists independently, the structure of that world, as we know it, is mind-dependent.

In other words, the "thing-in-itself" must always remain "unknowable" because we perceive it through the threefold veil or prism, which distorts the reality of the "thing-in-itself." The threefold veil, or three-sided prism, is made up of time, space and causality. In the phenomenal world objects are limited in space. The rose that we see here cannot be present elsewhere at the same time. There was a time when it did not exist, and there will be a time when it will cease to exist. The phenomena are seen in terms of past, present and future. These phenomena are seen as a causal series. Each phenomenon is the effect of the preceding one and will in turn become a cause for the next one that appears.

In *Isis Unveiled* (I, p. 58) we read: "Where is then that *matter* which you all pretend to know so well: and from which—being so familiar with it—you draw all your conclusions and explanations, and attribute to it all things?...That, which can be fully realized by our reason and senses, is but the superficial: they can never reach the true inner substance of things. Such was the opinion of Kant."

In the section "Primordial Substance and Divine Thought" (*S.D.*, I, pp. 329-30), H.P.B. observes that Spirit and Matter are interdependent. There is dependence of Spirit on matter for its expression as consciousness. Likewise, matter existing apart from perception is a mere abstraction. Matter relates to phenomena and

objectivity, which can be perceived, while Substance refers to *noumena*.

The phenomena on our physical plane, such as, trees, stones, rivers, rocks, etc., which are real to the physicist, but they are illusions for a metaphysician. From the point of view of highest metaphysics, objects on all planes, our whole universe, and even gods are illusion. Unlike the stage of highest metaphysics, Man, who is an illusion, perceives illusion on various planes, and that differs from plane to plane. He may become aware of the illusion of solid, material things on the lowest plane, but he may not be completely aware of the illusion of things on astral or higher planes. He may consider them a little more real than the physical plane. Man is an illusion perceiving illusions on this plane. This being so, our own perceptions are shaky, and therefore we cannot say with assertion or certainty what must be the perception on sixth plane, nor can we say that what we perceive is correct and that an ant also should try to see things as we do.

Even on the sixth plane of matter, different people will see things differently, depending upon how much the perceptive faculty is developed. Each human being has his own mode of consciousness, which differs from the mode of consciousness of an ant. We cannot take our perceptions to be a standard for correct perceptions. In the article, “Exact or Occult Science?” we read that ants are not sensitive to bright rays of light, such as, red, yellow and orange. They are sensitive to blue and violet rays of light. Likewise, they are not sensitive to infra-red but sensitive to ultra-violet light. From this we may infer that objects seen by the ants must appear to them quite different from what they appear to us. If an object absorbed all the rays of the solar spectrum and scattered only ultra-violet, then such an object would remain invisible to us, but would be seen by ants.

On pp. 329-30 (*S.D.*, I), we read: “The pure object apart from consciousness is unknown to us, while living on the plane of our three-dimensional World; as we know only the mental states it excites in the perceiving Ego. And, so long as the contrast of Subject and

Object endures...and [we] do not know how to divorce our all-perceiving *Ego* (the Higher Self) from the thraldom of these senses—so long will it be impossible for the personal Ego to break through the barrier which separates it from a knowledge of things in themselves (*or Substance*).” An object *as we see it* is not identical with the object *as it is in itself*. So, Kant said that there is something like a “thing-in-itself.” Absolute knowledge is the knowledge of the thing-in-itself. Our senses bring us raw data in the form of sensations. Our lower mind interprets these sensations, which we term “perception.” When we see an object, say, a chair, our senses bring to us its details as raw data. The lower mind synthesizes it or transforms it into an idea of a chair, which may be quite different from the *real* chair. Our perception is affected by our conceptions and the imperfections of the instruments that bring the data, and hence, we do not see the *thing in itself*. They are the “creations” of our perceptive faculty.

It is said that “The soul is the Perceiver; is assuredly vision itself, pure and simple; unmodified; and looks directly upon ideas” (*The Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali*, Book II, Aph. 20). This Perceiver is the Higher *Manas* or the Higher Ego. However, the Higher Ego cannot act directly on the body. Also, the Higher Ego, being part of the essence of the Universal Mind is unconditionally omniscient on its own plane and *only potentially so on our plane* because it has to act through its *alter ego*—the lower mind. However, we are unable to appreciate the fact that the Perceiver is *changeless*. This is because we identify the Perceiver with its perceptions. Patanjali’s *Yoga Aphorisms* mention that at the time of concentration, the Soul or Perceiver is like a spectator without spectacle, but at other times, *i.e.*, as we live the ordinary life, our mind is modified by the object perceived through the senses, and the Perceiver, as it views the object through the mind, also *seems to be altered into that form*. If red light falls on a white marble, it will *appear* crimson, though actually it is not crimson. We identify ourselves with the ever-changing perishable body and with its conditions and relations, which are also ever-changing.

