

PHILOSOPHY · SCIENCE · RELIGION · THE ARTS

TheoSophia

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*The Relevance of
Our Work*

LIVING
THEOSOPHY

TODAY'S SEARCH FOR
THE HOLY GRAIL

THEOSOPHY IN ACTION

TheoSophia



TheoSophia is the official magazine of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand.

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Contributions are welcome. Articles will be considered if up to 1,500 words, and sent as an email attachment to the editor. Note that *TheoSophia* articles will also be used in part or whole on the website: www.theosophy.nz

Please contact the editor at editor@theosophy.org.nz or visit our website for the guidelines: www.theosophy.nz/

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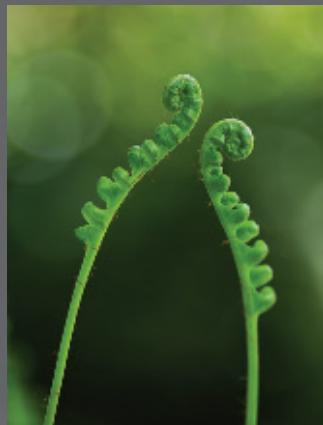
THE MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

Our Mission is to serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation and the Unity of Life.

July 2018 Naarden meeting of the TS



Cover:
Poinsettias
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Awakening Compassion – Deepening the Connection

National Presenters

John Vorstermans

Renée Sell

Our Lady's Home of Compassion - Island Bay, Wellington

TSNZ CONVENTION 7-12 January 2021 (5 nights)

To awaken compassion within ourselves, to see the world with the eyes of love and to respect all life, are all facets of living a spiritual life.

- How do we deepen that connection within ourselves on a day to day basis?
- How do we make lasting change in our lives?
- How do we navigate our world in these unsettling times?

Come and join us as we explore together these questions and more through talks, guided meditations and workshops, over a few summer days at the beautiful venue: *Our Lady's Home of Compassion* in Wellington.



Presenters



John Vorstermans is the National President of the Theosophical Society in New Zealand, Past-President of the Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS as well as Past-President of Wellington Branch and Auckland HPB Lodge. John has a deep interest in the ageless wisdom tradition and over recent times has focused on transformative processes that aid people to understand themselves and help create positive change in their lives.

Professionally, John has been self-employed and a director in several companies over the last 40 years, including other not-for-profit organisations.

Renée Sell has been a member of the Society for 22 years and during this time has been active in many different capacities, working locally at her branch, contributing at National Section and working in the role of Vice-President of the NZ Section for the past four and a half years.

Renée has been actively involved in the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) in New Zealand for 17 years and a part of many projects through this avenue. She is passionate about making the ancient wisdom teachings a living reality in her life. Renée says, "There is only 'living theosophy' as all else dies with the body." Renée's key focus is the practical application of theosophy as a way forward in a world in need of a new way of being.

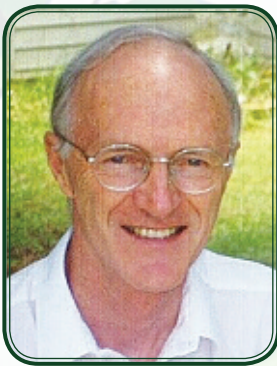
The Programme

The Wellington Branch is hosting the January Convention 2021 of Theosophy in New Zealand at a delightful venue in Island Bay with a lively, relevant programme and a variety of interesting speakers.

The TSNZ Convention 2021 programme includes:

- Speakers from throughout the country including the National President, John Vorstermans and Vice-President, Renée Sell as well as popular National Speaker, Murray Stentiford, Wellington Branch President, Sushma Webber and more...
- Spirited Q&A panel with guest speakers
- Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) special presentations
- Morning meditation and attunement
- Wellington outing
- Final evening entertainment.

All are part of the TSNZ Convention 2021 experience.



Local Speakers



Murray Stentiford, National Speaker and facilitator with the TSNZ has a wide knowledge of spiritual, scientific and social issues. He is able to draw on this experience in dynamic presentations that bring the light of the Timeless Wisdom to bear on life in the world today.

Murray has held several positions of responsibility in TSNZ over the years. He has a Master's degree in Physics and is an accomplished musician. Murray sees Theosophy as a magnificent framework which relates to every facet of human existence.

Sushma Webber first visited Sri Ramanashramam at the age of five. She has been inspired by Ramana Maharishi's teachings, adding the dimension of silence to her study of Theosophical literature. Sushma is originally from India but has lived in New Zealand since 2008. She has a Master's degree in Art History and is President of Wellington Branch.



Come and join us in January 2021, when you may refresh and revitalise yourself while renewing TS friendships in a tranquil setting.

Make your plans and register soon.

See also website: www.theosophy.nz/

THE ANCIENT MYSTERIES

THE HIDDEN LIGHT AND LIFE OF ANCIENT EGYPT

BY GEOFFREY HODSON

This new book by Geoffrey Hodson takes the reader beyond the confines of orthodox conceptions and, with clearly expressed interpretation of the symbology of Egyptian religious art, opens up a unique and profound understanding of this fascinating civilisation. Drawn not from academic studies but from the realms of implicit insight, it has a clarity and compelling logic. The magnificent monuments and art of Egypt's past which remain have an irresistible attraction, yet a far greater treasure lies hidden beneath the surface – the Ancient Mysteries – the wisdom and power of which was the impetus and driving force behind the stupendous heights to which Ancient Egypt rose over thousands of years.

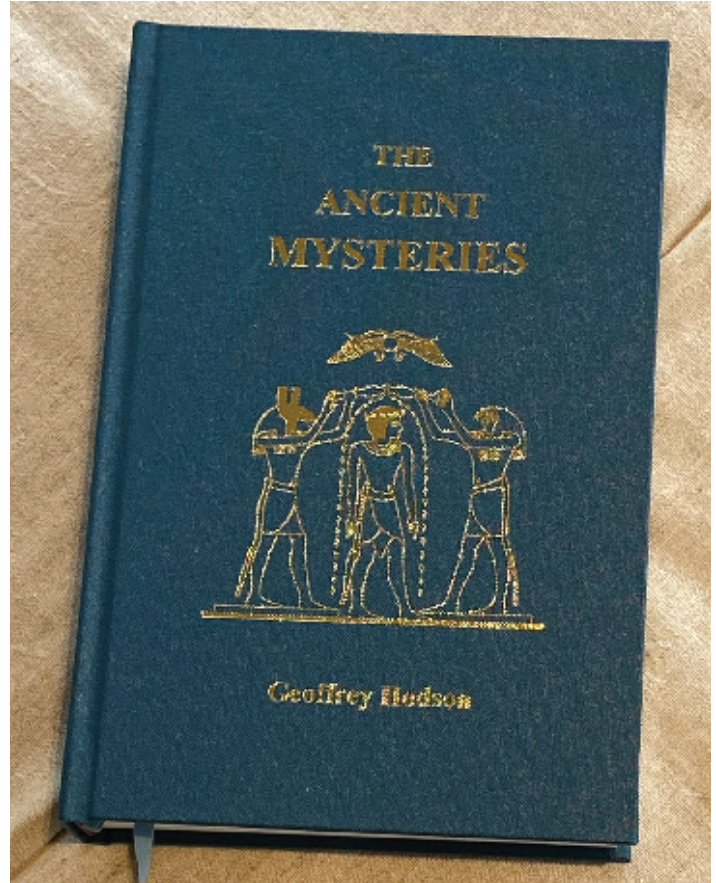
In this posthumous publication, Geoffrey Hodson interprets Egyptian religious art in relation to cosmogenesis, the principles and laws governing the universe, and the potential development of human faculties far beyond current conception. He reveals the Mysteries as the enlightening and quickening power behind the great sweep of human evolution on earth and its successive civilisations. In acknowledgement of the author's contribution to knowledge in this area, this well-presented volume is being made available at a price below the cost of production.

Reviews coming in the next few issues of *TheoSophia* are from renowned American theosophist and academic, Robert Ellwood as well as Murray Stentiford and Renée Sell from TSNZ.

The Ancient Mysteries: The Hidden Light and Life of Ancient Egypt by Geoffrey Hodson

Theosophical Publishing House, Auckland, New Zealand 2020

The book can be purchased on the website: www.theosophy.nz



INTRODUCING

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EMAIL US AT content@theosophy.world

Theosophy World
RESOURCE CENTRE

TSNZ Governance Board Voting Results

Two elected Governance Board members:
Chris Hensley and Graham Eden

The TSNZ Governance Board thanks all the candidates for standing, including Tim Wilmot-Sitwell who was unsuccessful on this occasion.

Noel! Noel!

Noel! song of angels, may have fresh significance this festive season. Multiple root meanings are given for the word, from French for *news*, old English for *shout of joy* to Latin meaning *birth*. We could focus on the joyful news that we are managing to survive these Covid-19 times from which we may experience a re-birth of values such as gratitude and kindness.

Theosophy in Action, theme for this issue of *TheoSophia*, is reflected in writing from famed theosophists: John Vorstermans (p.6), Tim Boyd (p.8), Nancy Secrest (p.12), Joy Mills (p.18) and John Algeo (p.24).

The TSNZ Convention in Wellington, this coming January, will be a special time.

May the holidays bring you love, joy and peace, now and into 2021.

Pamela Zane Keys

Editor

editor@theosophy.org.nz

HELLO ANGEL

Angels are real. I see one in you,
A shy, thoughtful being,
Struggling sometimes,
With wings too large
And a halo that won't stay level.
Nobody's perfect. We try, we fail,
But the angel in you remains,
Despite your efforts to escape.
So, hello angel!
Angels don't need shiny clothes
Or elaborate manifestation.
They work in small subtle ways,
As you do every day.
God bless, my little angel.

Vicky Weston

DIARY DATES

2021

7-12 Jan	TSNZ Convention in Wellington
8 Jan	AGM of The Theosophical Society in NZ Inc.
7 March	TheosoFest – Open Day Auckland HPB Lodge
24-27 April	School of Theosophy

Check for updates and details of these events: www.theosophy.nz

FUTURE ISSUES 2021

Date	Theme	Deadline
March	Soul and Spirit	1 January
June	Invocation and Prayer	1 April
September	The Ancient Wisdom	1 July

Email: editor@theosophy.org.nz

New Zealand's National President of the Theosophical Society, John Vorstermans, looks at an important combination...



