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Searching for
HARMONY

Seeing Versus Seeing

**Uniting Heaven
and Earth**

***MA'AT: Source of Egyptian
Strength and Harmony***

TheoSophia



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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



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Blue Flower
Alex Martin

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In Sweet Harmony

Synonyms for harmony include the most musically aligned: melody, sweet sounds, orchestration, proportion, balance, symmetry; with some perhaps more relevant to this theme: agreement, accord, rapport, cooperation, consensus, consistency, friendship, good will, unity, kinship, peace. All are music to the ear as words describing a society that the theosophical founders envisioned. So, how do we fit into this ideal?

During these Covid-regulated times, many people feel the discordant atmosphere that lockdowns, mask-wearing and social distancing can bring. Some families are divided over perceived rights versus caution relating to dangerous infection. Employers and their staff as well as students have acquired new ways of working. Harmony is not an easy state for our communities to experience right now.

However, armed with the truths of Ancient Wisdom, followers of Theosophy can overcome these challenges and put into practice a way of living for the highest good – for all. Reading and courses can provide valuable direction and inspiration. The annual convention of the TSNZ has been one of the times when theosophists have come together for learning

and support. Unfortunately, TSNZ was forced to cancel this year's convention but the National Section have worked hard to bring about a 12-week *Theosophical Sundays* series to replace it (p.16). There is also an Introductory Study Course available through the *Udemy* on-line learning platform (p.17).

Harmony is the theme of this issue of *TheoSophia* and wise writers contributing their thoughts include John Vorstermans (p.4), Richard Sell (p.10), Warwick Keys (p.18) and more contained in the Geoffrey Hodson Library list (p.27). Books reviewed give food for deep thought (p.28 and p.29) and there is some recommended science-based reading (p.26). Tim Boyd writes about his early spiritual experiences (p.6), Richard Smoley considers how heaven and earth may be united (p.14) and Renée Sell concludes her two-part piece on our connectivity (p.20).

Technology is helping to bridge gaps created by Covid as medical science works to find ways we can survive viral attacks and reconnect – in sweet harmony.

Pamela Zane Keys
 Editor
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The Tide Was High

The tide was high.
 A steady wind blew over persistent waves
 persevering nearer that coastal sea wall.

Each a repeated line of breaking sea,
 white topped,
 relentless till the tide turns,
 recedes for another attempt
 in 24 hours;
 cyclical continuum.

The regularity of variable breaking waves
 on that wild weather beach reflected
 our own attempts to reach beyond...

Beyond that seawall towards greater achievement;
 an urge deep within to find the answers,
 explanation, wisdom, the ultimate.

From the sea we came, the scientists say
 Our return to the sea of understanding
 and blissful peace awaits

Coming sooner to those who
 reach beyond the seemingly
 ceaseless waves of inconsequence.

Clive Conland

DIARY DATES

2022

16 Jan - 10 April	<i>Theosophical Sundays</i> at 7:30 pm online – see page 16 Theme: Awakening the Heart ~ Regenerating Change Within
22 - 25 May	School of Theosophy (subject to COVID restrictions)
14 May	<i>Presidents' Forum</i>
28 - 29 May	Immersion Weekend
12 June - 17 July	Science Sundays at 7:30 pm online Theme: Science & The Ancient Wisdom

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

FUTURE ISSUES of THEOSOPHIA

Date	Theme	Deadline
2022		
June	<i>The Inspiration Behind the TS</i>	1 April
September	<i>Spirituality and Religion</i>	1 July
December	<i>Theosophy in the World Today</i>	1 October

Email: editor@theosophy.org.nz

There would be no conflict in a world where harmony prevails. Peace, tranquillity, respect, agreement, equality and accord would reign, writes TSNZ National President, John Vorstermans.



HARMONY

Harmony can be defined as the combination of different musical notes played or sung simultaneously to produce a pleasing sound or a relationship in which various components exist together without destroying one another. Harmony is living in perfect balance, and when it is disturbed by us, karma is invoked to restore the balance. Founding Theosophist, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky says in *The Secret Doctrine*:

For the only decree of Karma – an eternal and immutable decree – is absolute Harmony in the world of Matter as it is in the world of Spirit.ⁱ

Karma is the universal law of Harmony, ever striving to see Harmony restored, whether we work with or through nature, abiding by the laws that Harmony depends on, or break them. Harmony is rooted in our Spiritual Soul. It is selfish minds and personal desires that destroy it, as shown in the *Divine Wisdom*:

In the *Sankhya philosophy* Mind is “conceived as having three aspects or *gunas*, literally ‘strands’, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. These are variously translated as ‘harmony’ or ‘equilibrium’, ‘mobility’ or ‘excitability’, and ‘darkness’ or ‘inertia’ respectively. It is when there is a preponderance of *rajas* and *tamas* that matter evolves out of its state of equilibrium. It is when humans have a preponderance of those *gunas* that they are in bondage to the cycle of transmigration. Release from bondage occurs when humans live in the *sattva guna* and Harmony is predominant.”ⁱⁱ

In *At the Feet of the Master* by Alcyone is an account from a young Jiddu Krishnamurti of a Master’s teachings concerning qualifications required on the pathway to

spiritual awakening. The third of the four qualifications he called ‘Good Conduct’, which includes six important aspects: **Self-control as to the Mind**, Self-Control in Action, Tolerance, Cheerfulness, One-pointedness and Confidence.

Buddhism also points to the Mind as the seat of disharmony, saying that all harm arises from the Mind, so mindfulness is essential in this tradition. If we are aware of thoughts as they appear in our mind, then we can choose to allow them to influence our actions or be discarded. Without mindfulness, thoughts flow through our minds with no filter and flow on to some action. I have found this understanding helpful in studying and applying the teachings of eighth century Mahayana Buddhist Shantideva’s *The Way of the Bodhisattva*.ⁱⁱⁱ One section of ten, called *Vigilant Introspection*, is especially useful. It goes into great detail about the importance of understanding and examining the Mind.

Buddhism, as with many other traditions, emphasises meditation as a process to understand the Mind and its influences on our actions, such as what we say, believe and feel.

In the *SaddharmaSmrityaUpasthana sutra* it says:

The mind’s our enemy, our mighty foe; no enemy exists apart from this our mind.^{iv}

Like tinder burned by flames itself kindled, the Mind is scorched and burned by mind itself.

In Theosophy, the Buddhic [Spiritual Soul] is the realm of Harmony and idealistic love; it is from that realm that all higher motivations emerge that inspire humanity.

The great works of art in paintings, music and architecture; benevolence; idealism and motivations that serve to raise humanity above its brutish origins.^v Buddhi is the faculty that manifests as spiritual intuition, insight and understanding, which is more profound and subtler than our reasoning faculty. It also manifests as the voice of conscience, unerring sense of right and wrong and sense of Harmony, beauty, truth. When it is reflected through the intellect, it appears as wisdom; when reflected through the higher aspect of the emotional vehicle, it has the quality of spiritual love which itself embraces wisdom.

In Theosophy, the spiritual journey is to awaken awareness of the Spiritual Soul emphasising compassion and Harmony. Meditation is the practice that takes us there. Our ideals of the good, the true, the beautiful are expressions of that harmonious state of wholeness, which is the gift of buddhi. In *The Voice of the Silence*, Helena P. Blavatsky wrote: “The mind is the great slayer of the real.”^{vi} This is on the first page emphasising the importance of understanding mind nature and the illusions it creates. Later she continues, “Compassion is no attribute. It is the Law of Laws — eternal harmony Alaya’s self; a shoreless universal essence, the light of everlasting Right, and fitness of all things, the law of love eternal.”^{vii} But she stresses that this must be translated into action: To feel ‘compassion’ without an adequate practical result ensuing from it is not to show oneself an ‘Altruist’ but the reverse. Real self-development on the esoteric lines is action. “Inaction in a deed of mercy becomes an action in a deadly sin.”

In *Hinduism*, we find the Divine Wisdom in

the Upanishads as we do in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali. A fundamental teaching of Buddhism, Jainism and most major world religions is the concept of harmlessness (Harmony), do no harm, live in Harmony with all. This is often the first quality to learn if serious about self-transformation as taught in the great mystery schools of all ages, which is why the practical followers of this wisdom live lives where they do no harm, starting with their thoughts which inform their actions.

In Patanjali's eight limbs of Yoga, the first is the five Yamas (observances) which are: *Ahimsa* meaning non-harming (Harmony), *Satya* governing truthfulness and honesty to yourself and others, *Asteya* translates to 'non-stealing' but goes a little deeper to promote giving rather than taking, *Brahmacharya* is about conserving your energy and *Aparigraha* which refers to non-attachment or letting go which can mean not being greedy, releasing things that don't serve you and others, retiring old stories, rejecting outdated narratives, cutting unhealthy attachments and finding freedom from external expectations. However, if you can master *Ahimsa* or non-harming (Harmony), then all the others fall into place as they are all aspects of Harmony. This first step in Yoga is about creating a life of Harmony.

Our Mind has, over countless lifetimes, influenced how we act, feel and what we believe, affecting the world around us. We want to live in a peaceful, harmonious world. Unfortunately, if we look for this Harmony to come from outside ourselves, we live in an illusion. To take the Divine Wisdom to heart, to find peace and Harmony in the world, we must start with ourselves which can only happen through mindfulness, ensuring only harmonious thoughts come from our Mind, leading to harmonious action. To create Harmony around us, we must have a reflective, mindful practice aware of thoughts as they arise and discerning which to pursue and which to discard. Thought comes first, before actions, before we say or write something.

Our lives are surrounded by things that destroy Harmony around us and create karma. Gossip, where one person shares unkind words about others; where judgements and accusations are made about a person or situation without putting effort into finding out others' perspectives or trying to help resolve differences, or conspiracy theories based on false information create huge disharmony amongst people.

The Theosophical Society was created as a model of future humanity. The TS models the divine ethics and universal values of respect, Harmony, equality, kinship and compassion through actions. Mostly, as members of the Society, we try to do this. Sadly, this is not always the case. Currently, a small group of members seem bent on spreading misinformation and accusations regarding elected officers, causing stress on maligned staff. This hampers the work of Theosophy. What is the underlying motive here? Harmonious communication could resolve such issues if the concerned members came to the table. Otherwise, it is in the hands of karma that will bring back Harmony eventually. Geoffrey Hodson says: "Motive is said to be the decisive factor in the effect produced by any action. This would seem to apply at the very highest levels of conduct." The whole system of Theosophy is based upon the One Reality or the Oneness of all Life and in its highest aspect, it is a harmonised balanced whole.

To conclude, if we wish to see a harmonious Theosophical Society or world, the effort must begin with our own thoughts and actions through awareness and reflection. Then, when others see this, they will take note and might be inspired by the example.