Occult Philosophy teaches that there is nothing like inert matter or an object, nor a solid and hard object. A block of wood or stone may appear inert, but its particles are in ceaseless vibration, which is so rapid that to the human eye they may appear to be motionless. Hence, it is rightly said that we know only phenomena of matter. All masses of matter are nothing but molecules in different rates of vibration. The knowledge of “things-in-themselves” is described as Omniscience, and that happens when there is no dichotomy between subject and object. Things-in-Themselves are the soul, essence and noumena behind the material manifestations. The entire phenomenal world is the reflection of the noumenal world. The noumenal world of archetypal Ideas is Kant’s things-in-themselves, which makes possible the world of things-as-they-seem, or the phenomenal world.

In the article “The World of Archetypes,” in the book, *Studies in the Secret Doctrine* (p. 24), we read that the Archetypal World is an expression of Platonic philosophy, and it is the world as it existed in the mind of the Deity. “This world in the mind of the Deity, this cosmic substance which is energized by cosmic ideation, is the world of noumena, in which inheres, in which lives the world of phenomena, in its abstract and archetypal aspects.”

Plato taught that “beyond all finite existences and secondary causes, all laws, ideas and principles, there is an Intelligence, Mind, the first principle of all principles, the Supreme Idea upon which all other ideas are grounded” (*Isis*, p. xii). This he called the “World of Ideas.” *Ideas* are the *archetypes* or *models* of which particular objects, properties and relations are copies.

In *Transactions*, H.P.B. explains how the condensed and concrete forms in the physical world are developed from prototypes in the archetypal world. We are told that “prototypes or ideas of things exist first on the plane of Divine eternal Consciousness (Akasa), and these become reversed in the Astral Light.” Akasa represents higher planes of matter and consciousness, which is also called the *noumenal* or archetypal world. H.P.B. gives the analogy of the acorn and the germ to explain prototypes in Akasa and Astral Light. An

acorn contains both the astral form of the future oak and also the germ, which will grow into a tree. This tree can take any one of the million forms, depending upon the atmosphere, sunlight, soil, water, etc. These forms are contained in the acorn potentially. We are told that what exists in the Akasa is the noumenal germ. In the astral light, we have the subjective picture. The development of the oak tree is the result of the developed prototypes in the Astral Light, which development proceeds from higher to lower planes. Thus, we descend downward from the most ethereal to grosser planes till we reach the grossest plane, where there is consolidation and a perfectly developed tangible form (*Transactions*, pp. 96-98). Plato called the world of Ideas the *noumenal* world, and the world of objects, the *phenomenal* world. He believed that one could only have a mere *opinion* about individual objects, and the objective world of *phenomena*, because everything in the objective world is continually changing. One can have real *knowledge* about the Universals, or *noumena*.

We read that it is only when the duality of Subject and Object has vanished “in the absolute negation of the Nirvanic State,” and the Unit is merged in the ALL, that it is possible to obtain Omniscience or the Knowledge of things-in-themselves (*S.D.*, I, 330). In other words, it is only when one enters Nirvana, so that one’s separate Ego merges into *Atman*, and the subject and object are merged into one, that one obtains omniscience. In the *Key to Theosophy* (Indian Ed., p. 113), H.P.B. explains that when the Spiritual entity breaks loose from every particle of matter, substance or form, forever, and re-becomes Spiritual breath, it is only then that it enters upon eternal and unchangeable Nirvana. The Spirit becomes Beness itself, but as a form or shape or matter as we know it, it is completely annihilated.

(*To be concluded*)

MANAGING THE PASSION OF ANGER

ANGER is a general term for a wide range of passions or emotions implicit in human nature, such as wrath, vengeance, hatred, annoyance, indignation, an impulse to hurt another, and so on. Anger arises from desire-*Kama*. Unfulfilled desires, wounded vanity and pride provoke anger.

Arjuna asks Krishna, “What is it that makes one sin against one’s good sense as if impelled by an impalpable secret force?” Krishna answers that it is Lust and Anger (*Kama* and *Krodha*) that arise from the quality of *Rajas*, and that they are enemies of man on earth, raging like fire, difficult to control because their empire is not only over senses, emotions and mind, but it also envelops the discriminating faculty by which it deludes the soul. Krishna says that this enemy in us is to be destroyed by the practice of self-control through discriminative knowledge of, and reliance on, the true Self. (*Gita*, Ch. III)

So insidious is this animal passion in human nature that even sages have succumbed to it and lost all knowledge and powers they had achieved by severe austerities—*Tapas*. What crime has not been committed by man in a paroxysm of anger! An episode is narrated in the Vishnu Purana on the loss one incurs by giving in to anger and the imperative need to abjure it.

Sage Parasara narrates to his disciple Maitreya that once he had embarked on the performance of a magical sacrifice (*Yajna*) to destroy demons in a spirit of vengeance when he heard that they had killed his father in the past. When the sacrifice was on its way, Vasishtha, his grandfather, appeared and asked Parasara to stop the sacrifice and showed him the injustice and sin of killing the demons and the great harm that comes to the one who gives in to anger and revenge. The sage advice of Vasishtha must be meditated upon. The wise cherish it.