Theosophy and Education

A significant weakness in the Theosophical Society (TS) is a lack of understanding of its purpose: the exploration of Theosophy, as the name itself implies. The TS can be defined as an educational organisation, not where views or teachings are imposed on others, rather one that endeavours to draw out meaning and understanding from individuals' interior search and reflection. The exploration of Theosophy requires a genuinely open mind, to reveal Theo-Sophia (Ageless Wisdom or Divine Wisdom), which lies deep within each of us.

One of the steps to open ourselves to this wisdom, to create an open mind, requires a mindfulness of the events in the play of our daily lives that contain the lessons which, when understood, awaken us to profound truths. This is an enduring adventure as our lessons are many.

I recall discussing this with Radha Burnier, when I first became National President of the TS here in New Zealand. Radha felt that a real understanding of Theosophy was missing amongst the membership in our organisation. If as a National Section, branches and members are to indeed form a Nucleus of Universal Kinship of Humanity, we need to have an idea of what Theosophy or Divine Wisdom is.

One of the challenges we face as an organisation is our methodology of exploring Theosophy, which has generally focused on information. To get to the core of developing an understanding of Theosophy, dialogue is essential, which results in deep reflection, personal enquiry and awakening to one's true Self. The discovery of the ageless-wisdom requires a conscious awakening or an expansion of awareness, a lifting of the veil which hides our true nature.

Today our focus in the exploration is diffuse with little direction or intention to try to dig deep into really discovering what it means. Theosophy or Ageless Wisdom is intended to be something practical that leads to social and personal transformation. It is a journey to be taken and incorporates many useful tools such as meditation, mindfulness, clearing out emotions and mental conditioning.

During a recent Immersion Weekend in Auckland, we explored the meaning of the Ancient Wisdom. We were impressed with the following quote from N. Sri Ram, a past International President

of the TS.

The Truth, or the Wisdom, cannot be known except by a mind which is completely open to it. It is only when the mind is clear of every idea, every colouring wish, every element of Self, that it can discover the Truth. That truth is reflected in such a mind; there is no need to go after it. The truth then comes to the person. He discovers it in his heart. It is only in absolute freedom of mind and heart that truth in its absoluteness can shine and manifest itself. Therefore, in the Theosophical Society we try to maintain that freedom which is like an open way or space. That is the reason why Theosophy is left free of all definitions, all limitations.¹

Are our minds completely open, unconditioned? This is an important question to consider, for a mind that is not entirely open is like a mind veiled or seeing through dark glass which obscures perception. Creating an open and unconditioned mind is not easy. We do not really know how conditioned we are until we try to unravel the layers, which is like peeling an onion; there are many layers to work through.

Real Theosophy cannot be found in books, in organisations or religions. Yet, they can point you in the direction to be taken towards discovering this Ageless Wisdom and provide a connection with fellow travellers. Some sacred texts focus more directly on the journey of finding the Ageless Wisdom, such as, *At the Feet of the Master*, *Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *The Yoga Sutras*, *The Bhagavadgita*. With careful study and putting what is learned into practice, we come to know our true nature and how to create an open mind clear of ideas and false impressions.

In Theosophy and Science today, we learn that everything in the universe is connected. It is a unified whole where nothing takes place in isolation. An event somewhere in the universe eventually affects the whole universe. One of the Theosophical propositions defines the universe as being one absolute intelligent reality. This reality is all-knowing and all-encompassing. Some have named this God or Brahmin. We might say that nothing ever happens by chance, everything has a purpose. Taking this a step further, if we are mindful of the events taking place in our lives, we might connect the dots and realise that the universe is communicating

with us. Mostly our mind is so distracted by ideas, wishes and personal desires that we do not hear its voice. Yet if we observe the events of life, and listen to the universe's message, it guides us on our journey of transformation.

Theosophical Literature does suggest some important points to keep in mind when exploring the Ageless Wisdom. Madam H.P. Blavatsky in the Proem of the *Secret Doctrine* lays these out as a proposition which includes the following points partly summarised below.

- There is one absolute reality which we are all a part of. Nothing is separate from anything else.

An analogy which may be used to describe this is to see us as drops of water in the rain which falls into the sea. As drops we all appear separate and once united with the ocean there is no longer any separation, just one ocean. Separation is one of the illusions we live under.

- The universe and all creation is subject to cycles. Nothing ever truly dies and disappears, energy cannot be destroyed, it transforms.

This is where Theosophical perspectives of life after death, reincarnation and karma are rooted. This suggests that consciousness evolves in a cyclic pattern.

- Human evolution is initially by natural impulse and then by self-induced and self-devised efforts (checked by karma).

Self-reflection and self-devised effort are required on the journey. We do not grow without meeting the challenges that confront us, walking through our fears and being willing to step through the door into the unknown.

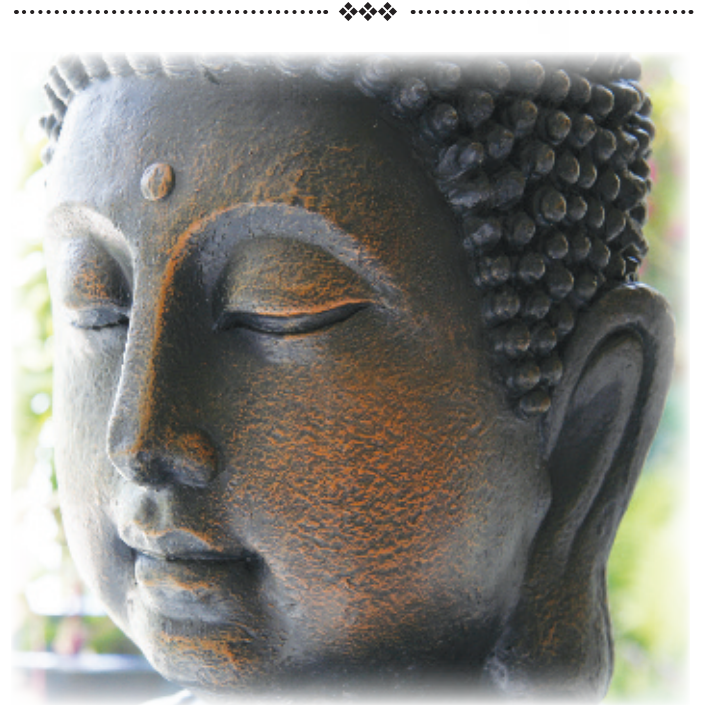
Have you ever watched a chick struggle to hatch from an egg or a caterpillar to fight its way out of a chrysalis? Both are evolving from one form of life into another. If you were to break the shell open for the chick or help the butterfly out of its chrysalis, then usually they would die, as effort is required as part of the survival and growth process. Nature has powerful lessons to teach us if we observe. This is the same for us as humans, to evolve we are required to break through our fears and the challenges that meet us as part of our human journey.

In conclusion, important points to consider on a journey of self-discovery are:

1. Knowledge is a tool to help lift us out of ignorance though it is not always accurate.
2. Real Eternal Truth must be realised from within and proven as true by our own inner experience, verified by the inner experience of others.
3. All is a united whole.

4. Everything in the universe manifests in a cyclic, evolutionary process. Nature itself is a testament to this.
5. Progress at a human level is made through our own personal efforts.
6. The universe manifests from within outward.

¹Why Theosophy Is Left Undefined by N. Sri Ram



For every flower of love and charity we plant in our neighbour's garden, a loathsome weed will disappear in our own, and so this garden of the gods – Humanity – shall blossom as a rose.

H.P. Blavatsky

Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society, shares insights into the potential for a unified humanity.

The Relevance of our Work

The best gardeners know something more: the power of human consciousness in promoting growth.

The theme for the 144th International Convention of the Theosophical Society in January this year, was *Nurturing the Seed*. Without over-labouring the theme, I would like to share a few related thoughts.

The seed analogy requires some definition: a seed is an embryonic life enclosed in a protective shell. Our interest is not horticultural, but related to the soul, the Hidden Life, within the confining shell of human personality. Eventual expression of that life depends on dissolution of the shell in the proper way at the proper time. But how do we know that way, that time?

In *At the Feet of the Master* a young J. Krishnamurti made a sweeping statement: “In all the world there are only two kinds of people, those who know and those who do not know, and this knowledge is...” what matters. The specific knowledge he referred to was evolution, in the sense of unfoldment of consciousness and its accompanying capacities.

Whether we are discussing the human soul, or the seed of a plant, the specialized knowledge involved in cultivating a seed is the domain of the gardener, that person who has gained knowledge through long observation, study, and practice. From experience, a good gardener knows the seed’s potential for growth and the conditions required for it to thrive: the quality of the soil, moisture, sun and shade, and seasonal cycles. In essence it is an experience-based awareness of the inter-dependence of things.

The best gardeners know something more: the power of human consciousness in promoting growth. The life-enhancing effects on living things of love, kindness, and intention are an active part of their awareness. Significant examples of this abound. In his book, *Hidden Messages in Water*, Masaru Emoto documented his research into the effect of human consciousness on the molecular structure of water. His water-crystal experiments involved exposing water in glasses to different words, pictures, or music, and then freezing and examining the aesthetic properties of the resulting crystals with microscopic photography. In his experiments water exposed to positive speech and thoughts would result in visually harmonious crystals being formed when that water was frozen. Negative intention would yield fragmented crystal formations.

When my daughter was in grade school her teacher assigned the class a science project of their choosing. She decided to attempt the well-known experiment where three sets of seeds are planted. One group of seeds is exposed to loving talk at intervals during the day; another receives negative speech during the same intervals; the third is not spoken to at all. In all other respects the light, soil, and moisture are the same. The result was that at the end of the growing period the seeds receiving the positive attention showed a measurable difference in the size of the sprouts.

Within the academic-science community both Emoto's research and my daughter's seed experiment are relegated to the status of "pseudoscience." This is a term normally used to label beliefs, theories, or practices considered scientific, but lacking any basis in scientific fact. The list of pseudoscientific fields is long: Astrology, Feng Shui, Rupert Sheldrake's Morphogenetic Fields, Acupuncture (until its effects were scientifically demonstrated), Extrasensory Perception, Hypnosis, Psychoanalysis, and so on. In spite of the bias against scientific demonstration of consciousness as an inextricable agency in the natural world, there are many statistical studies showing the effects of consciousness that satisfy the scientific method standard.