..... ❖❖❖
REFERENCES

- ⁱ *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P. Blavatsky, original edition, Vol. 1, page 643
- ⁱⁱ *Theosophical Encyclopaedia*: <https://theosophy.world/encyclopedia/sankhya>
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- ^{iv} *The Nectar of Manjushri's Speech*, A detailed commentary on Shantideva's Way of the Bodhisattva by Kunzang Pelden, Shambhala Publications, ISBN: 9781590306994. Page 167
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- ^{vi} *The Voice of the Silence* by H.P. Blavatsky, Facsimile edition of original, Page 1
- ^{vii} *The Voice of the Silence* by H.P. Blavatsky, Facsimile edition of original, Page 69
- ^{viii} *Sharing the Light*, Geoffrey Hodson, Vol. 2, P.110

... if we wish to see a harmonious Theosophical Society or world, the effort must begin with our own thoughts and actions through awareness and reflection.



Seeing Versus Seeing

Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society, writes of special experiences which affected him deeply.

I had an uncle, my favorite uncle, who died several years ago. Uncle John was a remarkable man in terms of his accomplishments in life, but more so because of his generosity of spirit and unconventional ways of thinking. As a student he worked long hours in very difficult circumstances to put himself through college and then medical school. In his fifties he decided that family practice was no longer satisfying, went back to school for three years, and became what he had always been in his heart of hearts – a psychiatrist. He was the uncle that would take us fishing, show us how to build a bicycle, and tell us stories about his life and the things he had seen.

When I was 20 years old I unexpectedly found myself in contact with a number of psychically sensitive people. I had not sought them out. Before making their acquaintance, I had not known anything about them or what they did. I was in college at the time and had never given much thought to the whole subject of psychic perception.

A year earlier, while on spring break from school, I had travelled from New York to Chicago. While there I was introduced to an intriguing man. My cousin, whom I was visiting, regarded him as quite wise and had brought me to meet him. If you had asked me at the time, I would have said that I did not want to take time away from my vacation to meet this man. In my 19-year-old mind I had better things to do than listen to someone talk about spirituality, a subject that was not uppermost in my conscious thought. I went to see him, not once, but twice. Over the course of those two visits a chain of events was set in motion that profoundly altered my thinking and my direction in life.

It turned out that this man was deeply involved in working with young people. His name was Bill Lawrence, but the young people around him called him the Old Man. He was a member of the Theosophical Society and also a highly developed clairvoyant. Although my first meeting with him did not make a deep impression on me, the second was quite different. At that meeting I sat in rapt attention for several hours listening to him talk about the truths of the Ageless Wisdom. He talked in a way that made these ideas that seemed so new, but also strangely familiar to me; instead of high-sounding abstractions, they were powerful tools I could apply in my own life. Over the course of that evening he seasoned his talk with several quite specific details of my personal life which I thought only I could have known. That visit made a very deep impression on me. I left his house early in the morning and returned home to New York.

Back in New York I found myself thinking about the things he had said. I took time alone on long walks in the park trying to remember and understand what he had shared. It was on one of those walks that I had an experience that irrevocably shifted my way of seeing the world. Literally in an instant everything changed. At the time I did not have the background of study to describe what had happened. I still don't, but from my immersion in Theosophy and the Ageless Wisdom teachings it is clear that the best way to describe what happened is to say that it was a mystical experience, a sudden movement from a conventional way of seeing the world to a greatly expanded view that revealed levels of meaning and purpose, powers and energies, patterns and gradations of consciousness that, though always present, were previously invisible to me. This experience and the profound effect it had on my sense of priorities were the reasons why one year later I found myself back in Chicago and suddenly surrounded by all of these psychics.

One by-product of my experience was the realisation that even though it had been profound and life-altering, with a little distance from its initial impact it seemed to raise many unanswered



questions. What was the nature of this expanded consciousness that had suddenly opened to me? What was the mechanism that made it possible? Was this condition of seeing repeatable? How? I needed answers, and the only place I knew that I could find them was in Chicago with the Old Man. Responding to my pressing need to know more, I did what seemed the logical thing. I took a term off from school; wrote to the Old Man; and on his invitation travelled to Chicago for a series of classes that he would be giving for some of his students.

When I arrived, I found that there were a number of young people around my age studying with him. Most of them had a strong fascination with psychic phenomena. As time went on I discovered that some were themselves quite sensitive to the psychic world, but unclear about how to integrate these sensitivities into a spiritual life. *Astral projection, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and readings* were new terms that I quickly became familiar with in conversations with my new fellow students.

Because of my background, I arrived at the Old Man's house with certain preconceptions about the terms study and classes. At the university these words had clear meanings that implied a formal structure of learning with which I was familiar. In my case, the Old Man initially prescribed a course of reading across a range of Theosophical literature. I greedily devoured the books. He could not give them to me fast enough. He began by giving me one book at a time, then discussing it with me after I had read it. When he found that I was finishing one or two a day, he just pushed a stack of books across to me. In my mind this was study. I soon noticed that none of the other students were engaged in such intense reading. While I was in my room reading, I would hear them downstairs laughing and talking with the Old Man. I began to feel that his approach to study might be different from my ideas.

The day arrived for the first of the classes I had been anticipating. It was not like anything I had expected. The Old Man had invited a number of interested friends to come over. He had also invited four or five psychics that he knew. Even though the Old Man never gave readings, or promoted an awareness of his abilities, he was known and highly respected within the circle of sensitives. Then there were six or eight of us, his students. His only advice to us was to watch and listen.

The evening began with normal socialising. Everyone there was new to me, so the Old Man took time to introduce me as his most recent student. In conversation he would have the psychics share their personal stories with me. The dynamic between him and them was fascinating. They all seemed to recognise that he functioned on a different level, a higher level, and they clearly held him in high regard. Later in the evening everyone gathered in the living room. It was time for some of the psychics to take centre stage. Two of them took turns working with the group. Each seemed to operate in a different way. One man apparently was being told messages to pass on to specific people in the group by people who had passed on who, he said, were on the other side. This man was a well-known spiritualist minister. As each message was received, he would say, "Thank you, kindly spirit." His messages were detailed, and different people would recognise the information as specific to them and to people they knew. A number of times he said the name of the person who was communicating with him, or described their appearance and details of their previous life.

Another woman was a psychometrist. She would ask for a person who wanted a reading to give her some object that they frequently had on their person, a ring, a key, or a watch: some object that she said carried their vibration. She would hold the object in her hand, then start telling the person what she saw. At one point a woman who had given her a ring turned quite pale when the reader described an incident in some detail, but refused to say more in front of others because, as she said, "You know what I am talking about, don't you?" The woman quickly took back her ring.

On another occasion the Old Man had a class that focused on healers. The setup was the same; friends who were interested in or in need of healing were invited, a few healers, and us. Not all, but most of the healers also seemed to be quite psychically sensitive. They not only applied their nonphysical healing methods, but they also diagnosed the various illnesses without doing any sort of physical examination. One of the healers was exceptional. Her name was Evelyn. She was a

...the world is
not the problem.
Our relationship
with the world is
the problem.

simple woman, uneducated, and deeply religious. During the course of the evening, she worked on a number of people. Her method was that she would stand in front of the person, then start talking about how she saw their malady. Then she would command the illness, or the spirit causing the illness, to release its hold in the name of Jesus.

Even though this was 40 years ago, I have a vivid memory of two of the people she worked on that night. One was my older brother. He had spent a part of the summer visiting with me in Chicago. He was in that phase of life where he had graduated from college, but was deeply uncertain about what to do next. Until she addressed my brother, all of the people Evelyn had worked on had some physical symptoms. When she came to him she immediately said, "This one needs a mind healing." Although I could not see it at the time, a few months later he would experience a profound mental crisis.

The second memorable incident occurred with a woman who did not attend the meeting. She was a nurse who did not know about this type of healing. While Evelyn was doing her work, unexpectedly the Old Man got up and walked outside. Later he said that he had gone outside to meet someone although at that moment he did not know who. While standing on the front porch he saw a neighbour, Mrs Jones, coming home from work. They greeted each other. Then he walked over to her and asked, "Are you well?" She responded, "I am so sick. Tomorrow I am going into the hospital for surgery." He asked her if she would allow Evelyn to see her. Mrs Jones came into the house and stepped in front of Evelyn. Immediately Evelyn said, "I see that you have a hole in your stomach, and its bleeding." Next she put her hand on Mrs Jones's belly and started to command the hole to close. She worked on her for several minutes. When she was through, she said that the hole had closed.


For years after that night, on numerous occasions I would hear Mrs Jones recount the story how she went into the hospital the next day; how she insisted on being tested again before the operation; how the surgeon came to her perplexed that there was no sign of the bleeding ulcer that had been the reason for the surgery and how it never returned.

As fascinating as the meetings were, the aftermath was more so. When everyone had gone, late into the night the Old Man would talk to us about what had happened. He would expand on what the psychics had seen, on what had happened with the healings. He would describe in greater detail what the psychics were looking at. He spoke in terms of planes and sub-planes of consciousness. He talked about the psychics and their level of seeing, about the things they left out, or couldn't see, or unintentionally altered because they could not help it. Everything they saw was necessarily coloured by the filter of their own personalities and development.

Most of the readers and psychics felt that they had been given their gifts by God. Many even believed that it was God Himself who was showing them the things they saw. Many of them were ministers with their own small churches, but when you looked closely at the way they conducted their daily lives, it was clear that their psychic sensitivity had little effect on their morality, stability, or clarity. Some few were exceptional in their religious fervour and devotional temperament. Others were manipulative, petty, and self-centred. As Annie Besant said, "While it is not true that the great psychic is necessarily a spiritual person, it is true that the great spiritual person is inevitably a psychic."

As captivating and exciting as these demonstrations were, I came away with the clear realisation that psychic does not equal spiritual; that psychic powers or awareness of other planes are no more or less connected to the Divine, or to the deeper powers of compassion, kindness, happiness, wisdom and stillness, than the normal five senses that everybody uses.

The Old Man felt it was important for us to see these things up close. He organised the classes so that we could be exposed in a safe way. Particularly for those students with varying degrees of psychic sensitivity, it was important to see and experience in the most immediate way possible some of the scope and limitations of the astral world, what it is and what it isn't. The main advice he gave was to aim higher: absorption in psychic matters was just like being absorbed in diet, or



Spirituality is
the realisation
of Oneness...

body building, or any other personal concern. It would certainly yield results, but would do little to enhance the more potent qualities of spirit. He liked to say that all of the psychic abilities would necessarily blossom in a stable way, as a result of a genuine and extended focus on the spiritual life, a focus that is substantially different and more demanding than the development of a more limited way of seeing. The distinction Annie Besant made was that the spiritual life goes inwards: all psychic powers go outwards.