Says the Sage Vasishtha: “Let thy wrath be appeased. Rakshasas are not culpable; thy father’s death *was the work of Karma*. Anger is the passion of fools; it becometh not a wise man. *By whom, it*

may be asked, is any one killed? Every man reaps the consequences of his own acts. Anger, my son, is the destruction of all that man obtains....and prevents the attainment of emancipation. The sages shun wrath, Be not thou, my child, subject to its influence. Let not these *unoffending* spirits of darkness be consumed; let thy sacrifice cease. *Mercy is the might of righteous.*" (*Vishnu Purana*, Book I, Chapter 1)

"Do not stir fire with sword" is a maxim of Pythagoras. It is also a popular superstition among peoples widely scattered on the globe. Tartars (Mongolian tribes) will not consent to stick a knife into the fire for fear of "cutting the head of the fire." Similar is the belief among Kalmucks. Max Muller shows that this "superstition" has a valid psychological basis. It means exercising prudence in the face of an angry encounter and maintaining calm. Says Heraclitus, "It is difficult to fight with anger, for whatever is necessary to be done redeems the soul....For many, by gratifying anger have changed the condition of their soul, and have made death preferable to life. But by governing the tongue and being quiet, friendship is produced from strife, the fire of anger being extinguished, and you yourself will not appear to be destitute of intellect." (*Isis*, I, 248)

Controlling anger is difficult but not impossible. Gandhiji shows the way: "It is not that I do not get angry. I do not give vent to anger. I cultivate the quality of patience as angerlessness, and generally speaking, I succeed. How I find it possible to control it would be a useless question, for *it is a habit that everyone must cultivate* and must succeed in forming by constant practice." (*Living the Life* by B. P. Wadia, pp. 111-112)

Horace says, "Anger is momentary madness, so control your passion or it will control you." The Bible says, "A soft answer turneth away wrath; but grievous (harsh) words stir up anger" (Proverbs, 15). The *Gita* advises, "He who, while living in this world and before the liberation of the soul from the body, can resist the impulse arising from desire and anger is a devotee and blessed." (XVI, 21-23)

THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE FRAGMENT ONE—XIV

“STIFLE THE voice of flesh, allow no image of the senses to get between its light and thine, that thus the twain may blend in one. And having learnt thine own *Agyana*, flee from the Hall of Learning. This Hall is dangerous in its perfidious beauty, is needed but for thy probation. Beware, Lanoo, lest dazzled by illusive radiance thy Soul should linger and be caught in its deceptive light.”

“The twain may blend in one” may be understood in terms of the Lower and Higher Mind. In the article “Psychic and Noetic Action,” H.P.B. writes that the lower mind is the ray of the Higher mind, the same in essence as the Higher Mind, but when it incarnates, it is clothed in an ethereal vesture of the Astral Light so as to work through the body, which beclouds its divine nature, making it forget its divine origin. It becomes dual in nature. It can gravitate towards *Kama* or levitate towards Higher Manas. When entangled in *Kama*, it works under its influence and becomes purely rational with its earthly intellect. On the other hand, the Higher Ego or Mind is unconditionally omniscient on its own plane and has knowledge of the past, present and future. Being too pure, it cannot work directly on our plane but has to work through its alter ego or the lower mind. Regarding this lower mind, H.P.B. says that “Mind” is *manas*, or “rather its lower reflection, which whenever it disconnects itself, for the time being, with *kama*, becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of the free will in physical man.” In other words, freed from lower desires, the lower mind can temporarily connect itself with Buddhi-Manas to display higher reason and intuition.

However, “twain may blend” is actually an injunction to “blend the two.” It refers to the destruction of the bridge, *Antaskarna*, between the Lower and Higher Manas, *i.e.*, blending the aspiring self with the immortal Self permanently. *Antaskarna* has been defined

as the Path of communication or communion between the personality and the higher *Manas*. In the *Voice of the Silence*, p. 55, we are asked to merge the personal self with the impersonal or higher Self and thus *destroy* the “path” (*Antaskarna*) between them. This means killing out of lower desires, including the desire for sentient existence. Thus, when the lower, the personal mind is completely purified and devoid of any personal, worldly thoughts, feelings or desires, the personal is sacrificed to the impersonal SELF. In a perfected being, the higher personal consciousness is merged into *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*.