A number of notable studies have been performed demonstrating the healing power of love. Because consciousness itself is not yet measurable, and, from a scientific perspective, is only revealed by its effects, the studies measured statistical effects. Using married couples with a positive relationship as the test group, a number of demonstrable effects were recorded. Among them are: people in a loving relationship tend to have fewer heart attacks and strokes; they live longer, have higher survival rates from major surgery and cancer; are less depressed; their wounds heal faster; thinking of a loved one lowers the blood pressure, etc. The true gardener/spiritual practitioner has an innate knowledge of these things.

There is a significant knowledge that the gardener lacks. He has no knowledge of the life force within the seed. Beyond the fact that it exists, and that it reveals itself and grows when given the proper conditions, it forever remains a mystery. His experience is that the application of his lesser knowledge leads to the expression of a greater life.

As spiritual practitioners we can also say that we know nothing of Spirit. The realm

of what we can know is confined to the spectrum of the mind, which touches upon Spirit at its highest reach and on Matter at its lowest. What we can say about Spirit is limited to what we know of its 'reflection' on the field of the upper reaches of mind — the 'Higher Mind'. Similarly, we know nothing of matter. In the current understanding of science the totality of the known and studied matter comprising the universe amounts to approximately 5% of the amount of matter required for the universe to be expanding at the rate that it does. The other 95% has been termed 'dark matter', which does not absorb, reflect, or emit light. It cannot be detected except by its effect on the objects within the known universe.

The mind could be described as the 'field' within which the soul's seed is planted. It is the 'location' where all of the work of spiritual practice takes place. The nature of that work has been variously described: "Know thyself" was the inscription carved into the stone above the temple of the Oracle of Delphi. The Buddha's teaching said: "Be a light unto yourself." Theosophy founder, H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) said that we must "paralyze" the personality. The great English poet, William Blake, gave an excellent indication of the nature of our work: "If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, Infinite." This cleansing of the doors of perception is the work we do as individuals, and it begins with a realization. In HPB's words:

The first necessity for obtaining self-knowledge is to become profoundly conscious of ignorance; to feel with every fibre of the heart that one is ceaselessly self-deceived.

We form fixed ideas on the nature of reality based on the most partial information. All of our organs/doors of perception are limited to an extremely narrow band of

The path to a deepening understanding begins with the observation of the way we perceive and react in the world.

... we seed
the thought
atmosphere
with the glowing
forms of new
potentialities, as
yet unrealized
possibilities for
a unity based
on the inherent
indivisibility of
humanity.

the electromagnetic, sound, taste, smell, and feeling spectrum as well. We need to recognize that the reporting from all of our avenues of perception is incomplete.

The path to a deepening understanding begins with the observation of the way we perceive and react in the world. We observe the body and its habits. The nervous movements we make when we sit or stand; the postures we adopt; the foods and environments we seek out; the way in which the breath flows into and out of the body. We begin to become conscious of all our normal bodily processes, not with a sense of judgment, but simply bringing them to the level of awareness. Most likely we will find that many of our normal habits do not contribute to a sense of well-being, but fragment our energy. Similarly, we observe our emotions. We learn to distinguish between bodily states and emotional currents that influence the body. We observe the physically stimulating effect of anger, the dulling effect of sadness, the uplifting energizing effect of happiness. From this process of observation we gain a sense of the emotions that contribute to our well-being.

The most important level of observation is with our thoughts, our mind stream. In the first letter written from one of the Mahatmas to A.O. Hume, a profound fact about the inner effects of thoughts was shared:

Every thought of man upon being evolved passes into the inner world and becomes an active entity ... It survives as an active intelligence, a creature of the mind's begetting ... Thus, a good thought is perpetuated as an active beneficent power; an evil one as a maleficent demon.

The stream of thought unconsciously generated by each person "reacts upon any sensitive or nervous organization which comes in contact with it." It is at this mind level that we have our greatest capacity to help, or harm.

Sincere engagement in this process of observation reveals certain deficits and opportunities; limitations and also powers latent within us. Our main revelation should be that at every moment we have the capacity to consciously evolve and transmit thought. The simple act of clearly 'seeing' this truth resolves countless difficulties and uncertainties. This level of awareness leads to a condition of effortless response. When one sees that the road ahead is impassable and that an alternate route is open, it is easy to turn and go in a different direction. All of our actions — bodily, emotional, and mental — are subject to the same ordering principle.

With clarity of seeing comes a deeper, previously hidden potential. In this seeing process the shell encasing the embryonic life of the soul is dissolved. The Hidden Life, Light, and Love, which are the nature of the soul, for the first time, become fully accessible. Even the partial dissolution of the shell of personality results in flashes of insight and purposeful stability. From this illumined perspective the words of St Augustine apply: "Love, and do what you will ... Let the root of love be in you: nothing can spring from it but good." The challenge is that love, unadulterated by personal need and desires, only results from an open connection to the soul. A person who finds the soul's influence growing within becomes a beneficial force in the world.

When considering the relevance of all this, the question is: relevant to what, or to whom? One thing is clear: in terms of popular discussion or culture the line of thought we followed above rarely comes up. There is the occasional veiled allusion in film, music, or literature, but attempts at a direct consideration are claimed by the various religious approaches, whose separative theologies tend to be more divisive than unifying. In spite



of historical examples of the occasional great soul who has influenced social change: the Mahatma Gandhis, Martin Luther Kings, Abraham Lincolns, Nelson Mandelas, and their lesser known co-workers in the realm of politics, economics, social engineering, business, entertainment, news reporting, agriculture, and so on, the role of the awakened soul is not ignored, but absent from awareness.

So, what is the possible relevance of a work that does not even rise to the level of awareness in those for whom it is intended? Are the Theosophical Movement and the numerous allied efforts that it spawned destined to be for the benefit of a few individuals only? The TS was founded to “form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity.” Although awakened individuals are required, the work has always centred on the potency of a group effort. In HPB’s words:

Though but a minority of our members are mystically inclined, yet ... the key to all our successes ... is in our recognition of the fact of the Higher Self: colourless, cosmopolitan, unsectarian, sexless, unworldly, altruistic and the doing of our work on that basis.

At the individual level we provide conditions for the Higher Self/soul to impress itself on our world. At the level of the “nucleus” we seed the thought atmosphere with the glowing forms of new potentialities, as yet unrealized possibilities for a unity based on the inherent indivisibility of humanity. These thoughts, exemplified in a few, must ultimately react upon the whole.

This article was first published in *The Theosophist*, February 2020, based on a talk given during the 144th International Convention in Varanasi, India.



Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society was born in New York City, studied at Brown University and University of Chicago and joined the TSA in 1974. He co-founded a Theosophical spiritual community. They taught the Ageless Wisdom, meditation and healing and formed a business helping stabilise neighbourhoods through training, employment and building affordable homes. Tim has worked as TSA President and US President of the TOS. He has spoken across every continent except Africa.



LIVING THEOSOPHY

Through Compassionate Service

As International Secretary of the Theosophical Order of Service, Nancy Secrest understands ways to live theosophical values.

With this awakening or awareness, compassion based on a sense of responsibility for all beings becomes a driving force in our lives...

Living Theosophy requires that we go through each day recognising the Oneness of all life, inherent in the First Object of the Theosophical Society, through compassionate action and selfless service.

In an article entitled *Reflections* written by David Bruce, the current National Secretary of the Theosophical Society in America, he says that "In her writings, H. P. Blavatsky repeatedly emphasised the importance of brotherhood as a guiding principle: 'It is only by all men becoming brothers and all women sisters, and by all practising *in their daily lives* [italics added] true brotherhood and true sisterhood, that the real human solidarity ... can ever be attained' (*The Key to Theosophy*). No matter how learned or erudite we may become in the metaphysics of Theosophy, let us not forget that the true measure of a Theosophist lies not in a proud and self-centred intellect, but in an open and loving heart."

The First Object of the Society speaks to the actualisation of Universal Brotherhood, but it means even more than this. According to Theosophy, Universal Brotherhood is not merely a high and lofty ideal but is eternally a *fact in Nature* because of the oneness and divineness of all life. Many religions and philosophies speak of brotherhood and of helping those less fortunate than ourselves, but the theosophical meaning speaks to the Oneness of all life, not just in a metaphorical sense but actual Oneness. I like to think of it as each of us being a drop in the ocean. Once the drop enters the ocean it blends with all other drops in the true sense of Oneness.

Joy Mills, a prominent theosophical teacher, speaker and writer, said that the focus of our

existence as human beings is self-realisation. Learning who we are, who we *really* are. That is what we are supposed to be doing here. This, she said, is the central point of the *Mahatma Letters*. Blavatsky made this point in her writings as well, calling it spiritual unfoldment. She taught that self-responsibility, ethics and altruism are essential to true spiritual unfoldment.

As we progress along the path of self-realisation, or spiritual unfoldment, we eventually awaken, or become aware of, our Buddhi nature. (If you are new to Theosophy, suffice it to say that the Buddhi nature is beyond thought even on the conceptual level. It is the seat of intuition and all that is universally compassionate and noble within us.) With this awakening or awareness, compassion based on a sense of responsibility for all beings becomes a driving force in our lives, and we act as a *bodhisattva* acts, for the good of all. In Theosophy the term *bodhisattva* is used to denote an individual who has reached enlightenment and may pass beyond the wheel of rebirth but elects to reincarnate for the good of all (*Theosophical Encyclopaedia*, p. 110, TPH, The Philippines, 2006). In other words, a *bodhisattva* sacrifices his or her reward of transition into Nirvana to help other sentient beings until all reach enlightenment.

We may not be *bodhisattvas*. But, are you familiar with the term, 'fake it until you make it'? What that means is that all of us can work as *if* we are *bodhisattvas*. All of us can help each other and humanity at large right now.