There are two tendencies that need to be recognised and avoided: glamorising and fearing psychic experience. Because conscious perception of the astral world seems unusual or abnormal, inexperienced people easily elevate the experience, or the person seeing it, to unwarranted heights. The equal but opposite approach is to belittle or even demonise the person or experience based on valid but only partially understood teachings.

In *The Voice of the Silence*, speaking of the tendency to idealise astral experience, H.P. Blavatsky wrote,

Having learnt thine own *Agyana* [ignorance], flee from the Hall of Learning [the astral realm]. This Hall is dangerous in its perfidious beauty, is needed but for thy probation. Beware ... lest dazzled by illusive radiance thy Soul should linger and be caught in its deceptive light.

Whether we are speaking of the astral, the physical, or the world of mind, the world is not the problem. Our relationship with the world is the problem. Until we realise that it is possible to touch without grasping or pushing away, to taste without devouring, we will continually find ourselves caught in the deceptive light of whatever realm in which we invest our attention.

It is possible for us to see without any of the senses, to feel beyond reaching or touch, to know without reference to my mind. Spirituality is the realisation of Oneness, and it exalts every sense that turns in its direction. Let us try to remember, and choose accordingly.

All of the Annie Besant quotes have been taken from her London Lectures of 1907.

This article is reprinted with kind permission. It is from *Viewpoint: Seeing versus Seeing* first published in the Winter 2015 issue of *Quest* 103.1 (Winter 2015): pg. 2-9.



Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society was born in New York City and studied at Brown University then at the University of Chicago. In Chicago Tim joined the TSA in 1974 and co-founded a Theosophical spiritual community in Chicago's inner city. They held classes on the Ageless Wisdom, meditation and healing and formed a business which helped stabilise neighbourhoods through the training and employment of local youth and creation of affordable homes. Tim has been involved in Theosophical work at many levels: from lodge member, to TSA president and president of the Theosophical Order of Service USA. He has spoken across the USA and every continent except Africa. Tim's articles appear in journals around the world.

How do we find this sweet place in these challenging times?

asks Richard Sell.

Searching for Harmony

If you ask just about anyone whether they want peace and harmony in their lives, and if they desire that for their country and the planet too, the answer will inevitably be “Yes.” Why is it therefore, we have the opposite? Why is harmony so difficult to achieve?

These questions make one stop and think about things. The COVID-19 pandemic for instance has provided this opportunity for us so vividly, presenting a window for the further development of humanity’s discriminative faculty. For example, we hear statements like “no one is safe, until we are all safe.” This is a recognition of our universal Unity. Being able to think in a new way, and form a new and more inclusive worldview, is something that will hopefully come about from this intense period. As Albert Einstein said, “Problems cannot be solved on the same level that they were created.” So, what is it, when we speak of Harmony?

Harmony is essentially a relationship, in which various components exist together without destroying one another. Nikola Tesla, Croatian-American electrical engineer inventor, spoke of some fundamental aspects of Harmony when he wrote, “If you want to find the secrets of the universe, think in terms of energy, frequency and vibration.”

Thinking about music helps us understand this concept better. We have all heard the discord of multiple instruments for example, when a symphony orchestra warms up before playing. Then shortly afterwards, sublime vibrations fill the airwaves, bringing coherently together, those previously discordant notes and chords into what we call harmony. They did not destroy the previous notes but brought them together in a more pleasing and uplifting sound, that speaks to something deeper inside us.

Harmony also involves working with opposites. Dealing with opposing ideas and forces can be difficult and knowing what to fight, what to change and what to let go, is always the tricky part. Sometimes we go to the extreme and are not even sure how we got there. Previous International President of the TS, N. Sri Ram said that a person who goes to an extreme will, after some time, tend

to go to the extreme opposite. Pendulum swings like this result in unhealthy and sometimes fanatical behaviour. The middle ground is what is missing; the Buddha spoke of the Middle Way or the Middle Path. This is a place of balance, where harmony is sure to be found should we but seek it.

Nature is built on these opposites which are always intertwined, but it keeps the balance between the two equally. Think day and night, the four seasons, good times and bad times. It is in skilfully dealing with such polarities and often changing forces in our life that we learn to become more harmonious with others and within our own being. These struggles present opportunities for growth.

One of the easiest ways to see harmony at work is through the great Law of

Karma which is the harmonising force of the universe. It is the adjuster, the equaliser that restores broken harmony and it plays out on a wide stage, rebalancing at different levels. Of course, the karmic aspect most focused upon is personal karma, which is so instructive, but difficult to bear at times as well. Our actions, emotions and thoughts create energy and therefore effect.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky tells us how karma works in a scientific sense, as the great Law of the Universe, in a very good explanation:

Think now of a pond. A stone falls into the water and creates disturbing waves. These waves oscillate backwards and forwards till at last, owing to the operation of what physicists call the law of the dissipation of energy, they are brought to rest, and the water returns to its condition of calm tranquillity. Similarly, all action, on every plane, produces disturbance in the balanced harmony of the Universe, and the vibrations so produced will continue to roll backwards and forwards, if its area is limited, till equilibrium is restored. But since each such disturbance starts from some particular point, it is clear that equilibrium and harmony can only be restored by the reconverging to *that same point* of all the forces which were set in motion from it. And here you have proof that **the consequences of a man's deeds, thoughts, etc. must all react upon himself with the same force with which they were set in motion.**

If harmony is disrupted through our thoughts and deeds, and we know that karma is created because of this, we would be wise to observe ourselves closely and make a study of our actions and motives. We reap the full consequences of our actions, having to atone for suffering we have caused, but equally, reaping in joy and gladness the fruits of all the happiness and harmony we helped produce.

In the *Key to Theosophy*, Madame Blavatsky says that "all pain and suffering are results of want of Harmony, and that the one terrible and only cause of the disturbance of Harmony is selfishness in some form or another." This word 'selfishness' comes up time and time again in theosophical literature; so what is its cause?

There seem to me to be three main causes of selfishness. Firstly, from my own observations and experiences there are some who seek to

control others and events as they unfold – why is this? Because we want to feel safe instead of being afraid of the unknown, or feeling vulnerable – like someone lost in the dark. Control is the light switch, but this comes with ramifications of the growing stronger, of what is called *ahamkara*, or the little 'I' and results in the building up of the personality, the small ego. Geoffrey Hodson shows a way out of this folly of caring too much about the small self, the personality when he says:

The part of us which suffers is *ahamkara*, the sense of I-ness, of I-am-ness, the delusion of separated, self-personality. We can get rid of this in an utter surrender to the one Will and a complete impersonality which literally does not care about the self, then pain on our own account cannot touch us, personal accusations and affronts, injustices, gossiping, will cause us not one moment of personal sorrow. He who has sacrificed self has found the way to peace.

The twin part to this control aspect of people is wanting to achieve certain outcomes, generally to one's own benefit. We may grow frustrated when the world doesn't behave the way we think it should and our lives don't conform to our expectations. Rather than feeling frustrated, we - could - let - go! Life in fact, is a long practice of letting go.

The Bhagavad Gita provides sound advice here: "When actions are performed, renouncing attachment and desire for the fruit of actions, one becomes equal to gain and loss and experiences sameness ... which is yoga in itself" (*sameness meaning neither made happy nor sad at happenings and results*).

The Second key reason for selfishness is Desire; we want money, status, power, respect, grand housing and other trinkets of daily living. Grasping in this way does not usually satisfy. Once achieved, we want more as we still feel empty and unfulfilled. The Buddha's teachings, the Four Noble Truths, speak of this desire and its being the cause of human suffering. He says this is based on temporary and conditional states of Being. The Buddha shows us the way to move beyond this state, towards enlightenment through the Noble Eightfold Path.

In this, the first step of the Noble Eightfold Path, is 'Right Understanding/View' and this is most vital to the seeker. How we see the world is based on

Our actions, emotions and thoughts create energy and therefore effect.

True fulfilment and meaning in life require that personal and cultural values be in harmony with universal values.

many things, largely to do with conditioning from religion, culture, schooling, parents and society at large. Combined, these factors mould our worldview. Having a wide view and open mind is vitally important to the student treading the razor-edged path.

The Third reason is to do with evolution and the unfoldment of consciousness itself. There are two broad paths. One is called the *Path of Forthgoing* and the other, the *Path of Return*. Of the *Path of Forthgoing*, Dr Annie Besant said that human beings are surrounded on every side by objects of desire and the use of these is to evoke the desire to possess them, to stimulate exertion, to inspire efforts and thus to make facility, capacity, strength, intelligence, alertness, judgment, perseverance, patience and fortitude.

Through learning, the desires will become subtler and more refined as intelligence fashions them and emotions replace passions, but throughout the treading of the *Path of Forthgoing* the ‘desire for fruit’ is the necessary and blameless motive for exertion. Without this, the person at this stage of evolution becomes lethargic and does not evolve.

However, when we start treading the *Path of Return* – the path back to Source, the One, God, the Higher Self – the lower aspects of these attributes must be transformed into something higher. For example, greed can be transformed into altruism, pride into modesty.

Understanding how we want to live our lives using Right Understanding and the other modes of living as taught by Buddha, leads us to consider what values and ethics we want to live by. There are three main types of values:

- UNIVERSAL OR CORE VALUES – which are enduring, time tested and apply to all cultures and times such as *truth, love, peace, non-violence, universal brotherhood/sisterhood, selflessness, kindness, compassion, etc.*
- CULTURAL VALUES – based on social norms, religious and cultural traditions, beliefs, etc. such as *religious expression, material comfort, rule of law, ideas of social justice, etc. – things we think in a collective way.*
- PERSONAL VALUES – these are based on personal preferences, temperaments, vocations, talents, etc. such as *sense of loyalty and integrity, respect for self and others, our personal code of*

conduct, morality and things like diet and hygiene.

True fulfilment and meaning in life require that personal and cultural values be in harmony with universal values.

H.P. Blavatsky said that Theosophy is essentially ‘High Ethics’ itself and her *Golden Stairs* is a fine example of how to make these principles and worldview a living presence in one’s life, leading to a happier and more harmonious existence.

Working on the transformative process of changing the lower nature into something higher is a direct act of harmonising one’s life. So, for example, we transform fear into courage, imbalance into poise, individualism into cooperation and so forth. The trick here is not to fight or dwell on the negative side as that will only give it power and energy and make it stronger. The best method is to ignore the negative side and focus on the opposite trait, the positive aspects. In the *Dhammapada*, the Buddha says:

Hate never yet dispelled hate, only love dispels hate.

This is the Law, Ancient and inexhaustible.

Therefore, by making the positive traits stronger, they become a habit and eventually part of one’s character. It becomes who we are. Working in a spirit of cooperation, tolerance and goodwill is very important to achieving and maintaining harmony. The philosopher and writer Delia Steinberg Guzmán said:

Those who are incapable of living in harmony with others, are also incapable of living in harmony with themselves. What they can’t achieve when working with others, they won’t achieve for themselves either.