The Hall of Learning refers to the deceptive astral plane, which makes one aware of his own ignorance and weaknesses. It is used by Nature and by the Master to test the disciple. The lower astral region has in it all the images that may excite the imagination and fancy of a chela. If he does not recognise them for what they are—false, illusive, deceptive and a trap—he fails in the test. He has to flee this hall of learning where he learns the tempting and illusive nature of the astral world and yearns for the permanent, the real wisdom. “We may be physically brave and say that no fear can enter into us, but no untrained or merely curious seeker is able to say just what effect will result to his outer senses from the attack or influence encountered by the psychical senses. . . . We must first dispel the *inner* darkness before trying to see into the darkness without; we must *know ourselves* before knowing things extraneous to ourselves,” writes Mr. Judge. (*Vernal Blooms*, p. 79)

When the disciple is asked to flee from the Hall of Probationary Learning, this learning also consists of false knowledge, *i.e.*, the worldly knowledge, which is worse than ignorance. Creedal religions, logical and verbal speculations called philosophies and the glamorous beauty of the forms, words, etc. of the arts, which are studied and experienced—all these constitute worldly knowledge. Mere learning, or intellectual knowledge, such as that possessed by scholars of literature, or of science, or of philosophy, does not make one wise. Between scholarship and spirituality, there

is a deep chasm. A philosopher may write learnedly about God as ‘One Absolute Abstract Reality,’ and yet offer prayers to a personal God, or continue to practice untouchability or the colour bar.

On the path of discipleship, one has to face not only the force of illusion but also the force of delusion. Psychologically, false perception could arise due to our biases. Each one of us carries with himself the background of his culture, education and religion and tends to look at the world and people through bits of these coloured glasses. Our judgments, more often than not, are biased. H.P.B. stresses the need to acquire unbiased and clear judgment. Our faulty perception or illusion could be because of limitations of our senses or the result of false conceptions, inherent in our nature, carried from the past. Philosophically, illusion is what is called “*Maya*,” and it is part and parcel of the cosmic order. Illusion is not having a correct picture of the reality. In the *Secret Doctrine*, H.P.B. writes that we are able to perceive only the *phenomena*, and they have in them an element of illusion or *Maya*.

Delusion, on the other hand, is *Moha*, when the person is convinced that his illusion is right. Delusion seems to be because of egoism. It seems to be a moral problem. Delusion could be avoided. In the Ninth chapter of the *Gita*, Shri Krishna says, “The *deluded* despise me in the human form, not knowing my true nature as the Lord of all things.” Being encased in different bodies and personalities, the true light is obscured, and we are led to believe that each one of us is different from others. Arjuna, too, was under the same delusion. It is only when he is made to realize the presence of divinity everywhere that he says that his *moha* or delusion was destroyed.

Illusion causes the person to swing between likes and dislikes, between love and hate, etc. Delusion, on the other hand, does not allow a person to see the Light of Truth, and one is enveloped by the darkness of ignorance. We might say that the force of *Maya* or illusion drives us to sense pleasures, and persistence in sensuous enjoyments leads us on the wrong path, so, through persistence in

that wrong path, one becomes deluded, and through persistence in delusion, we fall to the morally low level. If we are woken up by the suffering, it leads to repentance, inner conversion and a new life which ultimately leads to knowledge and compassion.

“The light shines from the jewel of the Great Ensnarer (Mara). The senses it bewitches, blinds the mind, and leaves the unwary an abandoned wreck.”

The third great power of mighty Nature is Mara, the Tempter. The footnote explains that in exoteric religions, *Mara* is a demon or an asura. *Mara* literally means “that which kills the Soul.” However, in esoteric philosophy, it is “personified temptation through men’s vices.” It is symbolized as a king in whose crown shines the jewel with such lustre that it dazzles the one looking at it. The power of evil, or human weaknesses and vices, lies in its ability to tempt. It points toward the fascination produced by vices that makes a man miss his judgement. To show how these temptations work, spiritual teachers have personified them as Mara, Ahriman, etc. The great ensnarer Mara is not a person but a personification of our vices, which take shape and tempt us in the most attractive manner. But the fact remains that in any situation, man can be the master of himself and nothing can waver him from his determination. Likewise, if a person does not have it in himself to get tempted by this, that or the other thing, nothing can affect him. So, the fault does not lie with anything external. They are our own vices taking shape and presenting themselves to us.

“*He who controls his mind escapes the bondage of Mara,*” says the Buddha (*The Dhammapada*, Ch. 3). If a man is not vigilant, he is at risk of being attacked by Mara. When we are not on our guard, Mara lures us away from our true purpose. The tempting demon has many tricks up his sleeve to delude the “practical man” of the world as to why it is perfectly all right for him to desire his own progress and happiness, even if it means hurting another or making someone else suffer for it. It will try to convince us to settle for the lower standards of morality and be content rather than practising Transcendental Virtues.

Man is a mixture of good and bad, of the godlike and demoniacal natures. In an ordinary person, the good and bad tendencies exist as complex collective forces, but when one decides to achieve some spiritual goal and resolves to allow his higher nature to govern him in his life, these tendencies separate out into two opposing forces of good and bad tendencies—represented in the *Gita* as the *Kaurava* and *Pandava* armies. Arjuna represents an individual who has resolved to develop his better nature. Like Arjuna in the *Gita*, every individual who resolves to develop his better nature faces opposition from the lower tendencies and faculties, “which have their camp and base of action upon the Astral and other hidden planes.” The threshold has to be crossed before entering a room or a house. It is as if someone sitting at the threshold of the house or a room prevents one from going into the house or a room. Likewise, in moving from the familiar, personal and often base nature to the unfamiliar and spiritual nature, we have to face and conquer at the threshold the evil in our own nature, in the family, race, nation, etc.