Blavatsky said:

He who does not practise altruism: he who is not prepared to share his last morsel with a weaker or poorer one than himself; he who

neglects to help his brother man, of whatever race, nation, or creed, whenever and wherever he meets suffering, and who turns a deaf ear to the cry of human misery; he who hears an innocent person slandered, whether a brother Theosophist or not, and does not undertake his defence as he would undertake his own – is no Theosophist.

Lucifer, Vol.I, p.169

Later these words, from Annie Besant, tied together Blavatsky's altruism, already a high ideal, with the sense of Oneness alluded to in the Society's First Object:

The spiritual man must lead a higher life than the life of altruism. He must lead the life of self-identification with all that lives and moves. There is no 'other' in this world; we are all one. Each is a separate form, but one Spirit moves and lives in all.

We have stated that it is our quest for self-realisation that touches the Buddhi nature within us and ignites our sense of compassion.

WHAT IS COMPASSION?

Although stated in different ways, various viewpoints, scientific, psychological and Buddhist agree that compassion, simply put, is the response to the suffering of others that motivates a desire to help.

Compassion is not the same as empathy or altruism, though the concepts are related. Empathy refers to our ability to take the perspective of and feel the emotions of another person. Compassion is when those feelings and thoughts include the desire to help. Altruism is kind, selfless behaviour often, but not always, prompted by feelings of compassion. Scientists have started to map the biological basis of compassion. This research has shown that when we feel compassion, our heart rate slows down, we secrete the 'bonding hormone' oxytocin, and regions of the brain linked to empathy, caregiving and feelings of pleasure light up, which often results in our wanting to approach and care for other people. According to the Buddhist view, true compassion is necessarily based on cherishing others. Compassion is a mind that is motivated by cherishing other living beings and wishes to release them from their suffering.

Earlier we spoke of the Bodhisattva path. We may not be there yet, but most of us already have some degree of compassion, albeit biased and limited. We feel compassion for the suffering of our family and friends, but we find it more difficult to feel sympathy for people we find unpleasant

Compassion comprises all the best qualities in human beings, like sharing, readiness to give comfort, sympathy, concern and caring...



...balance is the key to spiritual growth. The theosophical triad of study, meditation and service exemplifies this.

or for strangers. We may feel compassion for those who are experiencing a great deal of pain, but not for those who are enjoying good conditions, and especially not for those who may be trying to harm us or others. If we genuinely want to realise our potential by attaining full enlightenment, we need to develop universal compassion that embraces all beings whether beloved, family, friend, stranger or someone who engages in harmful activity. Universal compassion comes at the Buddhist level of our being and can be cultivated through meditation. Another way of saying this is: "Compassion is seeing someone as they are and loving them anyway."

(www.ehkhealing.com)

Compassion comprises all the best qualities in human beings, like sharing, readiness to give comfort, sympathy, concern and caring – all are manifestations of compassion. You will notice also that in the compassionate person, care and love towards others has its origins in care and love for oneself. We can best understand others when we really understand ourselves. We will know what is best for others when we know what is best for ourselves. We can feel for others when we feel for ourselves. Therefore, one's own spiritual development blossoms quite naturally into concern for the welfare of others, and vice versa.

Compassion is the very essence of a spiritual life, and the main practice of those who have devoted their lives to attaining enlightenment. In the book, *Stages of Meditation*, His Holiness, the Dalai Lama states that, "Compassion is essential in the initial state, in the intermediate state and in the final state of spiritual development." And the question is asked, "How should we meditate on it?" The answer is given, "You should begin the process by attempting to develop loving-kindness toward beings who are in misery."

Loving-kindness is unconditional, inclusive love, a love with wisdom. It does not depend on whether one 'deserves' it or not. It is not restricted to those we love. It extends out from the personal to include all living beings. It harbours no expectations of return. It is the ideal, pure, universal love held by everyone in potential.

We've said that compassion generates in

us the desire to help others. To say this another way, compassion generates the desire to be of service to suffering beings.

WHAT OF SERVICE?

Theosophy teaches that altruism, selfless service to humanity, living solely to help and benefit others, and the pursuit of the Bodhisattva ideal, are all just as important for our spiritual evolution and development as meditation and aspiring to higher levels of inner unfoldment in our quest to attain Union with our Higher Self, which is ONE Infinite Divine Life.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

A few years ago, I was interviewed on the question of service and was asked "if someone asked you how to serve, what would you emphasise?" I said that I would tell them to "grow where they are planted." In other words, look at where you are in life and attend first to whatever is needed in your immediate circle. We do not have to do great things to be of service. Service to one's family is just as important as service to a nation. It's also important to take care of yourself, to the extent possible, so that you will be fit enough to be of service to others. In the little book *At the Feet of the Master* we are told to take care of our body, to keep it clean and healthy, as it is "the horse upon which we ride." And, as the airlines tell us, "put on your own oxygen mask first, before helping others."

It does not take much effort to be of service to others, often a simple smile can be of great benefit. It is mostly a matter of attitude, of being alert and aware of people or situations to or about which we can be of help and using our discernment to know when and how that can best be accomplished. We also need to know and respect our own limits. Obviously, one does not give all one's money to charity and let one's own children starve, or walk into dangerous situations one is neither physically, mentally or emotionally able to handle.

The Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) is a charitable organisation, founded by Annie Besant, the second president of the Theosophical Society, in 1908 to put the First Object of the Theosophical Society (TS) into action. It fosters a

practical living application of theosophical principles and is a way to demonstrate and practise the oneness of all life. The giving of our time, talents, energy, money, advocacy and moral support to those in need is based on compassion and on the acceptance of our responsibility toward those with whom we are One. Our TOS motto, “a union of those who love in the service of all that suffers”, reminds us of our commitment to the Oneness of All Life. Our activities are many and varied. They include supporting education, healing, efforts toward peace in the world, animal welfare and emergency relief. For the past several years, our main international focus has been on women’s issues, and the TOS in India recently made women’s issues its principal area of service. While this effort goes on, we are also currently focused on providing a theosophically based education for children and fund-raising for our schools in the Philippines, Pakistan and India.

Our President, Tim Boyd, once said, “The TOS is motivated by a sense that we are all participants in the One Life. Suffering and overcoming suffering are not isolated or regional. We all share in it.”

The older I become the more I realise that balance is the key to spiritual growth. The theosophical triad of study, meditation and service exemplifies this. Study utilises our ability to reason and think logically. Meditation helps us to tap into our Higher Selves, the divine within, and gives us respite from today’s hectic world. Service then is the fulcrum – the point of balance. Service is that part of the triad which allows us to demonstrate the divine in the world. Through selfless service we help to heal suffering humanity. We draw attention to the woes of the world, and lead by example in the effort to ease suffering and right wrongs. In the process, we help ourselves. We grow spiritually as we become more and more open to seeing the unity of life wherever we look. So, let each of us work as *if* we are bodhisattvas. All of us can help each other and humanity at large right now.



Nancy Secret began studying metaphysics and religion in childhood and joined the Theosophical Society in America in 1980. She has served as National Secretary, National Treasurer and board director of the TSA. Nancy became International Secretary of the TOS in 2014 and moved to the international headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, Chennai, India to assume the position of International Treasurer in 2017.

Immersion Weekend in Colour



IMMERSION WEEKEND 2020



National Section's Theosophical Activities resumed again this spring with great anticipation around the country after two extended lockdowns.

Renée Sell reports back...

Immersion weekend, held in Auckland (3 and 4 October) was a very special event with mostly new members attending along with some very learned theosophical members too. Keen participants came from Dunedin, Wanganui, Hawke's Bay, Auckland, Palmerston North, the Waikato, Orewa and the general public too.

The theme: *Theosophy, Exploring Pathways of Unfolding Awareness* was 'just what the doctor ordered' after Covid-19 pandemic emergencies.

For example, on the Saturday evening we had *A little Art ~ Mandalas ~ Symbols ~ Music*. It was the first time that some had done this type of activity and was an opportunity to tune inward with silence and relaxation being the keynote of the evening, followed by delicious cupcakes and teas.

Presentations included such titles as: *What is the Ageless Wisdom? Theosophy: A Direct Knowing, Unfolding the Petals, The Legacy of H.P.B., What is Theosophy? Right Understanding, Meditation, The Power of Theosophy in the Present*, an interactive workshop session and much discussion.

It was also lovely to show off our rejuvenated *Geoffrey Hodson*

Library at Vasanta House, with a tour by Senior Librarian, Jo Atkinson. Jo writes:

The library has been closed for some time while we worked on a major update and re-vamp which involves the assessment of every single item. We will catalogue, label and mend as necessary and replace those items which are beyond repair. Valuable items are being transferred to the Archive. Some work has already been completed to make the library a more attractive space.

Thank you to the library team for making all this possible.

The weekend created a sacred space for all who attended and had a special atmosphere and openness with absolutely perfect weather. Food throughout the weekend was simple and healthy and enjoyed by all.

Special thanks for all those that attended and helped make the weekend a very special time. This is what theosophy is all about, and it makes everything worthwhile when it all comes together and culminates into something so beautiful.



TOS evening of reflection led by Renée Sell



Time to relax outside Vasanta House



Gae Allcock from Dunedin



Andrew Whyte from Auckland



TOS fund raising table



Becky Skye-Gatland from Palmerston North and National Speaker Murray Stentiford



Renée Sell and John Vorstermans lead a session



Richard Sell presenting at Immersion Weekend

Renowned and respected international Theosophist,
Joy Mills contemplated the deep meaning of...

TODAY'S SEARCH FOR THE HOLY GRAIL

Today we see all about us the radical collision of individual and group values as part of the critical challenge confronting a maturing humanistic civilisation.

In every sacred tradition, in the mythologies of East and West, one story has been told and retold: the story of our human journey in search of meaning. However the tale has been recited, each one of us is the hero of the telling and the pattern is always the same, even though it may differ in the details. The journey began somewhere, we do not remember where, and sometime, although we do not remember when. As with Dante, in the *Divine Comedy*, when we come awake we feel we are midway in our trek and dimly know there are still obstacles to be overcome and challenges to be faced. And we know, too, that there is help along the way and that our destiny is written in the stars. Certain too is the knowledge that on this journey, we – each one of us – is the hero of the story that is being told.