It is only through individuals achieving harmony within themselves, that society can achieve harmony collectively. As Marcus Aurelius said, “He who lives in harmony with himself lives in harmony with the universe.” As collective harmony is restored, we will see social conditions change, wars lessen or cease, natural disasters – nature’s own way of restoring equilibrium and harmony – will also lessen. From the macro viewpoint this change in world affairs is over a much longer timescale. The timescale for personal development, however, is here and now. The famous sage, Sri Ramana Maharishi said it well

when he encouraged us to focus inwardly. He said:

Self-reform automatically brings about social reform. Confine yourself to self-reform. Social reform will take care of itself.

He also said:

First reform yourself and then it will be time enough to think about the world. How can you help the world until you have helped yourself?

So, Harmony is the smooth flow of life, where we have established a balance between our inner world and the external world. It is a place where we have made peace with ourselves. In Geoffrey Hodson's diary we read that harmony is the secret treasure, the priceless privilege of all who have utterly outgrown the errors of untruth and the discordance with which that is intimately involved.

I have always admired the undisturbed yogis facing favour or adversity with equal indifference. They have attained that inner poise, that harmony within, which any winds of fortune cannot disturb.

Many years ago, I was in Australia talking with an older member of the Society. We were chatting about things theosophical in general on a warm autumn afternoon. He reminisced about when the International President of the Theosophical Society, N. Sri Ram came to Australia many years earlier and he asked Sri Ram, "With all the intrigues and petty squabbles going on in Adyar and elsewhere in the TS world, how do you cope with all that? Does it upset you?" Sri Ram turned to him and quietly said, "It's all just wind blowing in the leaves."

I thought this was a wonderful attitude to aspire to. Discord is all temporary, conditioned and unimportant. Let it go and don't let it take one away from the equipoise gained, the calmness in the centre of one's core being. I remind myself of Sri Ram's reply often, when feeling disturbed.

So, we try to work with the laws and forces of nature, not against them. The man in a boat who sets his sail so that he may go against the wind, is not overcoming the wind, but is harmonising his affairs with nature's laws. In working with the laws of nature, the human being gains a wider understanding, and is no longer fighting against the tide.

And above all these, clothe yourselves in love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.

St Paul's Letter to the Colossians 3:14



Richard Sell joined the Theosophical Society as a teenager. He is currently the President of the Auckland branch and Chair of the TSNZ Governance Board. Richard is a speaker both throughout New Zealand and internationally and contributes articles to theosophical magazines. He is active in promoting theosophy as a founder of theosophy.world resource website.

Uniting Heaven and Earth

Sage Editor of Theosophy America's famous *Quest* magazine,
Richard Smoley, considers a way forward...

Soon after I first suggested that *Quest* magazine do an issue on Ecology, it became clear to me that I was not thinking of the term in its usual sense.

The environmental crisis is grave, and its size and degree would be hard to overstate. But there is comparatively little we at *Quest* could say about this subject. Very likely we have no more access to information about it than you do. The only thing left would be sermonising, which is usually tiresome and counterproductive.

Instead, I was thinking of ecology in a deeper sense – our interrelation with the world and the universe, not merely in biological terms, but in light of the unseen realms. Hence, we retitled that issue as *The Ecology of Spirit*.

If we grant that there is an astral realm – a realm of thoughts, forms and images that is no less real than the physical one – we have to consider how we may be polluting it. Many people are generating extraordinary amounts of emotional toxic waste, and they are by no means limited to any one sector of the ideological continuum. As often happens, people employ the abuses of the other side to pardon their own.

The backdrop of the environmental crisis is the materialistic worldview – the belief that nothing exists except for what can be apprehended with the five familiar senses (augmented by certain apparatus); beyond that, there is nothing.

This worldview is cracking, to judge by the many news stories about quantum physicists suggesting that consciousness rather than matter is the ground of the universe. But materialism is still the default intellectual habit.

For the last two centuries, the materialistic worldview has been used to justify exploitation of nature. Over the last 50 years, as the ecological crisis has become more and more acute, some in the intellectual world have taken another tack: instead of regarding the earth and all therein as merely a set of 'natural resources' to be used at our whim, some worry whether the human race is itself a cancer on nature and whether the planet would be better off without us.

What then, are we supposed to do? Kill ourselves off as a matter of principle? The world was shocked by the mass suicides of cultists like the People's Temple and Heaven's Gate, which were recognised as instances of collective madness. Sacrificing the human race to save the earth comes across as still more insane.

The *Quest* issue contained an article of mine on *George Ivanovich Gurdjieff*, the 20th Century Greco-Armenian philosopher, mystic, spiritual teacher and composer. I wrote about his view of what might be called astral ecology. In his colossal work *Beelzebub's Tales to His Grandson*, Gurdjieff suggests that humans exist as means of generating certain forces that are necessary for the care and feeding of the cosmos. These forces are generated, says Gurdjieff, by the "conscious labors and intentional suffering" of people working toward self-perfection. If we do not strive for perfection

I do believe that if we take this cosmic union as an objective in our lives, the means will be given to us.

in this way, these forces will be extracted from us regardless – through death on a mass scale. Gurdjieff suggests that war exists as a side-effect of the collective failure of humanity to perfect itself.

These ideas may seem outlandish, but at least they provide some explanation for war, which has been a consistent feature of human history even though everybody professes to hate it.

For my part, I neither endorse nor reject Gurdjieff's views (although they have some flavour of truth about them). But I think there is reason to believe in the traditional sacred ternary of the Chinese: heaven, earth and man (or humanity if you prefer). We are the only beings that we know of who are capable of consciously uniting heaven and earth – that is, the visible and unseen realms. I believe that is very close to our function as a species on this planet.

Our failure to live up to this task has had the most grievous consequences. In the first place, it leads to a distorted valuation of the material realm as the whole of reality rather than a mere part of it. In the second place, at some level we realise that we have not been doing the job that we were put here to do, leading to the anomie, dissociation, depression, alienation and anxiety that are practically universal in the present-day world. In the third place, our failure to fulfill our role in the subtle ecology of the planet may be doing more harm than all of the fluorocarbons and fossil fuels put together, in ways that we have not imagined.

In short, yes, the human race is responsible for cleaning up the environmental mess that it has made. But I don't believe that's enough. Doing no harm (or undoing the harm that one has done) is only a part of a complete ethical program. We must also embrace a positive role for ourselves, and it is not one that can be cooked up as a mere placeholder. It must be genuine.

What, then, does it mean to unite heaven and earth? Are there techniques for it? Meditations? Rituals? Many of these no doubt serve such a purpose, but I don't see it as my place to tell readers what they might be. Nonetheless, I do believe that if we take this cosmic union as an objective in our lives, the means will be given to us.

Reprinted with permission from the Spring 2021 issue of *Quest: Journal of the Theosophical Society in America*



Richard Smoley, world leading authority on Western esoteric traditions, has degrees from Harvard and Oxford. His published books include *Inner Christianity: A Guide to the Esoteric Tradition* and *How God Became God: What Scholars Are Really Saying about God and the Bible*. Former editor of *Gnosis*, he is now editor of *Quest: Journal of the Theosophical Society in America* and lives in Illinois, USA.

Theosophical Sundays

TSNZ National Section have worked hard to bring about a 12-week Theosophical Sundays series in place of the 2022 Convention that was to be held in Auckland.

At the heart of the decision to go online was to be inclusive and not discriminate in any way, so that we could include all of our members, if they wished to join us. The theme is:

AWAKENING THE HEART: Regenerating Change Within

16 January – 10 April 2022

Special guests from around the country plus the Philippines and the USA will contribute. There will be something for everyone.

PROGRAMME

Sunday 16 January	Regenerating Change Within	John Vorstermans
Sunday 23 January	Searching for Harmony	Richard Sell
Sunday 30 January	The Poustinia of the Heart, the Call to the Stillness	Trish Lynch
Sunday 6 February	BREAK	
Sunday 13 February	The Heart Message of the NDE	Alastair Murray
Sunday 20 February	Note to Self – change habits for a change within	Jim Scrivener
Sunday 27 February	A Viral Valentine	Chally Romero
Sunday 6 March	Sacred Geometry and Universal Order (visual)	Jonathan Quintin
Sunday 13 March	Near Death Experiences – The Journey	Carole Van Weede
Sunday 20 March	TBA	
Sunday 27 March	Awakening Divine Essence, Liberating the Potential Within	Renée Sell
Sunday 3 April	What Moves You? A Look at Theosophical Teachings for a World in Need	Elena Dovalsantos
Sunday 10 April	TBA	

For up-to-date information on the sessions or to register, visit the TSNZ Website: <https://theosophy.nz>

Registration is FREE.

Once you have registered you will be sent an email that contains your personal link to access any of the Sundays in the series.

Registrations close at 7 pm prior to start time, so register by 7 pm on the Sunday.

The Zoom Application:

To access the Sunday presentations, you will require the ZOOM APP for your computer. You can download this by clicking this link: <https://zoom.us> and then download the App for your computer system.

Once you have downloaded ZOOM and use it for the first time, you need to create a free Zoom account to log in to the Sunday sessions.

If you have any queries, please email the National Vice-President at nvp@theosophy.org.nz or check online for an update at: <https://theosophy.nz/events/theosophical-sundays-nz>

INTRODUCTORY STUDY COURSE ON THEOSOPHY

A new on-line study course is now available through the Udemy on-line learning platform.

The course comprises seven modules of around 15 minutes each, exploring some of the Theosophical views on core topics such as:

- Seven planes of consciousness
- Life after death
- Exploring reincarnation
- Karma
- Power of Thought
- The practice of Theosophy (this one will be available shortly)
- Course summary

To enrol in the course you will need to create an account on Udemy.com which is free, then search for Theosophy in Today's World.

You could also watch each module with a group of friends or at a branch and then have some exploratory discussion around the topics presented. Notes are provided with each module and can be downloaded.

The course was created by Steve Moss and the New Zealand National Section.

As we enter 2022 we send greetings from the team at National Section to you all. May you meet in harmony and ever deepen your theosophical understanding.

With kindest regards
Renée Sell and John Vorstermans

The Theosophical Society Mission

**To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and
realisation of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual self-transformation
and the Unity of all Life.**

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.

The compact format of short articles, snippets and humour from authors around the globe makes the *Theosophical Digest* a great read for short relaxing interludes at any time. These books also make great gifts – perhaps as a subscription to an organisation, or someone you know who would appreciate some thoughtful inspiration in a busy world.

Subscriptions in New Zealand are \$25 annually, and the magazine is sent out quarterly. Back copies of individual Digests can also be ordered for \$5 each, and are subject to availability. The *Theosophical Digest* is published by the Theosophical Publishing House in the Philippines and reprinted in India.