Mr. Judge has remarked that every real aspirant will someday, in some life, arouse the “Dweller on the Threshold.” The very act of trying to conquer the inner foe with the help of the Higher Self stirs up the slumbering *Tanhaic* elementals. These, sensing instinctively the danger to themselves, coalesce to become one composite entity and try to overthrow, if possible, the struggling spiritual aspirant. The aspirant has to drive it out of his system and face it objectively as his own Elementary. As we progress on the spiritual path with greater and greater aspiration and strong determination, more marked is the separation of good from evil in our nature. Our faults and weaknesses begin to assemble and take shape, and when the process is completed, it becomes *Papa-Purusha*, the evil Dweller. But our aspirations and our effort to lead the higher life also begin to take shape, creating *Punya-Purusha*. “Then by the help and strength of the latter we eject the former from within ourselves. Next, it torments us from without; this is the real Dweller. There are some grim mysteries connected with the subject. A clear conscience, purity of

magnetism and cleanliness of body are the very best protection. You are bound to get over difficulties as you persist in attention-devotion,” writes Shri B. P. Wadia.

Regular self-examination is necessary to become aware of the weak and strong points in our character. One day, we may become aware of our tendency to think uncharitable thoughts. On another day, we may discover that we have begun to consider ourselves so important or good that we are all the time criticizing others. We might be so occupied with criticism of others that we have no time left to look at our own faults. Often, this creates the delusion that we are always right and others are all wrong. Thus, we build the most harmful of all Dwellers—pride, or the perverted sense of “I,” or the exaggerated self-importance, which is the most difficult foe to fight.

“The moth attracted to the dazzling flame of the thy night-lamp is doomed to perish in the viscid oil. The unwary Soul that fails to grapple with the mocking demon of illusion, will return to earth the slave of Mara.”

The moth is attracted to the flame, but it dies either due to excessive heat or falls into the oil. So also, when the aspirant mistakes the light of the astral region and is fascinated by the illusive beauty of the things in that region, he is on the path of his own destruction. We see that worldly pleasures lure us and give pleasure for a while, but soon we are satiated. This is especially the case with alcohol and drugs, which give us pleasure initially, but after a while, they stop providing the pleasure or thrill that they did initially. This is called the “mocking demon of illusion” because at first it creates the illusion of pleasure, but after a few times, we neither enjoy that thing nor can we altogether leave it. The person who falls prey to these things “becomes a slave of Mara,” *i.e.*, he has to incarnate again and again.

(To be continued)

THE PHENOMENON OF SPIRITUAL DEATH

STRANGE as the subject may seem, it is a fact pertaining to human existence. It is clearly taught in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. Yet it is very little known to people in general. The subject matter is of greatest importance, as it has a direct bearing on human happiness and destiny. A write-up on it has necessarily to be short and sketchy in view of the limitation of magazine space.

Immortality, meaning self-conscious existence in Spirit, transcending the cycles of birth and death, is possible for the mortal man on earth; he can become divine. Equally true it is that “immortality in Evil” is also possible for man; “immortality” in this context means the misery of continuity of personal existence in gross matter for ages, which nevertheless ends in annihilation of the soul. It is called “spiritual death.” It is the greatest calamity that can befall man. It is entirely up to each individual to choose between the two paths—one leading to immortality in Spirit (divinity), and the other, annihilation in Matter (Evil).

To understand this truism of human existence, we need to understand what our true self and nature are. We have the wrong idea that we are the body. We must unlearn this wrong idea we hold. We are not the body. The body is the grossest and most impermanent aspect of man. It is one of the seven principles that constitute man.

The seven principles have two aspects: First, the lower four, represented in geometrical symbol as a square, are the four lower mortal principles; they are : Body, Astral Body, Prana (life principle), and Kama (passions and desires). It is the lower mortal self (quaternary). It is temporary. It is born and dies.

“Kabalistic doctrine....teaches that it is only through observing the law of harmony that individual life hereafter can be obtained; and that the farther the inner and the outer man deviate from this fount of harmony, whose source lies in our divine spirit, the more difficult it is to regain the ground.” (*Isis*, I, 317)

The second, upper three, represented symbolically as a triangle, constitute the Immortal Real Man; they are Atma, Buddhi, and Manas. The three are “One” with three aspects. This is our True Self—the Real Man. It is the Reincarnating Ego. It is unborn and deathless, universal and eternal.

The Higher Manas-Entity being too spiritual and divine, cannot incarnate directly in the gross mortal body. It overbroods the mortal and incarnates indirectly by emitting a spark of the Higher Manas into the body and brain. The spark of the Higher Manas entering the body becomes the Lower Manas, a personal mortal soul. The Lower Manas uses the brain as the instrument, presides over the five perceptive organs and five organs of action, and through them perceives, experiences, and acts in the external world or nature. The Lower Mind-Soul, working with the brain, is the faculty of thought, reasoning and intellection. This is the mortal LOWER SELF, or the Lower Mortal Ego. It is enmeshed in the principle of Kama, or Passions and Desires. Impelled by desires and passions, man makes Karma and becomes bound by effects produced by it.