For the sake of a beginning, we tell ourselves that we started on the way as a “simple fool,” naïve, unknowing. Along the way we have met with every temptation, whether disguised as dragon, witch, giant or demon; we have been befriended by lovely maiden and wise old man. We have experienced all the terrors of the night and wakened at dawn to glimpse anew the vision that has drawn us onwards, the sight of the heavenly city, the Castle of the Grail, the radiant light of wisdom that will clothe us in its robe of glory and mark us as a saviour of the world. So the story has always been told, a universal story, which even today, in these most perilous of times when we seem to have lost our way, still calls us forward. For something within us tells us that there is a place of Light, that there are those who dwell therein, a mystery-race of King-Adepts who guard an ageless wisdom and who exist but to aid humanity in its never-ending search for understanding.

Today we seem to have reached some fatal fork in the road, so that we stand looking out over a land made waste by human greed and selfishness, a land so exploited that no path is visible, if indeed there is a path at all. For today there is a guru search almost frantic in its efforts, although the gurus we seek are in the realm of economics and politics, seldom in that of spiritual guidance. While it may be true that in the world of mundane existence, one gets precisely what one pays for, whether it be a new car, a pair of shoes or a refrigerator, other values obtain in the realm of spiritual wisdom, and it is to that realm that we need to give our closest attention if we would discover the truth we so sorely need for the regeneration of ourselves and our world, and that truth is ultimately within ourselves. The coin with which one pays the price of wisdom, however, is not the coin minted in the world's treasuries; it is the coin of inner dedication, minted out of loving understanding, the disciplined life, compassion. A price is exacted, yes, but the price is one's life given in service.

No clearer or more beautiful retelling of the ancient tale can be found than in the corpus known as the Grail legends. For every archetypal symbol in those legends, in their varied versions, many linked with the well-known Arthurian romances, but all antedating the Christian era, lies within each of us, in every human being. All the symbols found in those tales – the Waste Land, the Fisher King, the Hidden Castle, the Mysterious Feeding Vessel, the Bleeding Lance, you can name them over – are elements of our own nature, symbolic of faculties to be awakened from within, aspects of ourselves to be experienced and made conscious. Each participant in the drama of the Grail quest, whether called Klingsor or Kundry,

Tituel, Amfortas, Parsifal or Lancelot, whether known as Merlin, Arthur, Guinevere, Gawain or the chaste Galahad, each one is within us now. Whether we recognise them or not, we are embarked on an evolutionary journey in which each legendary character as all of life participates. It is for each of us to decide whether we will hasten the journey, undertaking in earnest the age-old quest for the Grail of spiritual wisdom or whether, in ignorant playfulness, we will remain in the magic garden of Klingsor, content with the enchantments of the illusory world of psychic phenomena. The legend of the Grail reminds us that we alone can save the world, and that only in saving others do we save ourselves. As Richard Wagner, in the finale of his magnificent retelling of the ancient legend, phrased it: Miracle of highest grace; Redemption for the Redeemer.

So it is today and now, as in all ages, we are called to awaken from the sleep of non-knowing, to cease our dreaming of psychic visions, and to set forth upon the ancient quest, the one true adventure that leads us to become, in due time, a Grail-King, one of the race of Adepts who are the saviours and the guardians of the world.

The Wolfram von Eschenbach version of the Grail legend on which Wagner based his musical drama introduces us to the hero Parzival with words that may characterise everyone who sets forth on this adventure: Brave, and slowly wise: this I hail my hero!

Significantly, the story of Parzival (one version of the Grail legend) begins in a forest, where our hero has been living with his mother, fatherless, unaware even of his name, a fact which becomes apparent when he meets a group of knights who ask him for it. As we examine the story, the symbolism is so rich, with such a depth of meaning, particularly in relation to our current situation, that we can only touch upon some aspects of it in a rather superficial way. The forest, for example, has always represented a primitive state of consciousness in which we live close to the instinctual life symbolised by the plant and animal life which inhabits it. The restricted horizon of a forest indicates that our vision is limited and also may represent the collective social values by which we live almost unconsciously and from which we need to break free if we are to live our own lives in a conscious manner. Today we see all about us the radical collision of individual and group values as part of the critical challenge confronting a maturing humanistic civilisation.

Whether we realise it or not, whether our search is a conscious one or without conscious awareness, we are all in search of the Grail, although our definition of the object of our seeking may differ from person to person. For some, the Grail may constitute economic security, while for others the Grail spells meaning or perhaps simply some transitory pleasure. Beyond our individual and personal definition, however, there is a rich tradition which we may consider. Some texts, for example, equate the Grail with a pseudo-historical cup said to have been the vessel containing the blood of the crucified Jesus and carried to Britain by Joseph of Arimathea; other texts describe it as a mysterious receptacle which has no physical existence yet possesses a numinous reality with the capacity to heal. Most students of the various legends surrounding what has been called the Grail agree that it has two aspects: it is the "Secret Gospel," the esoteric wisdom conveyed about the world under the symbol of a cup from which one must drink deeply to be restored to one's true nature, and it is also a jewel or stone with a miraculous power to heal and transform.

One tradition holds that the mystic Grail was brought to earth by a band of spirits, those identified by H. P. Blavatsky as "The beneficent entities who... brought light to the world and endowed humanity with intellect and reason" (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, 179). Yet another legend tells us that the Grail was carved by angels from an emerald fallen from the forehead or the crown of Lucifer. The French Theosophist, Solomon Lancri, has said: "The Grail

For it is here
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incarnation... that
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...we have been assured by those who walked this way before us that “we have but one word for all aspirants: Try.”

is a ‘magnetic stone’ which attracts the human soul and arouses in it a mystic urge like a vague feeling of its splendid spiritual potentialities,” adding then that the Grail quest is “the marvellous adventure of the human soul seeking perfection and struggling against its passions.” The Grail has also been seen as the symbol of the Divine Life, Wisdom and Love, united as the immortal human spirit, Atma-Buddhi, expressed through their vehicle, Manas, or the chalice of the causal vehicle in theosophical terms.

As we seek the true meaning of the Grail, we can only acknowledge that in all versions of the age-old legend, there is mystery surrounding it, an atmosphere of awe and reverence so that even to speak of it casually is to court disaster unless one is fully prepared to know its secret. In their splendid psychological analysis of the tradition, published as *The Grail Legend*, Emma Jung and Marie Louis von-Franz point out that “In a special sense... the soul is that wondrous vessel which is the goal of the quest and in which the life-giving power inheres, whose final secret can never be revealed but must ever remain hidden because its essence is a mystery.”

Psychologically, then, the Grail is an archetypal image and may represent to every individual whatever is sought that gives meaning or substance to existence, whether it be material or spiritual goods. Even when the goal of the search is for monetary security, the adventure (or journey) as we will see soon becomes a search for one’s own identity born out of the need to know ourselves, to realise who we really are. For on the journey we soon discover that any lesser goal, any material objective, never satisfies the heart’s yearning for meaning and purpose.

Here it may be useful to examine a word that is frequently found in most of the Grail legends, particularly in the earliest versions which were in French. It has been translated as the simple English word ‘adventure’, for indeed the search for the Grail of wisdom leads us on an amazing adventure. While the word basically means ‘to come to’, it has such other meanings as a ‘happening’,

‘the encountering of danger’, ‘an exciting and dangerous undertaking’ and similar phrases, even terms that may be related to our well-known concept of karma. In at least one version of the Grail quest, Parzival (whose name means ‘to pierce the valley of darkness’ which we could equate with *maya* or ignorance) is told: “Go where adventure leads you.” We may suggest such a statement urges us to face our karma as we search for our dharma.

In a number of the texts, Gawain appears as the hero, representing spiritual blindness at the outset of the quest and whose ineptitude for the spiritual life leads him to futile bloodshed, acts contrary to the laws of life. It is Gawain who, then, fails to understand the true purpose of the journey he is on and consequently ignores the advice of the wise ones he meets. At the same time, it is Gawain who is perpetually astonished at his own failure to meet with any worthwhile adventure. Perhaps we too miss significant ‘happenings’ in our lives, because they seem so unimportant, so trivial, so mundane, and yet the dangerous encounters as well as meetings with beneficent guides occur in the very midst of our everyday lives if we are awake to them. To use terms familiar to every Theosophist, we could say that we often let karmic circumstances bind us or blind us to our true dharmic responsibilities, and thus fail to appreciate the great adventure we are on.

The essential message of the Grail quest is as clear and relevant today as at any time in the past: a beginning must be made, and one must start where one is, undertaking the adventure of the hero-soul. As already noted, the Parzival version of the myth begins in a forest, symbol of our largely unconscious state from which we must awaken to seek our true identity. But symbols have multiple meanings, and the forest may represent not only a collective consciousness (or unconsciousness) from which we must move out in order to establish our own individuality, but also that beautiful subjective state into which we may retire for periods of meditation or reflection. The perceptive

student will discover many more meanings in the symbolism of a forest.

In the Galahad version of the Grail quest, we have a challenging portrayal of the beginning, for in that version it is said that the “pure” knight (Galahad) entered unannounced on the scene of Arthur and his knights seated at the Round Table. He arouses them to their duty, saying, “I came because I must, for this is to be the starting point for all who would join fellowship in the quest.” We may suggest that, symbolically, Galahad’s call is that of the monad (Atma-Buddhi) to the personality to awaken to the work (dharma) of the quest. For it is here in physical incarnation, as all the great teachers have emphasised, that the work of Self-realisation, the goal of the quest, must be undertaken. Here indeed is the great adventure!

Those who heard Galahad’s call, the summons of the Immortal Spirit (the monad), arose from the Round Table symbol (in the Galahad version) of the collective consciousness, and, as the text then tells us, “...each one went the way upon which he had decided, and they set out into the forest at one point and another, there where they saw it to be thickest.” Commenting on this, the eminent student of comparative mythology, Joseph Campbell, has written: “...each, entering of his own volition, leaving behind the known good company and table of Arthur’s towered court, would experience the unknown pathless forest in his own heroic way.” And Campbell continued, “Today the walls and towers of the culture-world that then were in the building are dissolving; and whereas heroes then could set forth of their own will from the known to the unknown, we today, willy-nilly, *must* enter the forest... and, like it or not, the pathless way is the only way now before us.”