To order an annual subscription, or for back copies and internet banking information, email Maureen Paterson with your contact details including address and phone number at theodigests@gmail.com or post a note to Theosophical Digest, Box 183, Kaeo 0448 or phone Maureen on 09 405 1653.



The key to the power and longevity of the Ancient Egyptian civilisation, claims Warwick Keys, lies in their belief system.

MA'AT

Source of Egyptian Strength and Harmony

Nothing was more important to the ancient Egyptians than the preservation and practice of *Ma'at* (*Maat*). The concept of *Ma'at* – depicted in paintings as a goddess – is a concept Egyptologists still struggle with. Essentially, it can be summed up like this:

Ma'at is the Divine Force or energy manifesting through the sun and flowing through the world. *Ma'at* is the spirit of beauty and order. *Ma'at* also represents truth and justice when, through human beings, she becomes the conscious exercise of faith in the transcendent creative power embodied in the solar disc.

Because *Ma'at* breathes life into everything, the more someone opens their heart to *Ma'at* the healthier and happier they are as circumstances seem almost magically to favour them. Hence the famous scene from *The Book of the Dead* (actually more correctly entitled *The Book of Coming Forth by Day and Opening the Tomb*) where a human heart is shown balancing on a scale with a feather that *Ma'at* always wore in her hair.

The ancient Egyptians recognised that 'life, health and strength' were the rewards for what they called 'Cutting *Ma'at*' with their every thought, word and action. Immortality could only be achieved through 'the intelligence of the heart.'

There was nothing abstract about the Egyptian world. Each human being is part of the cosmos. As 'living matter', he/she has the ability to receive solar energy through the heart, to transform it, and to send it back out.

The ancient Egyptians believed that a harmonious flow of solar energy, when transformed into words, involved growth on many levels: inner growth, inner happiness, and outer growth through physical and material prosperity.

They also believed that the obstruction of the flow of energy would mean a crisis: destruction, misery and even death. The ancient Egyptians understood the importance of the proper flow of thought. They also understood how much physical as well as intangible exchanges bring wealth in the tangible as well as in the intangible world. The key word was 'harmony.'

The king or pharaoh was the great interpreter of *Ma'at*. Suffused with the benefits of *Ma'at*, the divine office of the king served as the basic unifying element for the ancient Egyptian state. This laid a heavy responsibility on the king, a responsibility taken very seriously by most kings.

Ma'at is at the heart of understanding Egyptian civilisation in its entirety and is the foundation of its longevity. It is bound to and

fused with ethics (including justice and truth), with universal order (cosmic order, social order and political order) and with social integration based on communication and confidence.

The Egyptians developed the concept of Ma'at and tried to apply it with some success, particularly early on, which is one of the reasons for their civilisation to last so long.

Very few people realise that the Ten Commandments, from which our laws are derived, came from the Egyptian Precepts of Ma'at recorded at least 2,000 years before Moses, who was an Egyptian prince well-schooled in the ancient wisdom tradition of Egypt.

The 42 Precepts of Ma'at are more comprehensive than the Ten Commandments. They embrace all aspects of existence including the basic equilibrium of the Universe, the relationship between constituent parts, the cycle of the seasons, heavenly movements, religious observances, fair dealings and honesty and truthfulness in social interaction.

Many Egyptologists have little understanding or appreciation of the underlying esoteric principles involved in Ma'at, the complex and enlightened philosophy of Egyptian initiates.

The whole Egyptian civilisation was built around and depended on everyone's understanding and adherence to Ma'at. People were expected to depend on each other to keep balance as this was the will of the gods to produce the greatest amount of pleasure and happiness for humans through a harmonious existence which also enabled the gods to better perform their tasks. A Fifth Dynasty official named Nefer-seshem-re tells us that:

I have left my city, I have come down from my province, having done what is right (Ma'at) for its Lord, having satisfied him with that which he loves,
I spoke Ma'at and I did Ma'at, I spoke well and I reported well...

I rescued the weak from the hand of one stronger than he when I was able;
I gave bread to the hungry, clothing [to the naked], a landing for the boatless.
I buried him who had no son,
I made a boat for him who had no boat,
I respected my father, I pleased my mother,
I nurtured their children.

It has been said that the modern Christian Bible can be summed up in two sentences: Love God. Love your neighbour. Clearly these values are not new to that text, as most Egyptians loved their gods and the ancient Egyptian obviously believed that looking out for his neighbours was a high point in his life.

Other early texts, contemporary to that of Nefer-seshem-re, include denials of misconduct. We find lines such as 'Never did I take the property of any person'; 'Never did I say a bad thing about anyone to the King (or) to a potentate because I desired that I might be honoured before the god'; and 'Never did I do anything evil against any person', all of which are recognisable ethical standards to most of the modern world. The Egyptian ideals expressed in such biographies include justice, honesty, fairness, mercy, kindness and generosity and reflect the central concept of Ma'at, the cosmic and social order of the universe as established by the creator god. Harmony was at the centre of this belief.

The wise is known by his wisdom,
A noble person by his good deeds.
His heart is in harmony with his tongue.
His lips are accurate when he speaks.
He sees rightly through his eyes.
His ears are pleased to hear what is useful for his children.
He does Ma'at and is free from falsehood.

Ptahhotep, Circa 2400 BC

The Egyptian ideals ... include justice, honesty, fairness, mercy, kindness and generosity...



Warwick Keys, TSNZ past National President and lifetime member of Theosophy Wanganui, is a long-time theosophical student, TSNZ national speaker and meditation teacher with a background of research, writing, business, national politics, history study and photography. Warwick has a deep, lifelong interest in ancient civilisations, especially Egypt.

The Theosophical Society in New Zealand's
National Vice-President, **Renée Sell**

focuses on inclusiveness and leaving no one behind...

Our Need to Connect - part 2

Speaking to peoples of all cultures in these times, our message is strengthened in the First Object of the Theosophical Society:

To form a nucleus of the Universal Kinship of Humanity without distinction of race, ethnicity, creed, gender, sexual orientation, caste or colour.

The proposal put forward from the TSNZ Governance Board to the NZ National AGM was passed on 14 January 2022. Words from one of the Masters of the Wisdom are shining brighter from this day:

Theosophy is for everyone, not just for a part.

I had the opportunity and honour to speak to the proposed changes in the First Object at the AGM of the TSNZ. The vote itself was never about personal feelings or opinions but about the kind of inclusive and non-discriminatory culture we want to create in the world.

A long-term member phoned me after reading the article *Our Need to Connect* in the December issue of *TheoSophia* to say thank you for acknowledging her journey and the difficulties that many in her community face and commended the courage in introducing this possible move forward. She felt strongly enough to call and express her support for the changes, which she felt would make a real difference in making people feel included in our organisation. I had a number of people reach out with comments like this one: "I support both remits. I think that they are very progressive and forward thinking. As a member of the LGBTQ+ community it is very reassuring for me."

From some of our younger people an important point was made: If we want to boost membership, especially to get young people to join, we need to be more inclusive and accessible through our language. Youth particularly struggled with the word *brotherhood* and how it does not resonate well in 2021. Hearing that the proposed remit was passed, there was a resounding 'awesome' from many of the younger ones.

Having presented at the front line of branches, study groups and like-minded organisations for many years, it was clear to me that the time was ripe to address the modernisation of our theosophical messaging and outreach to the world. It is vital for us to speak in the language of our culture and time, reaching everyone possible and acknowledging where key stumbling blocks are within society and the discriminations that are very real and present today. It is a major step forward for The Theosophical Society with our message of hope for a world in



desperate need of signposts and guidance to remove the shackles of selfishness, unconscious bias and materialism, to see a world without distinction of any kind.

There was acknowledgement of the beautiful meaning of our First Object; the deep connection and unity in the human heart that is being referred to: the oneness of all and the ultimate reality that our First Object embodies. Many members I have spoken to are filled with hope for the future, making the leap in these times, naming the current issues and reaching all peoples.

There was one young lady who touched my heart in the way she responded to some members who did not want to change the word *brotherhood*. She said she understood how special the word is for some, especially after all these years of membership and study. She went on to explain how this word is not acceptable today and then spoke of the 'sacrifice' that sometimes we are called to make as individuals, for the future of humanity and thanked everyone for this sacrifice. The kindness and deep respect that was shown from the young ones at my local branch when discussing this remit and this young lady in particular, was very moving to hear and I think many knew in that moment, that we are in safe hands going forward into the future.

It is clear that words must be adapted when they interfere with any form of equality, whether those words be custom, tradition or religious. Equality is of supreme importance if humanity is going to move towards a more peaceful and harmonious world.

Many have asked: What research steps have been taken when looking at the language in the new wording and in particular to the addition of 'sexual orientation'?

Some say that sexual orientation and gender identity are sensitive issues. I understand. Like many of my generation, I did not grow up talking about these issues. But I learned to

speak out because lives are at stake, and because it is our duty under the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to protect the rights of everyone, everywhere.

Ban Ki-moon ⁽²⁾

We have engaged with women, individuals from different minority groups and students who specialise in sociology, the study of human social relationships and institutions, understanding how identities, cultures and social structures impact human action and experience. For example, how things like race, ethnicity, gender and sexuality influence our experience of the world. We researched human rights law and how it is guided by the fundamental principles of universality, equality and non-discrimination, as framed in *Article 1 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which states: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." This affirmation in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the cornerstone of international human rights law, and at the heart of the mission of the United Nations.⁽¹⁾ It is clear that equality for all is centrepiece in the First Object of The Society when we affirm 'without distinction'. These core principles are reaffirmed through international human rights covenants and treaties, many of which contain open-ended provisions against discrimination, and have been interpreted to include discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics.⁽¹⁾ These important issues are very relevant and alive at this time.

It is quite simple, human rights are for everyone without exception and it is well documented and acknowledged that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI+) people are just as entitled to protection, respect and fulfilment of their human rights as everyone else. By adding 'sexual orientation' to our Objects in addition to 'gender' we protect the rights for minority groups that are lagging behind at a terrible rate in terms of discrimination.

It is vital for us to speak in the language of our culture and time, reaching everyone possible...



The language we choose to use has a huge impact on the meaning received and it is not just about communication, it has effects on our relationships with others and how we and others perceive the world around us. This is why inclusive language is so important in *The Objects*. Inclusive language acknowledges diversity and creates an atmosphere and a sense of belonging. It is being thoughtful and conscious about the words we use and how they make people feel. The Theosophical Society can play an avant-garde role once again in the world by affirming in modern language, our long-held stance against discrimination of all kinds. In doing so, we help retain our relevance to the regeneration of humankind in the world today.

The United Nations and various agencies, International Human Rights Law, NGOs, some governments and businesses at this time are helping light the way to a better future in promoting inclusiveness by amending and adjusting official statements, values and codes to reflect our changing times – just as Helena Blavatsky was avant-garde in her time.