The Lower Mind being a spark emanated from the Higher Mind, is however, endowed with all the attributes of the divine parent, such as Will, judgment, discrimination, reason, intuition, moral sense and conscience. Hence the mortal man, though generally conquered by earthly animal passions, has the innate ability to choose between right and wrong, good and evil; and, thereby, he is able to control the desires and passions of the lower mind and nature, follow the laws of virtue, which are the characteristics of his higher, diviner nature, and gradually raise the lower self to accord with the higher. Everyone is naturally endowed with this ability.

The Lower Mind in the body, therefore, is the balance between the lower animal desires and passions on the one hand and Atma-Buddhi-Manas on the other. Selfishness and all lower passions predominate in Lower Self. Good thoughts, nobler impulses, higher aspirations, compassion and wisdom come into the Lower self from Atma-Buddhi-Manas. So, under the influence of both these powers,

man makes good and bad Karma and reaps the effects of them as pleasure and pain in cycles of rebirth.

At the death of the body, all the material thoughts and passions become attached to the Astral Body, and constitute *Kama Rupa*, which survives for more or less time after bodily death, depending on the degree of grossness or the refined quality of life he lived, and gradually dissipates in *Kama Loka*. This *Kama Rupa* is the moral dregs of the personality of the man that was on earth. It is Astral Corpse, without mind or conscience. All higher thoughts and aspirations of man while living in the body on earth cannot perish, being spiritual, and become assimilated to spiritual Individuality (*Sutratma*) or Ego. Thus, only the nobler and higher thoughts and aspirations of man survive and enjoy the divine felicity in a state of blissful spiritual consciousness for more or less period of time depending upon the intensity of higher thought energy man generated in life. The spiritual state of consciousness is known as Devachan by Buddhists and *Swarga* by Hindus. When the spiritual energy of higher thought is exhausted, the Devachanic state of consciousness ends, and the Ego is drawn back by the force of *Tanha* (thirst for sentient existence on earth) to another incarnation to work out the Karma of the past lives.

Thus, in every life throughout the series of reincarnations, the higher essence of man's thoughts only survives. This essence is assimilated to the Ego. Through such countless reincarnations the Ego gathers the essence of the thoughts of every incarnation—like the bee gathers honey from many flowers—to finally blossom as a fully Self-Conscious Divinity, one with the ALL. Thus, there is spiritual continuity of man by virtue of some nobler aspects of his life surviving from every incarnation. This is the law of spiritual continuity.

If the human being gives himself over entirely to selfishness and gratification of passions of material life with no thought of the nobler promptings of one's Divine nature, life after life, and in fact, delights in evil, then such a person generates nothing of the higher thought-

energy in life to be assimilated to the Ego at the end of each life. Barren of nobler elements of life, nothing survives the death of such a man that leaves a sign in Eternity that he existed. Giving in to gratification of animal passions and selfishness through many lives, with nothing of higher thought-energy surviving, his lower principles, the aggregate of *skandhas* (material qualities), reincarnate immediately after death by the unconsciously acting self-reproductive brute force of the animal man. Such a person becomes severed from the Divine Conscience, the God in him, while in body. When death comes, during the post-mortem process of separation of principles, there will be no trace of spiritual element in the dying person to be liberated. Nothing of spiritual quality of that personality will be there to survive death. This is called soul death. Such are dead spiritually even before physical death. By living a life of unbelief in any but material life and its illusive delights, one grows unconscious of the Higher Life. His *skandhas* may survive in Matter as a *Kama Rupa* after bodily death for centuries. The wicked among such become a scourge amidst mankind. Such may live in Evil for ages but are soulless, reincarnating immediately after death in each life, but will suffer the agony of conscious annihilation in the end. It is the result of the infraction of the law of spiritual continuity. This severance from Higher Self during life is Spiritual Death. It is spoken of in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, in chapter XVI, entitled, “Discriminating Between Godlike and Demoniactal Natures.” Of the fate of the latter, Sri Krishna says:

“And they, being doomed to those infernal wombs, more and more deluded in each succeeding rebirth, never come to me, O son of Kunti, but go at length to the lowest region.” (*Gita*, XVI-20)

It is left to the choice of each individual whether he or she will attain conscious immortality in Spirit, become divine, or obtain the awful misery of “immortality” in Matter for long ages, ending at last in painful conscious annihilation. Therefore, Teachers say that there are many such soulless men and women whom we meet with in life but know little of the inner conditions of such.

IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY

Human life is an interplay of forces; some lift us up, and others weigh us down. Philosophers and mystics have variously labelled them as virtues and vices, light and shadow, and gunas and vikaras. According to Sant Shyam Lal Saxena, Babuji Maharaj, a human being is shaped by twelve primary energies, of which the six positive energies must be nurtured, while the six negative energies must be dropped. It forms an algebra of the soul. There are six expansive energies, or active forces, namely, compassion, humility, forgiveness, truthfulness, love and charity, which build our inner being. Every act of love, forgiveness and truthfulness makes something inside us grow and multiply. “The soul becomes more spacious and open to the Divine. These virtues act like additive operators in mathematics. They accumulate and elevate human experience. Symbolically, they are the Sigma qualities—the Sigma of spiritual life. They represent summation, growth, and enrichment.”

However, alongside these six virtues are six vices, namely, lust, anger, greed, attachment, jealousy and ego, which do not build but erode. “They drain emotional energy, cloud mental clarity, and obscure spiritual perception. These are Koppa qualities—symbolised by the archaic Greek letter Koppa.” Koppa has been removed from the Greek alphabet though it is retained as a numerical symbol. Thus, a letter that once existed but is now dropped, serves as a perfect metaphor for the forces that we must discard and filter out from our consciousness.

Thus, Six Sigma: the deliberate cultivation of the six virtues, and Six Koppa: the conscious dissolution of the six vices, together form a complete cycle of inner transformation. Human life is then the result of what we nurture and what we discard. We might say growth results from two simultaneous movements: Adding what uplifts and removing what corrupts. It will not do if we only cultivate goodness without addressing the vices, or we drop bad habits without building

positive qualities. “Virtue without cleansing becomes fragile. Cleansing without virtue becomes empty....If Sigma represents the positive architecture of the soul, Koppa represents its necessary demolition. Babuji Maharaj often emphasised that spirituality is not an escape from the world but a deeper engagement with it.... Ultimately, the destiny of every human being can be expressed in a single elegant equation: Human Evolution = Sigma (virtues) – (vices). This is the algebra of awakening—a living formula,” writes Anmol Saxena. (*The Speaking Tree, The Times of India*, February 9, 2026)

A good and pious man practices virtues. But virtue is often understood to mean abstinence from vice and taken to be synonymous with conventional morality and disconnected from knowledge. Mere personal good feelings do not take us anywhere. It needs to be recognized that Virtue and Knowledge are the two wings of the bird of Human Progress. *Through the Gates of Gold* cautions that by practice of virtue we might fetter ourselves into one groove, one changeless way of living the life. Unlike the person who practices virtue *mechanically*, the person who has sinned deeply and is steeped in selfish gratification stands a better chance of entering the spiritual life because sooner or later, he wakes up, either through satiation in pleasures or through severe consequences of his evil actions. Some of us practice our own brand of purity and morality and look upon it as a ticket to heaven. “It is easy to become a gourmand of pure living and high thinking as in the pleasures of taste or sight or sound. Gratification is the aim of the virtuous man as well as of the drunkard,” warns *Through the Gates of Gold*.

We are reminded of John Milton’s quote: “I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue, unexercised and unbreathed...that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary.” A virtue, for example, of celibacy, cannot be developed by remaining within four walls of a monastery, without facing any temptation or trial. A spiritually advanced person knows more about evil than a sinful person, because the sinner sinks deep into his vice or sin, while a spiritual person is able to remain detached while observing it and has resisted evil in every phase of its manifestation.

This also shows that the path of spiritual progress often passes through darkness and evil. Mr. Judge explains that only a person of great moral strength can walk the path without wavering. For many of us, the spiritual progress involves sinking very low and then rising. Thus, “Do you not know that it takes a nature with some strength in it to sink very low, and that the mere fact of having the power to sink low may mean that the same person may in time rise to a proportionately greater height?” (*Letters That Have Helped Me*, p. 94)

This possibility is beautifully conveyed in the article “Reflections,” by Mr. Judge. “More saving grace may be found in the society of thieves than in that of fine persons who never reverberate to a true thought.” “Fine persons” are those who may follow the conventional morality and keep up the appearance by fine talk, good manners and even a show of honesty, but they have never appreciated or tried to live the virtuous life in true sense. Saving grace is a redeeming quality or characteristic. So, a person may be a thief but may respond to the virtue of kindness, generosity or courage, which could act as a footstool and help him take a higher step. There is potential good hidden within evil, because the heart or centre of evil is expiation. True repentance can bring about an inner transformation in the sinner. “The vices of men become steps in the ladder, one by one, as they are surmounted. The virtues of man...though they create a fair atmosphere and a happy future, they are useless if they stand alone.” (*Light on the Path*, p. 5)

Can chimpanzees and other great apes breed with the monkeys? The answer is no. We often think of primates—to mean the order of the mammals that includes great apes such as chimps, human beings, gibbons, monkeys, and arboreal creatures such as bushbabies, lemurs, etc.—as being closely related; the common ancestor for this group goes back tens of millions of years. The animals that became great apes split from those that became monkeys some 25-30 million

years ago. In that long period of time, many separate species would have developed, and also, they would have evolved different numbers of chromosomes, which makes them reproductively incompatible. For instance, chimpanzees, gorillas and orangutans have 48 chromosomes, while Old World monkeys, which are found in Africa and Asia, have 42 chromosomes. The New World monkeys, which are found in the America, have 54-62 chromosomes.