So it is that the great adventure lies before us, that adventure which as earlier suggested is compounded of karma and dharma. The philosopher, Schopenhauer, perceived this quite clearly when he wrote:

Everyone, during the course of his lifetime, becomes aware of certain events that, on

the one hand, bear the mark of a moral or inner necessity, because of their especially decisive importance to him, and yet, on the other hand, have clearly the character of outward, wholly accidental chance. The frequent occurrence of such events may lead gradually to the notion that the life course of the individual, confused as it may seem, is an essential whole, having within itself a certain self-consistent, definite direction and a certain instructive meaning.

To examine all the adventures the mythic heroes of the quest encountered is neither possible nor within the bounds of the present paper. Yet when seriously considered, we may see them as archetypal events reflected in our own daily lives. And, too, the cast of characters we meet in all the legends may be recognised as elements within our own natures or within people we know. There are, as always, numerous perils on the way, problems to be solved and conflicts to be resolved. And, as always, there are guides as well as guideposts along the way. It is for each of us to “Seek out the way,” as *Light on the Path* advises us. Ultimately we cannot travel on this quest “before thou hast become that Path itself,” as *The Voice of the Silence* tells us. If we fail in our quest today, we must remember that “each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time.” For we have been assured by those who walked this way before us that “we have but one word for all aspirants: Try.”

So the Grail legends represent a call, the eternal summons that characterises an awakening to the true nature of the human quest for meaning and purpose. It is the call of the Self to the self, the monad to the individuality, the individuality to the personality, the soul, the maiden in distress as found in many of the stories, to the incarnate individual, the knight in all his armour. And, as the hermit (wise old man or woman) informed Lancelot: “...should your heart not be entire, I do not recommend you to pursue this Quest...” We must indeed mean business, to put it in today’s terms, and be willing to pay the price that may be exacted of us, our karmic debt. It may seem a solitary journey on which we have

It may seem a solitary journey on which we have embarked, but along the way we come upon companion souls...

embarked, but along the way we come upon companion souls and we join in a fellowship of seekers as we travel. And as we walk on, we learn of that Adept Brotherhood who seek to share with humankind their profound compassion and wisdom, a Fraternity of Self-realised ones whose lives are given wholly in selfless service.

If we would answer the call of the Immortal Spirit, the King seated at the Round Table, we must respond as did Parzival: "Go I will, cost what it may." And in our hearts will echo the words from *The Voice of the Silence*:

If thou hast tried and failed, O dauntless Fighter, yet lose not courage: fight on and to the charge return again, and yet again. Remember, thou that fightest for man's Liberation, each failure is success, and each sincere attempt wins its reward in time.

All that is ever asked of us is that we walk on...



Joy Mills (1920-2013), a teacher by profession, devoted most of her life to the work of the Theosophical Society. As first woman National President of the American TS, she founded Quest Books. Joy also led the Australian TS and served as International Vice-President. Joy's lecture tours covered more than 50 countries. She published several books and her writings were published in journals internationally. See Joy's work listed at: www.questbooks.net.

Theosophical Digest



The *Theosophical Digest* is a quarterly magazine which condenses wholesome articles on meditation, comparative religion, Ancient Wisdom, art of living, health, science, theosophy, spirituality, philosophy and more.

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Practical Theosophy

The Sacred Texts, when talking about putting the knowledge that we have learned into practice, emphasise three very important steps:

1. STUDY

It is recommended that the aspirant study the sacred texts so that they will have something to compare their own experiences with and through a good knowledge of these texts be able to discern more easily what is closer to reality and what is not. It helps to develop the power of discrimination, essential to anyone who wishes to truly learn who they are.

2. MEDITATION

Today there are many practices which are called meditation, but in this case we are talking about a process of active inquiry into who we are. This involves truly coming to understand our personality, the illusions of life and eventually becoming fully conscious as divine beings.

3. SERVICE

This is essentially a process where we turn our attention away from pleasing ourselves, feeding our own desires, towards being focused and concerned about the wellbeing of others. Through selfless service we develop altruism and love for all. It is a process where we take what we have learned and experienced and we share it with others in a genuine desire to help make the lives of others a little easier.

Service of such a nature makes the turning point in the evolution of the soul – when we step from a point of childhood, concerned only for oneself, and become a true spiritual adult, where our concern is for humanity and the world around us.

In the present state of society, especially in so-called civilised countries, we are continually brought face to face with the fact that large numbers of people are suffering from misery, poverty and disease. Their physical condition is wretched, and their mental and spiritual faculties are often almost dormant.

On the other hand, many persons at the opposite end of the social scale are leading lives of careless indifference, material luxury and selfish indulgence.

Neither of these forms of existence is mere chance. Both are the effects of the conditions which surround those who are subject to them, and the neglect of social duty on the one side is most closely connected with the stunted and arrested development on the other.

In sociology, the law of universal causation holds good. But this causation necessarily implies, as its logical outcome, that human solidarity on which Theosophy so strongly insists. If the action of one reacts on the lives of all, and this is the true scientific idea, then it is only by all men becoming brothers and all women sisters, and by all practising in their daily lives true brotherhood and true sisterhood, that the real human solidarity, which lies at the root of the elevation of the race, can ever be attained.

It is this action and interaction, this true brotherhood and sisterhood, in which each shall live for all and all for each, which is one of the fundamental theosophical principles that every theosophist should be bound, not only to teach, but to carry out in his or her individual life.

This article was first published in *The Theosophist*, February 2020, based on a talk given during the 144th International Convention in Varanasi, India.



DOING THEOSOPHY

John Algeo, revered Theosophist and luminary, left us many wise words drawn from study and experience. Here he defines a way theosophy can be lived...

The term Theosophy is generally defined in terms of ideas. Thus Merriam-Webster's *11th Collegiate Dictionary* defines it that way, both generally and specifically: "1) teaching about God and the world based on mystical insight and 2) often capitalized: the teachings of a modern movement originating in the United States in 1875 and following chiefly Buddhist and Brahmanic theories especially of pantheistic evolution and reincarnation."

So does the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary*: "Any of various systems of belief which maintain that a knowledge of God may be achieved by spiritual ecstasy, direct intuition, or special individual revelations; spec. (a) such a system proposed by Jacob Boehme (1575-1624); (b) a modern system following some Hindu and Buddhist teachings, seeking universal brotherhood, and denying a personal god."

Such, however, was not the view of Theosophy founder, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB), who famously wrote (in *The Key to Theosophy*, p.20): "Theosophist is, who Theosophy does." A Theosophist is not someone who holds any particular ideas, but rather is someone who does Theosophy.

HPB's statement certainly does not deny that there are Theosophical ideas. Theosophical ideas abound. Their essence was summarized by HPB herself in the three fundamental propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* (1:14-20), which can be even more concisely (albeit, inadequately) summarized as the ideas of universal monism, order, and purpose. But to be a Theosophist or even a member of the Theosophical Society, one need not subscribe to these or any other ideas, such as "pantheistic evolution and reincarnation" or other "Hindu and Buddhist teachings," including a nontheistic view of the divine. Instead one must do Theosophy.

What does *doing* Theosophy involve? When one joins the



Theosophical Society, one is not asked to confess belief in any ideas whatever. Instead one is asked only to subscribe to the Society's Three Objects:

1. To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science
3. To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

Note that the operative verbs of the three Objects ("to form ... to encourage ... to investigate") specify actions, not beliefs or ideas. Membership in the Society requires a commitment to do some things, not to believe anything or adopt any particular ideas. To be sure, doing those actions assumes a belief in certain things: specifically, the reality of human brotherhood (*or oneness – Ed.*); the value of studying religion, philosophy, and science; and the existence of unexplained laws and latent powers.

In fact, every action rests upon some belief, just as every idea entails certain actions. Theory and practice are not divorced from each other, but are mutually implicative. Thus the three Objects of the Society correlate with the three fundamental propositions, as follows:

1. Monism, the view that there is only one ultimate reality in the universe, implies that you and I – indeed, all existing beings – are ultimately one with that reality and therefore with one another. Human brotherhood is a fact of existence. In



Doing Theosophy involves three things, as the Society's Objects indicate. First, doers form a nucleus by participating in the Theosophical Society and its branches, without prejudice based on the merely external characteristics of other fellows, and by helping to forward the Society's work in whatever ways are possible for them. Second, they encourage the study of religion, philosophy, and science by recognizing the importance of humanity's multicultural efforts to respond to the principles of order in the universe, society, and human life and by respecting the diverse forms those efforts have taken, without attempting to impose their own cultural values on everyone else. Third, they investigate unexplained natural laws and humanity's latent powers by being open to new possibilities for dealing with the world and by striving to realize their own inner potentials.

Theosophical ideas are inspiring and energizing. They are great guideposts in life. But ultimately karma does not respond to what we think or believe, but rather to what we choose to do.

the Society, we merely try to form a nucleus of it.

2. Order, manifesting through the cyclical patterns of life and the cosmos, is the subject of religion, philosophy, and science. Each of those disciplines focuses on some aspect of order: Science tries to discover the laws that govern the physical world; philosophy, the principles by which intellect operates; and religion, the connections between the secular and the sacred. Those three disciplines are the main ways humans have formulated ideas about the order of the universe. To encourage their comparative study is thus to increase our understanding of that order.
3. Purpose, in the universe and in human life, is the recognition that existence has meaning and that all beings are on a pilgrimage, a journey towards a goal of ever-increasing refinement, understanding, and connectedness. Fulfilling that purpose entails an investigation into the unexplained and a development of our latent powers. The unexplained is within us as well as around us, and those latent abilities are not primarily psychic, but rather such spiritual powers as love and wisdom.

Ideas and actions properly go together like a horse and carriage, or love and marriage (as an old Frank Sinatra song has it). But the emphasis, in both Theosophy and the Theosophical Society, is on doing Theosophy, not professing a belief in any ideas or doctrines.

To be sure, no one *does* Theosophy perfectly. We each need only try to do our best, according to our nature and opportunities. As the Master KH wrote in *The Mahatma Letters*, no. 54 to A.P. Sinnett:

We have one word for all aspirants: TRY.