We wanted to showcase inclusiveness in a modern way in our stated *Objects* because this is often the first thing people see when they come through our doors, view our websites or read our brochures. It is a human right to know who we are, to feel valued and to know that we are all equal – this is the forerunner to a peaceful world – theosophy shows this in our teachings and now it is supported in a more fortified way in the revitalised expression of our First Object in New Zealand. In addressing and improving our wording in this way we encourage further progression toward a more inclusive world *for all*.

While significant in their impact, the changes to the *First Object* keep alteration to a minimum while being sensitive to both the original intent and the needs of our time. This is a positive and healthy move, forwarding The Society’s purpose in connecting more readily and easily to the people of New Zealand of all generations, especially the younger ones. In making the necessary changes we bring The Society into the present day, assisting to reach out to a world in need. The modern theosophical movement is a gift to the world, let us then give a beautiful ‘all-inclusive’ gift with heart and love for all. I have no doubt this will not be the last change to our *Objects* and statements as we work to create an environment where all members of the community feel respected and valued, no matter their life experience.

I would like to thank the membership of the New Zealand Section for being attuned to listening to the great call of our time. ‘Love is a form of seeing’⁽³⁾, recognising the oneness in all and following this up with action which demonstrates a deeper understanding of the tenets of theosophy.

AUTHOR’S ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Thank you to all those that have inspired and supported me on this journey of inclusiveness for all, I am very grateful to each and every one of you.

REFERENCES

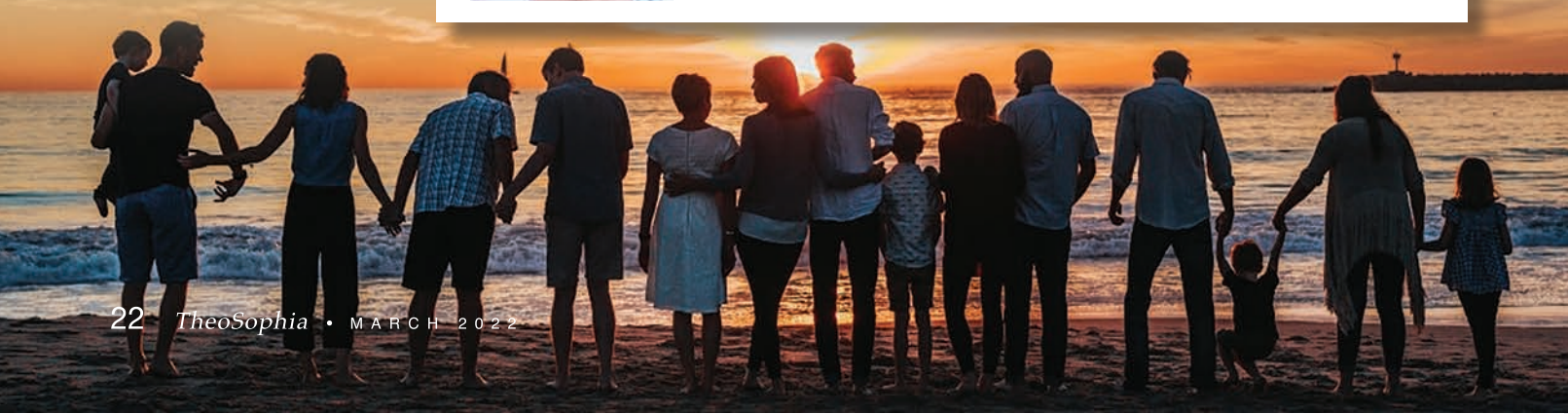
- ⁽¹⁾ Credit to the United Nations publication issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR): *Born Free and Equal* © 2019 United Nations. Second edition: HR/PUB/12/06/Rev.1
- ⁽²⁾ UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to the Human Rights Council, 7 March 2012. (Eighth Secretary-General of the United Nations from January 2007 to December 2016.)
- ⁽³⁾ Annie Besant



In making the necessary changes we bring The Society into the present day, assisting to reach out to a world in need.



Renée Sell, dedicated student of the Ancient Wisdom has been active in the Theosophical Society in various capacities over the years and is the National Vice-President of the New Zealand Section. Renée has also coordinated the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) in New Zealand since 2003, nurturing many projects through this avenue of service. Her key focus is applying the Ancient Wisdom teachings in her own life and enthusiastically encouraging others to do the same.



Vegetarians Today



From the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, Margaret Johns encourages us to meet the challenges ahead this year.

A second year with activities disrupted by lock-downs has now finished and we are into another new year. No doubt numerous opportunities lie ahead for us to learn from the seemingly constant challenges and changes we are all having to face. Interestingly, one of the few things that does remain under our control is the choice(s) we make regarding the food we eat.

The temptation to eat 'comfort food' is very strong in these challenging times and particularly when we take the time to relax and read a book or lounge by the pool or at the beach! Many of us make New Year resolutions regarding food and/or diet (which are so hard to keep), but it's definitely worth trying to boost one's immune system by eating healthily and sensibly. It's also much easier to form good habits by taking it one day at a time or even one meal at a time. You could even take on the NZ Vegetarian Society's *21-day plant-based challenge*. You can sign up at <https://www.vegetarian.org.nz/veg-living/21-day-plant-based-challenge> and receive daily recipes, inspiration and all the nutritional information you need to know.

Plants don't just supply nutrition for the body, they also supply medicine, oils, aromas, and juices for healing, renewing and

soothing the body and mind, to list but a few of the wonderful uses for plants. A lifetime studying them would not be sufficient. Anna Valentine, who supplies the delicious recipes for the NZVS quarterly magazine, also supplies information on using plants for all sorts of purposes round the house. Her website (<https://www.theveggietree.com/>) has some great immune boosting recipes on it.

The NZVS now has a bright, new, refreshed website (www.vegetarian.org.nz) so do take the time to have a look at it, there's bound to be something of interest for you. Members can now choose to be even more eco-friendly and view the quarterly magazine online instead of receiving it through the postal service. Make the most of the opportunities and challenges that are presented this year and turn them into positive advantages on your spiritual journey.

Here's a very easy, quick and nutritious lentil soup that's packed with protein, fibre and iron from our *Home Tried Recipes*.

LENTIL SOUP

- 2 Tbs oil
- 2 large onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1¼ cup split red lentils
- 1 litre water
- Juice of half a lemon (to taste)
- Salt
- Black pepper, freshly ground

1. Saute onions and garlic in vegetable oil.
2. Add cumin and stir for a minute.
3. Add water and lentils and simmer until lentils are mushy (20-30 minutes).
4. Stir briskly until soup is smooth.
5. Add lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste.

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





Carol Collier, new National Coordinator
for the Theosophical Order of Service, New Zealand,
wishes all happiness, health and peace for the year ahead.



Autumn will soon be fully upon us. As trees lose their leaves it is a reminder to let go of some old habits and life patterns. Using the seasons as a metaphor for life, autumn can bring us insight into letting go of that which no longer serves us, allowing space for new growth.

On behalf of all our TOS members and supporters in New Zealand, I wish to thank Renée Sell for the tremendous amount of work she has undertaken over the past 19 years in the role as TOSNZ National Co-ordinator. It is heartening to know that she will continue to be a very big part of the TOS team here in New Zealand, still working for the great cause. A beautiful link in the golden chain of love. Renée, you have left big footprints in the sand.

We have recently sent funds through to the TOS in Mumbai, India for the children that are sponsored from New Zealand and have received a special thank you from Freny Toddywalla to those that support the sponsorship program in India. We have much appreciation for Vicki and Sue and their coordinating the sponsorship program. A special thank you goes to Graham Eden who sends our funds overseas. We also have a short update on the child educational sponsorships in Pakistan.

Deep within our hearts, hope springs eternal as it is of spirit. Spirit or 'inflowing force' is always available to us if working from a centre of unity and love. This centre is our true home and available to each one of us. This brings me to the importance of our practice and taking the time each day to cultivate peace and stillness in our lives.

Thinking about a theme for this year, 'unity' keeps coming to mind. Unity is strength. Where there is teamwork and collaboration, wonderful things can happen. We invite TOSNZ supporters and friends to share their thoughts on 'unity' and what it means to them. Please contact me directly. Thanks go to Sushma Webber from Wellington who has written a few words below titled 'Silent Heroes'.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to fill the role of National Coordinator of The Theosophical Order of Service in New Zealand. It will be an honour to serve this great cause, which was founded by Annie Besant in 1908 and I look forward to working to help improve the lives of others. This work provides a source of unity beyond outward differences: 'theosophy in action'. There will be challenges, no doubt, but I know that I am not on my own. Individually we are one. Together we are the ocean.

TOS NZ FUNDRAISER

A beautiful framed painting has been donated by Elizabeth Sell to raise funds for the TOSNZ supported projects. As 2022

Convention could not go ahead as planned but will be online with *Theosophical Sundays* through to 10 April 2022, we decided to hold a silent auction with the picture going to the highest bidder. The picture is called 'Poppies'.

If you are interested in bidding for this picture, please send me an email through to tos@theosophy.org.nz with your name and the amount you would like to bid. Bidding will close on 09 April 2022. There is a reserve of \$200 and the highest bid over this will be accepted. Supporting this fundraiser is support for the various local and overseas TOS projects.



SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM MUMBAI, INDIA – TO THE NZ SPONSORS

We are truly beholden to all our NZ Sponsors for their overwhelming support to our TOS Sponsorship Project that helps educate poor and deserving students in India. It is only due to your precious and timely help that some of our students have been able to complete their basic School or College education. The parents of those students receiving help from NZ Sponsors have also conveyed their profound gratitude to all of you. We have been fortunate enough to have received your unstinting support for the past 16 years. We take this opportunity to thank our most devoted sponsors Sis. Vicki Jerome and late Bro. Reg Ford. We can say with conviction that it is with dear Sis. Vicki's conscientious efforts that we have been able to get more Sponsors from NZ. At present 25 students are being sponsored by benefactors from NZ who constitute our largest overseas donors.

May Almighty God bless you all with good health, happiness, peaceful and fruitful life with success in all your lofty endeavours. May the Great Ones grant you all many more opportunities to serve the poor and the needy and to bring a ray of hope and light in the lives of the

less fortunate ones. There is nothing greater in life than to bring a smile on the faces of those who are in trouble and those who have been dejected in life. With warm regards and affectionate greetings to your good self and all our valuable NZ Sponsors, from Parinaz, [her daughter] all our Committee members and self,

Yours in His Service,
Freny Toddywalla

TOS PAKISTAN EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM UPDATE:

From the latest TOS newsletter update: The TOS work, activities and projects mainly centre around delivering quality education, imparting excellence in academic subjects at the same time, developing compassionate skills, character and moral values in line with the philosophy of theosophy.