Can any primate species interbreed? The answer is, quite a few can interbreed. “The lead scientist of that study, Professor Jenny Tung from Duke University, says somewhere between 20-30 per cent of all primate species interbreed with one another. That was even true of humans—somewhere between 2-5 per cent of our DNA comes from other hominids, notably Neanderthals.” Marmosets and tamarins, the monkeys from the Americas, and likewise white-handed and pileated gibbons that are members of the *Hylobates* genus, have been shown to successfully interbreed in Khao Yai National Park in Thailand.

Can any great apes interbreed? The answer is yes. For instance, chimpanzees and bonobos can interbreed. Scientists who observed the hybrid animals reported that in each individual there were “anatomical features reminiscent of both of the parental species,” writes James Fair (*BBC Wildlife Magazine*, February 14, 2026)

De Quatrefages, a naturalist, put forward a theory of monogenism, or monogenesis, according to which all human races belong to a single species (*Homo sapiens*) and share a common ancestry. He argued that all humans, regardless of racial differences in skin colour, hair, or cranial structure, originated from a single stock. He argued that the racial differences were not innate and unchanging but were caused by differences of climate, habits, isolation, and religious culture. In the *Secret Doctrine (II, 195)*, H.P.B. says that those believing in monogenesis are saying that the very fact that every race of mankind is capable of crossing with every other, proves monogenesis. However, she says that they are not taking into account the “exceptions” to this rule. It is true that since the separation of

sexes occurred, every human race was capable of crossing every other, but at a certain point in time, the law of sterility between two human races asserts itself. H.P.B. points out that just as between two different species of animals, the law of sterility is at work so that their union is not fruitful, so also, in *some rare cases* even in human beings, the law of sterility is at work, such as when a European desires to unite with females of the “savage tribes,” which are described as mixed tribes.

These mixed tribes consist of semi-animal creatures, whose remnants known to ethnology were Tasmanians, some Australians and mountain tribes in China, and the men and women of these are entirely covered with hair. They are being described as the last descendants of the semi-animal Lemurians (of the Third Race). How were these produced?

Hybridization in biology is the process of crossing two genetically different individuals—species, genera, varieties—to create a new organism (hybrid) which possesses traits from both parents. One example is the crossing of a horse with a donkey, producing a mule. It is used in the present day, in both plants and animals, to enhance traits like disease resistance, adaptability to environment, etc. We are being told that while at present there is hybridization in plants and animals, at the time of Third Race humanity, there was “artificial crossbreeding,” which is similar to hybridization, and that was the crossbreeding of man with huge she-animals, producing a dumb race of red-hair covered monsters that walked on four legs and also could stand erect and also bend. These were not anthropoid apes, nor any other apes, but are described as “primitive lower man.” (*S.D.*, II, 184)

Likewise, according to Theosophy, anthropoid apes have descended from the unnatural union between “Third Race man of the early Atlantean period” and the animals. The mindless men who were the “narrow-brained,” united with huge she-animals and bred huge man-like monsters. On p. 689 (*S.D.*, II), we read that as time rolled on, the still semi-astral forms consolidated into physical and

later dwindled in size, producing the lower apes of the Miocene period. After this, man was endowed with mind, and hence with power to think and choose, and also with self-consciousness. But once again, men with minds belonging to the *later* Atlantean Race repeated the sin of the mindless by uniting with the lower apes of the Miocene period, giving rise to the species of apes—orangutan, gorilla and chimpanzee—now known as anthropoid apes. Regarding the anthropoids, in which are trapped the human Egos, Theosophy teaches that they will be liberated and pass into the astral human forms of the Sixth and the Seventh Races and then into the lowest human forms in the fifth Round. (*S.D.*, II, 184)

Thus, as far as human beings are concerned, even those belonging to different races can breed together, and this is termed “specific unity,” which no one can deny. But how to explain that those belonging to the Fourth Race united with females of a semi-human race and then the hybrids produced through this union again united and produced ancestors of present-day anthropoid apes? According to Theosophy, in earlier times such unnatural union was fruitful but not anymore. The unnatural union was *invariably* fertile because the then mammalian types *were not remote enough* from their Root-type—Primeval Astral Man—to develop the necessary barrier. It is not fertile anymore because “Nature has changed her ways,” therefore, the result of such a union is sterility. “Medical science records such cases of monsters bred from human and animal parents, even in our own day. The possibility is, therefore, one of *degree*, not of fact.” (*S.D.*, II, 689)

Although great similarity in anatomical structure and behaviour had led scientists to think that man has descended from the apes, or that man and apes have common ancestors, the adepts say that man has neither descended from apes, nor has he risen from the apes.

VIRTUE is not to be considered in the light of mere innocence, or abstaining from harm; but as the exertion of our faculties in doing good.

—JOSEPH BUTLER

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(*Sd.*) DAKSHA S. PARAJIA
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