<https://www.theosophyforward.com/articles/theosophy/>

Published: Sunday, 06 October 2019 12:22 John Algeo – USA



John Algeo (1930-2019) was an American professor and President of the Theosophical Society in America. He also served as Vice-President of the international Theosophical Society in Adyar, Chennai, India. He had a distinguished academic career at the University of Georgia as a professor of English language and linguistics, and then was Professor Emeritus. In 2014, Dr Algeo was awarded the Subba Row Medal for his significant contributions to Theosophical literature. See also https://theosophy.wiki/en/John_Algeo



Renée Sell, National Coordinator for the Theosophical Order of Service in New Zealand, shares a Pakistan report and urges us to gain strength from turning inward.



PAKISTAN

The TOS in New Zealand, with the support of TSNZ, has sponsored two Qandeel home schools over many years. We received an email from TOS President Hamid Mayet giving a fuller account of the NZ supported home schools in Pakistan. If you would like to receive a copy of the reports from our schools, please contact me directly on tos@theosophy.org.nz

Hamid wrote in his email:

Dear Sister Renee

...the pandemic has brought about the unity of humanity in unusual ways.

I take this opportunity to send herewith two progress reports of Qandeel Home Schools for the months of January 2020 to June 2020 which are supported by TOS New Zealand. The reports have been prepared by our Education Officer, Ms Sharmeen Bhamani and Mr Muhammad Atif, In-Charge, Qandeel School.

Although the overall environment was disturbed all over during the ongoing pandemic, educational activities continued in all our Qandeel Schools with strict observance of safety protocols. The dedication of the teachers deserves praise. It is important for all of us to stay safe, wherever we are and at the same to continue our work.

Please convey our thanks to all members of TOS New Zealand for their continued assistance in providing funding to support our Qandeel Home Schools and helping us in our work.

Best wishes and regards,
Sincerely
Hamid Mayet

I have met Hamid, a humble gentle person who is passionate about the work of the TOS in Pakistan: "...without your support the children studying in the school will be deprived of basic education," he said.

All Qandeel Schools are visited twice a month by the In-charge inspection and an onsite progress report prepared covering all aspects, for example, teaching lessons, random tests of students, room environment and cleanliness. Covid1-19 procedures are assessed and temperatures of teachers and students checked. Information is stored and shared with administration.

The ongoing commitment from TOS NZ, the dedication and perseverance of everyone who supports TOS activities and fundraising is very important. We cannot see longer-term effects from seeds we plant but know in our hearts that human beings are benefitting from funds we sent to Pakistan.

I was warmed to see the new logo that the Management of the TOS in Pakistan designed. It reflects the goal of spreading knowledge from "the darkness of ignorance to the light of Education." Let us keep the TOS Pakistan in our thoughts and healing circles.



TS IMMERSION WEEKEND

It was encouraging to see the TOS fundraising table full of special items for sale and fundraising for projects TOS NZ supports world-wide. On the Saturday evening we set up for creative activity with calm music and silence for attendees to discover creativity space within themselves, highlighting the importance of both inward and outward action when choosing to give time to serve.

THEOSOPHY IN PRACTICAL EXPRESSION!

As mentioned in the last issue, the TS Order of Service was brought into being as a call to action in the world and to support the TS

in its work of realisation of its First Object in creating universal kinship of the human family.

Like a cell in a human body, every human being is a cell in the body of humanity. When we are a healthy cell that radiates love and light outwards, we are taking personal responsibility for our part in the body of humanity. The health of the whole body is dependent on the health of all the cells in that body. Keeping this in mind, we can put our mind to good use in being a part of positive change in the world: Let us imagine for a moment that each person is a centre of light, linking up with an intricate network of beings around the world that are all radiating outward 'light and love', each influencing the other, and each playing their part in the greater picture. The positive radiating influences of this would go beyond our own networks and change immeasurably the human situation on Earth.

Link up with others radiating positive influence in the following meditation:

- Get comfortable, quiet and be present to your surroundings
- Notice the breath and follow in and out...
- Soften your tummy and open your heart...
- Visualise sending out bubbles of love and peace to all hearts in the world, surrounding our world in calm-loving-peaceful-tranquil-serene-beautiful-equanimous thoughts.
- Being One with all that lives and knowing there is only ONE LIFE...
- Making this a daily practice is theosophy in action.

Our call to action is *Theosophy in Practical Expression!*



The Qandeel Schools in Pakistan, sponsored by the TOS, are lively, busy places of learning which responded to the Covid-19 crisis with special care and consideration.

NEW GEOFFREY HODSON BOOK RAFFLE

A copy of the beautiful new Geoffrey Hodson book, *The Ancient Mysteries: The Hidden Light and Life of Ancient Egypt*, is being raffled at the Wellington Convention. Funds raised will go to Indian and Pakistani projects that the NZ TOS supports. Tickets are \$5 each.



To help contact:

RENÉE SELL

Phone: 021 1755 170 or
email tos@theosophy.org.nz

WebSite
tos.theosophy.org.nz

Or write to
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Sushma Webber reports on North Island activity...

STRENGTHENING THE NUCLEUS IN THE CENTRAL REGION

If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together – African Proverb

Regional events or inter-branch activities have been highlights of Theosophical work in the central region of New Zealand for the past nine years, helping to strengthen bonds of friendship among members and friends. Working together to enhance the work of each branch has helped nurture, strengthen and revitalise members' enthusiasm. New members find these events inspiring and meeting other branch members has enlarged perspectives on the Theosophical Society in New Zealand and also worldwide.

The central region, consisting of the Hawke's Bay, Palmerston North, New Plymouth, Whanganui and Wellington Branches/Lodges, has organised 16 regional events. Palmerston North and Hawke's Bay Branches were the first to host a regional event in 2011. Initially only a few members were able to travel. However, in recent years we have had between 25-33 attendees including five to nine presenters at these one or two-day events. In the last three years between seven and 15 members, not only from the central region but also from Auckland, Hamilton, Far North and elsewhere, have attended.

Four events were held this year beginning with Wellington Branch hosting its third Foundation Day weekend retreat for members on the theme *Mystics, Sages, Seers and the Masters of the Wisdom* held late November 2019, attended by 24 members. Wellington Branch has hosted seven popular regional events with a focus on the Theosophical movement's history, leaders, lives and contributions of well-known and lesser known Theosophists. At such members-only events, attendees have chances to delve deeper into subjects and be inspired.

Hawke's Bay Branch organised an Open Day in March 2020 where the special guest was National President, John Vorstermans. The new building of Hawke's Bay Branch was inaugurated on 22 April 2018 and they have been establishing a library which was inaugurated during the Open Day. There were presentations by other branch members and time for interaction among the 23 attendees.

Through the initiative of Simon Webber of Wellington Branch, the central region Branch Presidents have researched how best to improve work in their branches and support each other on a regular basis. Meeting at regional events and Presidents' Forums have helped. They got together in August 2019 at the Palmerston North event and created a calendar of events for 2020. However, the Covid-19 pandemic and lockdown prevented their holding them. Being resilient and persevering, Branch Presidents held

online meetings to organise events in Palmerston North and New Plymouth for post-lockdown.

The regional event in Palmerston North with a focus on self-help – physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually for today's world – has been held annually for the last three years. This year's early August workshop's theme was *Exploring the Realities of our Existence: Harmonising Matter and Spirit – Liberating the Soul* with 30 participants with eight speakers/facilitators from central region branches.

The New Plymouth Branch held its first regional event on the theme *Ways you can help yourself on your Spiritual Journey* in late September 2020. It was attended by 33 members and friends including eight presenters. New members from Palmerston North, Whanganui, Hawke's Bay and Wellington had the chance to meet long-standing members like Peter and Nina Vink from New Plymouth. Afterwards, an informal meeting was held by five new young members with Simon Webber and Tim Sitwell who had been active as Young Theosophists in their youth. The story of past activities was shared and new ideas born to take the youth focus forward.

These regional events have been possible through subsidies from the Regional Development Fund initiated by Past-National President Sandy Ravelli in 2011 and continuing support of TSNZ National Officers. Work in the central region has evolved over time providing opportunities for new speakers and facilitators to emerge and has inspired members to participate in Branch Committees. It is hoped the work grows from strength to strength and collaboration with branches in other regions might also become possible.



New Plymouth Branch Regional Event attendees, September 2020

Vegetarians Today

From the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, Margaret Johns claims challenging times mean opportunity.



Challenging times – this year has certainly been a strange one in more ways than one. But with challenging times comes the opportunity to learn and to grow. It has been very satisfying to see the continued growth in interest in the Vegan Certified and Vegetarian Approved programmes offered by the NZ Vegetarian Society. Companies continued to request information and make application for products to be certified right through the lockdown periods, much to the surprise and delight of the Trademark Co-ordinator, Philip McKibbin. The Vegan Certification programme was launched at the Society's 75th Anniversary celebrations in 2018. Products certified as Vegan can be seen on the back cover of the quarterly magazine *Vegetarian Living NZ* produced by the Society.

This growth is no doubt related to, or even driven by, the general development of interest in a vegan/vegetarian diet. The coronavirus pandemic seems to have awakened people to the necessity of living a life more in harmony with nature, being kinder not just to other people, but also to animals and the environment around us. It has also made people realise the interconnectedness of everything and everyone on this planet Earth and, indeed, the Universe. Whether this realisation will bring about permanent change or just be a 'flash in the pan', only time

will tell. However, embracing a new way of life with enthusiasm, passion and understanding rather than through coercion and fear could ensure a more lasting effect and encourage others around us to also change for the better.

One example of this is the number of vegetarian/vegan cook books being produced by youngsters 10 and 12 years old. The enthusiasm, dedication, time, research, testing of recipes, and creativity in putting a book together and offering it for sale on social media, is tremendous. Their mission is to inspire other young people to make and eat tasty, easy to make veg-n meals – a wonderful way to make change happen.

It is definitely past the time for everyone to take a good look at exactly what they are eating and particularly, where it comes from, i.e. its true origin: where and how it grows and is harvested. This is the real challenge we should be investigating in this time of change and reflection: health-giving foods and a healthy lifestyle helps develop a strong immune system. A strong, healthy immune system helps the body to stay strong and lessen the harm caused by diseases and viruses.