The Child Educational Sponsorship Program started as part of the work of 'Save the Children Fund', and was handed over to the TOS Pakistan when 'Save the Children' was to leave. Many hundreds of young girls and boys from primary school right up to university level have been helped through this program by providing partial amount of fees to be paid to their educational institutions. All of this has been possible due to the International and local donors' support and their generosity. There are over 30 children sponsored from donors through TOS New Zealand and TOS Pakistan are deeply grateful to them.

SILENT HEROES – by Sushma Webber

“Service alone makes the eye single, so that the whole body is full of light, and only those who serve are those who truly live” wrote Annie Besant in *The Theosophic Life*. In 1908, Annie Besant started an organisation whose mission is, ‘to unite all who love in the service of all that suffers’ known as The Theosophical Order of Service (TOS).

My first introduction to the TOS was in the 1980s when I attended an event at the Bangalore City Lodge where the local group made donations of wheelchairs, white canes, study materials for students, etc. Later in the 1990s when I worked in Adyar I came

across the work of the Madras (now Chennai) chapter of the TOS. I remember it was Mr V. Gopalan and Mr Harihararaghavan who had for several years kept its activities going, one of which was a free medical clinic on Sunday afternoons, which was run by a doctor who offered her services and medical advice for over 35 years (when I interviewed her, she was in her early 80s). It was the existence of this TOS group that helped organise the relief such as clothes, food and other amenities when the 2004 Tsunami hit the Tamil Nadu Coast and they were one of the first to arrive at Nagapattinam which bore the brunt of the disaster with a death toll of over 6,400 and tens of thousands displaced. The tsunami had occurred on the first day of the International TS Convention and members swung into action to help in every way possible.

There are many such examples in the history of the TOS of those who carry on the work silently and are available to pitch in during a time of crisis. These are the silent heroes who keep the flame of service burning to kindle it in every eager heart.

If you would like to make a donation or would like any information or to organise a TOS fundraising activity for your group or just have a chat about supporting some of the TOS projects, I would be happy to assist you in whatever way I could, just drop me a line at tos@theosophy.org.nz or contact me via phone.



TOS workers of 2003

To help contact:
CAROL COLLIER

Phone:
027 668 4554

or

Email:
tos@theosophy.org.nz

Please donate to help the work:

Name:..... Email:.....

Address:

Donations

- Donation for TOS General Projects \$.....
- NZ Kids Fund Project in the Hawke's Bay (new) \$.....
- NZ The Waikato Teen Parent Project (new) \$.....
- NZ The Waikato Women's Refuge (new) \$.....
- Empowerment of Women Project, India \$.....
- Individual child sponsorship \$150 per child India/Pakistan (circle preference) \$.....
- Pakistan Schools (Literacy Centres) support \$.....
- Golden Link College, Philippines \$.....
- Auckland City Mission Donation \$.....
- Direct credit to a/c 'TOS New Zealand'

Bank account number: 03-0104-0088756-03, e-mail tos@theosophy.org.nz

FROM THEOSCIENCE.ORG

RESEARCHES RELEVANT
TO THEOSOPHY

NEW RECOMMENDED BOOKS

THE PHYSICAL BENEFITS OF YOGA

Harvard Medical School 2020

A medical/scientific basis for claims related to the Theosophical recommended practices like hatha yoga, mindfulness and awareness. "Yoga promotes physical health thru better stress management or physical movements and postures ... Preliminary researches also show that yoga may help with migraines, osteoporosis, balance and mobility issues, multiple sclerosis, inflammatory bowel disease, fibromyalgia and ADHD."

Level: All public

MODIFIED GRAVITY

Baojiu Li & Kazuya Koyama, 2020 – World Scientific Books – ISBN 978-981-327-99-3

"Progresses and Outlook of Theories, Numerical techniques and Observational Facts. This book presents expert reviews on different topics in the field of modified gravity, which are then coordinated and organised in a self-consistent and self-contained manner. It is suitable for graduate students and researchers interested in the frontier research of gravity theories."

Level: Physics experts

WHERE PHYSICS WENT WRONG

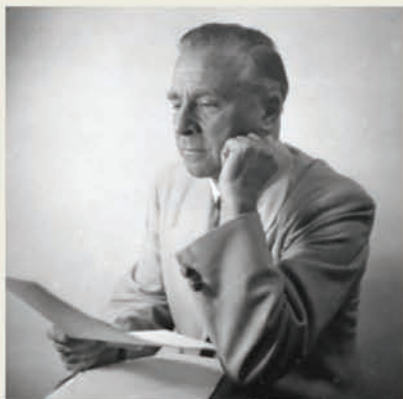
Bernard Lavenda, 2015 – World Scientific Books – ISBN 978-981-4632-92-8

"What has gone wrong with physics since Einstein's formulation of this theory of general relativity a century ago, i.e. inconsistencies and fallacies in the standard model of the big bang and the inflationary scenario which was supposed to have overcome those shortcomings, the evolution of string theory from a theory of strong interaction to a theory of gravitation and quantum mechanics which has not produced a single verifiable prediction..."

Level: Physics experts

Retrieved from website: Theoscience.org – New Recommended Books

The Geoffrey Hodson Library



Membership in the Theosophical Society in New Zealand includes library borrowing privileges (in person or by mail); however, members must register for this benefit with the library.

Non-members may register for library privileges for an annual fee of \$50.

Requests can be posted within New Zealand and must be returned at the borrower's cost.

To register or to borrow books:

call 09 523 1797 or preferable at the moment to email.

email

library@theosophy.org.nz

or visit the library in person.

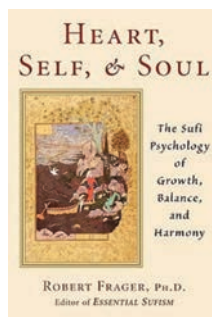
18 Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 1051

You can view the library catalogue at

<https://tsnz-library.theosophy.org.nz>

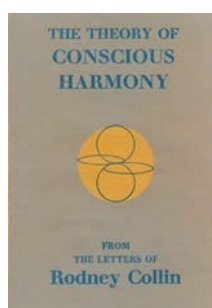
Harmony

A selection of titles available to borrow from the library:



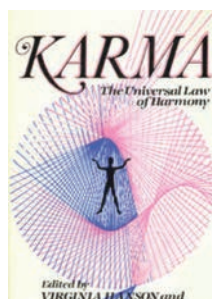
HEART, SELF AND SOUL: The Sufi Psychology of Growth, Balance, and Harmony
by Robert Frager

Full of stories, poetry, meditations, journaling exercises and colorful everyday examples, this book will open the heart, nourish the self and quicken the soul.



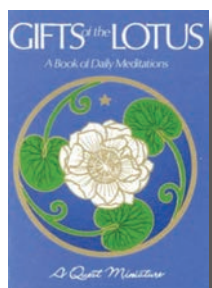
THE THEORY OF CONSCIOUS HARMONY
From The Letters of Rodney Collin

Selections based on the philosophies of Gurdjieff and Ouspensky discuss how to live daily life in spiritual manner.



KARMA: The Universal Law of Harmony
edited by Virginia Hanson and Rosemarie Stewart

This read is useful to both the beginner and the more experienced student, written by 14 long-time students of the subject.



GIFTS OF THE LOTUS: A Book of Daily Meditations
by Virginia Hanson

This book of meditative thoughts contains 31 thoughts of harmony, one for each day of the month.



HARMONIES OF HEAVEN AND EARTH
From Antiquity to the Avant-Garde
by Joscelyn Godwin

"The power of music is spiritual. It is for many people the principal point of access to a consciousness beyond that of ordinary life."

Initiates, Initiations and The Path

BIBLICAL ALLEGORIES UNVEILED

by Geoffrey Hodson

Found in the archives of The Theosophical Society in New Zealand Inc., after more than 40 years, a manuscript by the late writer and seer, Geoffrey Hodson, has been brought to light in an illuminating new book. He informs us that the Old Testament was authored mostly by Initiates from Mysteries of their day, from a blend of the old Chaldean and Egyptian Schools.

Geoffrey Hodson mentioned in his diary that he was assisted by a Master of the Wisdom in this extensive work revealing hidden interpretations in the Holy Bible. He affirms that this sacred book is the perennial story of the human spiritual journey. We discover that “Solomon’s temple is an allegory and symbol of the Mystery Tradition” itself and rediscover the “story of Joshua and its revelations about self-emancipation and spiritual illumination.” We read the story of Samson anew as “a description of the occult powers, training, tests, strain and final achievements of every Initiate into the Greater Mysteries.” These parables weave biblical events into the fascinating world of Initiates and Mystery School Initiations.

In inspired allegories, personas are attributes of humans and events occur within the human soul. Death in the Sacred Language can be interpreted as the descent of conscious life into a state of relative unconsciousness in dense material forms, the killing out of spiritual idealism in the mind and heart or transcendence of the illusion of self-separated individuality – frequently achieved through mortal agonies. King David’s own death indicates his attainment of this third state.

In Exodus we explore hidden meanings behind mere literal reading as Geoffrey Hodson summarises the allegorical story of Moses from the esoteric perspective.

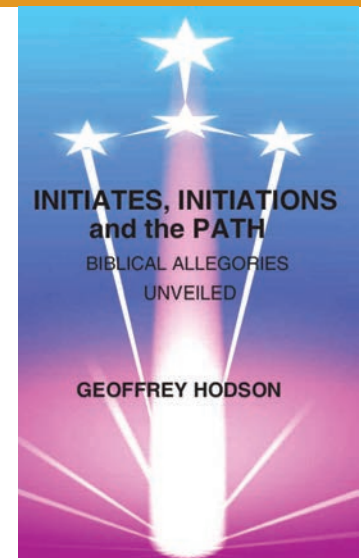
He explains “bondage to the flesh – Egypt – sublimation of emotion – the Red Sea – passage from the lower to the Higher Mind – the wilderness – and entry into super-mental states of awareness – perception of the phenomena upon the mount and alert stillness – standing obediently at the foot of the mount – are in fact the essentials to the attainment of the illumined state. Anyone who sets up these conditions within themselves, ascends – Moses-like – the mount, will hear the word of the Lord.”

Many details in the scriptures have hidden meanings unlocked for the Initiate through the guidance of the Hierophant, passed down by tradition through the ages. It is said there are seven meanings in sacred texts, each revealing further truths as the individual is capable of comprehending them. A simple example of such interpretation is put forth in this book relating to karma.

Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.

Exodus 34:7

Helping decipher the allegory, Geoffrey Hodson says of this passage, “to visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation would be a monstrous injustice, an iniquity of the Deity Itself. The term ‘Father’ has a special significance in the Sacred Language. It refers to the Spiritual Self of human beings. The term ‘children’ refers in its turn to the successive reincarnations in physical bodies of that Spiritual Self. In this sense, it is true to say that the iniquity of which the Ego in preceding bodies was



guilty will produce inevitable effects in later lives. These lives are in truth the children of the Spiritual Self being conditioned by its actions in preceding lives.”