Here is a recipe from Jeremy Dixon's *Revive Cafe Cookbook No.5* (cookbooks available from www.revive.co.nz):

MEXICAN BEAN ENCHILADA (makes 6 enchiladas)

- 3 cups Italian tomato sauce (see far right)
- 400g tin red kidney beans
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 cloves garlic crushed or finely chopped
- 1 cup red onion thinly sliced
- 1 cup red capsicum thinly sliced
- 1 cup yellow capsicum thinly sliced
- 1 cup orange capsicum thinly sliced
- 1 tsp oil
- 6 wholemeal tortillas

- PARMESHEW SPRINKLE** (makes ½ cup)
- ½ cup roasted cashew nuts (raw nuts can be used instead)
- 1 Tbsp nutritional yeast flakes
- 1. Put the ingredients into a blender and blend for around 30 to 60 seconds until you get a breadcrumb type texture. (Time will depend on your blender)
- 2. You may have to use a spoon to take the mixture off the sides of the blender and re-blend to get it consistent.
- Keep in sealed container in refrigerator.

- TOMATO SAUCE**
- 1½ cups onion chopped
- 4 cloves garlic, crushed
- 2 Tbsps oil
- 3x 400g tins tomatoes
- ¾ tsp salt
- 1 tsp mixed dried herbs
- 3 Tbsps honey or date puree
- 1. In a pot sauté onion, garlic and oil until clear.
- 2. Add remaining ingredients and cook until bubbling.
- 3. Blend all the sauce with a stick blender.

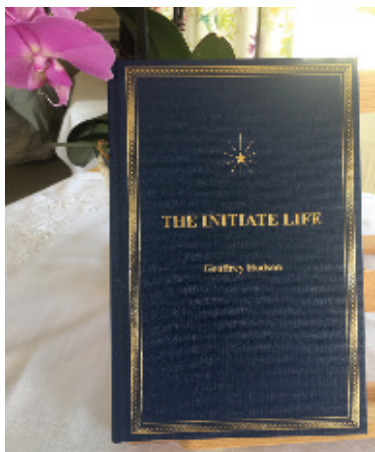
Garnish: PARMESHEW SPRINKLE (above middle)

1. Make tomato sauce.
2. In a pot or pan, heat the beans and salt.
3. In a pot or pan, sauté the onion, garlic, capsicum and oil for around 5 minutes or until the onion is soft.
4. Spoon the beans and capsicum mix into the centre of the tortilla and roll up. Repeat for all tortillas.
5. Put in a lightly oiled baking dish. Cover with the tomato sauce.
6. Bake at 180°C (350°F) for around 5 minutes or until heated through.
7. Garnish with parmeshew sprinkle and parsley.

See www.vegetarian.org.nz for a variety of recipes, including immune booster recipes from Anna Valentine (*The Veggie Tree*), which have appeared in *Vegetarian Living NZ*.

More recipes, information and the NZVS revised and updated *Home Tried Favourites* recipe book, are now available from www.vegetarian.org.nz





The Initiate Life

A Guide to the Path of Hastened Unfoldment by Geoffrey Hodson

The Path of Hastened Unfoldment is one of Geoffrey Hodson's key teachings and this new book, compiled from his talks and study notes, contains material on this very subject. It is relevant for the serious student, aspirant, disciple, or initiate. While many of the talks were addressed to Theosophical Society members and audiences, the message of the Ancient Wisdom and the Path of Swift Unfoldment is applicable to all humanity.

Geoffrey Hodson is acknowledged the world over for his near lifelong dedication to spreading the Ancient Wisdom, Theosophia, and for his depth of knowledge of its multifaceted aspects. He was so highly regarded that wherever he travelled, people sought his counsel and were guided by his unique insight.

Order online at: <https://theosophy.nz> Email: nvp@theosophy.org.nz

Book cost: NZD \$85; free postage within New Zealand extended for 2020; postage overseas: NZD \$40

The Theosophical Publishing House, Auckland (2018).

PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY Selected Works of John Sell



Two of John Sell's qualities that come through this book are his sincerity and his ability to engage the reader... This is evident in every chapter, providing uplifting support as the reader delves into what are often difficult and complex issues on the path to self-understanding and personal transformation.

Practical Spirituality also contains a useful article by Elizabeth Sell [who edited the work] titled *Service: A Dynamic Challenge*, that focuses on the importance of committing ourselves to practical activities that are of lasting value to both the local and world communities. In addition to illustrations by John Sell and Lionel Taylor, *Practical Spirituality* contains full-colour reproductions of rare paintings by Elizabeth Sell that are as beautiful as they are inspiring.

Practical Spirituality: Selected Works of John Sell offers a wealth of useful, step-by-step teachings of Theosophy that will challenge, inform and inspire. In addition to being important to the library of every theosophical lodge or study centre, this will be a 'core text' for individual students wishing to expand their insight, compassion and understanding of life's mysteries.

Extracts from review by Nathaniel Altman in the American TS magazine *Quest*, Fall 2019. See complete book review on line at www.theosophy.nz/

Edited by Elizabeth Sell.
Auckland: Theosophical Publishing House, 2020,
xii + 495 pages, cloth, ISBN 978-0-473-47677-9.
Cost: NZ\$60 + postage (free within New Zealand).
office@theosophy.org.nz or Phone: 09 523 1797
TSNZ National office, 18 Belvedere St., Epsom, Auckland 1051, NZ.

Vasanta House Library



Books can be ordered from the library at TSNZ national headquarters by using the postal facility available and contacting the librarian at email: library@theosophy.org.nz or 18 Belvedere St, Epsom, Auckland 1051, or telephone 09 523 1797 (Saturday afternoons).

Cost to members is the return postage, non-members may join for \$10.

Vasanta House Accommodation

Casual accommodation is available at TS National Headquarters, Vasanta House in Epsom, Auckland. There is a range of rooms: single, double and bunk rooms with and without en-suite plus kitchen and laundry facilities. We welcome those in sympathy with the TS Objects and willing to abide by vegetarian, smoke-free and alcohol-free requirements.

For bookings and more information please contact the office 09 523-1797.

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Cost: \$2.50 each or \$2.00 if bought in quantity

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Send to: Theosophical Order of Service, c/o Richard and Renée Sell, HPB Lodge, Theosophical Society, 4 Warborough Avenue, Epsom, Auckland 1051. (Please refer to issue *TheoSophia* March 2007, Vol. 68 No. 1 inside back cover for samples.)

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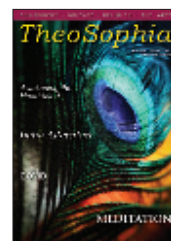
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Theosophy

Theosophy is the body of truths which form the basis of all religions, and which cannot be claimed as the exclusive possession of any. It offers a philosophy which renders life intelligible, and which demonstrates the justice and the love which guides its evolution.

Theosophy puts death in its rightful place as a recurring incident in an endless life, opening the gateway to a fuller and more radiant existence. It restores to the world the science of the spirit, teaching one to know the spirit as oneself and the mind and the body as one's servants.

Theosophy literally means divine wisdom: *theosophia*. Theosophy illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions, by unveiling their hidden meanings; thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

Members of the Theosophical Society study these truths and theosophists endeavour to live them. Everyone who is willing to study, to be tolerant, to aim high and to work perseveringly, is welcome as a member and it rests with the member to become a true theosophist.

From *Exploring the Mysteries of Existence* published by The Theosophical Society - <http://theosophy.nz>

DIRECTORY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND

BRANCHES

AUCKLAND

Venue: 4 Warborough Ave, Epsom
Meetings: Theosophy Exploration - Mondays 7.30pm
Members Meeting: 4th Wednesday of month 7:30pm
Contact: Ph 09 524 7994/hpbpres@theosophy.org.nz
Website: <https://hpb.theosophy.org.nz>

CANTERBURY

Venue: WEA Canterbury
59 Gloucester Street, Christchurch
Public Talks: 1st Thursday of month 7:30pm
Contact: theosophycanterbury@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/canterbury>

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Meetings: Wednesdays 7:30pm
Contact: Katrina 027 337 0256 /
theosophy.dn@actrix.co.nz
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/dunedin-lodge>

FAR NORTH

Venue: Theosophy Centre, Waikare Ave, Kaeo
Contact: Maureen Paterson (09) 405 0707 /
farnorththeosophy.president@gmail.com
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hawkesbayts@gmail.com
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Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/wellington>

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Venue: Community Arts Centre, Taupo Quay
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Contact: Kirsty TXT to 021 212 3819 /
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Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/wanganui>

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Venue: 110 Handforth Street, Onerahi, Whangarei
Meetings: 3rd Sunday of the month 11:00am
Contact: Paul Henderson (09) 436 2661 /
mjclass2014@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/whangarei>

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daphnemiller@slingshot.co.nz

INVERCARGILL

Contact: David Simpson (03) 213 0424

NELSON

Contact: Jan Lowe 022 123 4920 /
momentsigns@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/nelson-study-centre>

TAKAKA

Venue: Members' homes
Meetings: Alternative Mondays
Contact: Murray Rogers (03) 525 8286 /
jmrwordplay@gmail.co.nz

WAIKATO THEOSOPHICAL STUDY CENTRE

Venue: 40 Marama Street, Frankton, Hamilton 3204
Meetings: 1st and 3rd Thursdays of month 7-9 pm
Contact: Carol Collier 027 668 4554
or Sue Mitchell 027 636 6435
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/waikato-theosophical-study-centre>

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Journey of Self-Discovery

Theosophy endeavours to answer the deeper questions such as:

Who am I?

Why am I here?

Where did I come from?

Where am I going?

Exploring answers to these questions takes us on a journey of self-discovery. Theosophy endeavours to answer these questions through various approaches such as science, philosophy and religion without limiting itself to any of their particular assumptions or ways.

Theosophy can be applied to our curiosity about our own identity and the meaning of everything in the world around us today. It does that, not with a list of simple, pat answers, but by giving us a new way to look at ourselves and the universe, a way that provides a basis for developing our own answers.

THEOSOPHY STATEMENT
www.theosophy.org/

It is only when there is realisation of our unity with our fellow-beings and when the only motive is that of giving ourselves in such service as we are capable, that we can fill our lives with rich, helpful and creative action.

N. Sri Ram



December 2020