This fascinating book reveals deeper truths in older Christian scriptures as it takes us through symbology used as code for its interpretation. Mention of the Old Testament may conjure up images of bloodthirsty tribes, a vengeful God Jehovah and outdated revelations. The author explains that while some of this violence undoubtedly did occur during ancient times, some of the arcane texts have been degraded through translation, later additions and unilluminated editing; therefore, many pearls of wisdom have been sorely diluted. However, much wisdom still remains awaiting realisation by those who seek it earnestly.

While some parts of Geoffrey Hodson’s book are challenging to assimilate such as stories and revelations of theosophical principles, it becomes more and more interesting and revealing on further reading. Stories and allegories can be retold and through this mechanism underlying truths shine clear as each is wrapped in new clothing or characters.

This tome is well worth reading. It has given cause to dust off more unused treasures and with new enthusiasm, explore hidden esoteric meanings concealed tantalisingly below the surface.

Reviewed by HPB Lodge members, TSNZ.

THE MAGIC OF MAKARASANA

THE YOGA POSTURE THAT WILL TRANSFORM YOUR LIFE

by Teresa Keast

Let crocodile magic change your life
and restore harmony, writes reviewer **Tim Wyatt**.

The world is awash with self-help books purporting to improve or transform our lives in various ways; some deeply insightful and others, mediocre and in some cases frankly, irrelevant.

Occasionally a really outstanding gem emerges and this new offering from Teresa Keast firmly falls into this special category. Clearly written, engaging and extremely easy to read, it offers deep, specific and uncomplicated insights into our inner bodily and psychological workings and a highly practical approach into improving wellbeing. More than that, it can be applied by just about everyone.

Drawn from Hindu philosophy and thriving on both sea and land, *Makara* is the sea-like crocodile creature guarding the gateways to places of spiritual worship and wisdom. The land represents our minds and the waters our emotions. *Makarasana* is a yoga technique designed to bridge the heart and mind in order to restore natural balance.

When we find ourselves blocked by negative emotions, these create barriers to the natural flow of subtle energies and this affects not only our vitality but our minds and bodies, too. These blockages play out as various mental and physical problems which can have a hugely detrimental effect on our lives.

Imbalances often lead to a bewildering array of negative feelings many of us regularly experience, such as feeling at odds with life, irrational anger, tension, resentment, frustration as well as over-reacting to other people and situations. They undermine our ability to deal with

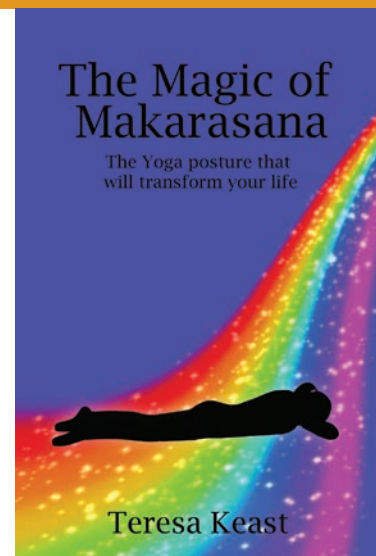
life's thorny issues. They can also manifest as unexplained aches and pains, fatigue, a loss of joy and a general feeling of purposelessness and malaise.

The Makarasana yoga healing technique is about restoring harmony. When successfully applied it prevents us from being trapped in the difficult emotional maelstrom which dominates and ruins so many lives. In a nutshell it involves accessing and applying intuitive wisdom.

Unlike some other methods, this technique is essentially very simple and easy to use. Requiring only between five and ten minutes a day it's suitable for people of all ages and backgrounds. It simply involves lying down on your front in a relaxed and comfortable 'crocodile' position which assists yogic deep breathing. This is breathing from deep in the diaphragm rather than just the chest. The breath itself is the key to opening blocked energy channels and relaxing the nervous system.

Tangible benefits of Makarasana are extensive but essentially hinge on restoring equilibrium, balance and vitality as well as achieving mindfulness, self-awareness, better sleep and improved sexual and creative energies. But this is far from an exhaustive list of the many positives this easy-to-use technique offers.

None of this is dry or dead theory but based on many years of real hard-earned experience by the author. Keast has spent her life exploring the Ageless Wisdom teachings along with 30 years working in stress management and the past 16 years teaching yoga, meditation as well as running self/spiritual development



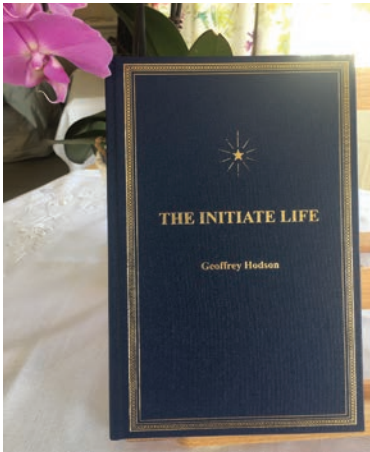
workshops and retreats. She has degrees in both physical education and nutrition.

As an added bonus Teresa Keast's work comes complete with background guided audio and video meditations to help newcomers to yoga techniques. Its real beauty lies not only in its straightforward approach but also that this is a technique which can be used by virtually anyone whatever age and state of health; from Olympic athletes to aging reviewers.

In a time of increasing complexity something as astonishingly simple as this makes a refreshing change and shows that we all have the inner resources to transform our lives if we choose to. I couldn't recommend Teresa Keast's book more highly.

The Magic of Makarasana: The Yoga posture that will transform your life is available as an easy to download eBook at \$5.99 at: <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/1112319>

Reviewer, Tim Wyatt is a U.K. journalist, writer, broadcaster, musician and actor with more than four decades of award-winning media experience. A keen esotericist and TS member, he runs the School of Applied Wisdom at Leeds lodge.



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;
postage overseas: NZD \$40

The Theosophical Publishing House, Auckland (2018).

Diversity of Opinion

A message from Helena Petrovna Blavatsky,
to the US convention in 1888...

Orthodoxy in Theosophy is a thing neither possible nor desirable. It is diversity of opinion, within certain limits, that keeps the Theosophical Society a living and healthy body ... Were it not also, for the existence of a large amount of uncertainty in the minds of students of Theosophy, such healthy divergencies would be impossible and the Society would degenerate into a sect, in which a narrow and stereotyped creed would take the place of the living and breathing spirit of Truth and an ever-growing Knowledge.

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 \$50.

Vasanta House Accommodation

CURRENTLY CLOSED DUE TO COVID RESTRICTIONS

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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Code	Description	Quantity	Code	Description	Quantity
<input type="checkbox"/>	A1 To live to benefit mankind – H.P. Blavatsky.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	B4 Peace – A. Besant.....	___
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<input type="checkbox"/>	A4 The first step – H.S. Olcott.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C2 The Dew is on the Lotus – Sir Edwin Arnold	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	A5 Only as we go out (blue font) – N. Sri Ram.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C3 The Golden Stairs – H. P. Blavatsky	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	B1 The World Mother – A. Besant.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C4 The Rainbow Bridge.....	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	B2 Only as we go out (white font) – N. Sri Ram.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/>	C5 Unity – A. Besant.....	___
<input type="checkbox"/>	B3 O Hidden Life – A. Besant	___			

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

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Send to: Theosophical Order of Service, c/o Renée Sell, HPB Lodge, Theosophical Society, 18 Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 1051. (Please refer to issue *TheoSophia* SEPTEMBER 2007, Vol. 68 No. 1 inside back cover for samples.)

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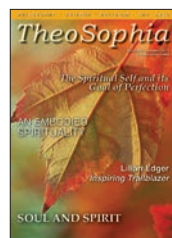
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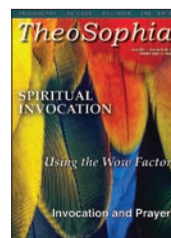
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Theosophy

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: Aldersgate Centre, rear entrance from Chester Street West, Christchurch
Public Talks: 1st Wednesday of month 7.30pm
Contact: theosophycanterbury@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/canterbury>

DUNEDIN

Venue: 469 Hillside Road, Caversham
Meetings: Wednesdays 7.30pm
Contact: Marie 027 499 1770 / 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
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/far-north>

HAMILTON

Venue: 73 Anglesea Street
Meetings: Sundays 7.30 pm
Contact: hamiltontheosophy@gmail.com
Website: <https://hamiltontheosophy.weebly.com>

HAWKE'S BAY

Venue: Cedric Alexander Hall, 5 Devonshire Place, Taradale, Napier
Meetings: 2nd & 4th Thursday 7.00 pm
Contact: Don Harrison 021 532 050 / hawkesbayts@gmail.com

NEW PLYMOUTH

Venue: 30 Hine Street, New Plymouth 4310
Meetings: Public - see newsletter on website
Members - 1st & 3rd Wednesdays 7.30pm
Contact: Jim Scrivener 021 251 1011 / tsnewplymouth@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/new-plymouth>

OREWA

Venue: 9E Forest Glen, Orewa 0931
Meetings: Varying
Contact: Heather Bell (09) 427 0149 / palumbo@xtra.co.nz
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/orewa>

PALMERSTON NORTH

Venue: 304 Church Street, Palmerston North Central 4410
Meetings: See website
Contact: Anthea Clement (06) 353 6221 or 027 240 2069 / pn@theosophy.nz
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/pn>

WELLINGTON

Venue: 19 Marion Street, Te Aro, Wellington 6011
Meetings: Public - Tuesdays 7-8pm
Members - Some Sundays 2-4pm (see programme)
Contact: Sushma Webber 022 626 8381 / tswlgtm@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/wellington>

WHANGANUI

Venue: Community Arts Centre, Taupo Quay
Meetings: Usually 2nd Sunday of month 2.00pm
Contact: Kirsty TXT to 021 212 3819 / theosophywhanganui@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/wanganui>

WHANGAREI

Venue: 110 Handforth Street, Onerahi, Whangarei
Meetings: 3rd Sunday of the month 11:00am
Contact: Paul Henderson (09) 436 2661 / mjccloss2014@gmail.com
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/whangarei>

STUDY CENTRES

DANNEVIRKE

Contact: Daphne Miller (06) 374 7492 / daphnemiller@slingshot.co.nz

INVERCARGILL

Contact: David Simpson (03) 213 0424

NELSON

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

TAKAKA

Venue: Members' homes
Meetings: Usually alternate Tuesdays
Contact: Murray Rogers 022 072 4569 / 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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THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND website: www.theosophy.nz/
VASANTA GARDEN SCHOOL website: www.vasantagardenschool.weebly.com

Please Note: Due to Covid Restrictions, branch meetings may be postponed



The Ancient Wisdom

Right thought is necessary to right conduct, right understanding to right living and the Divine Wisdom, whether called by its ancient Sanskrit name of *Brahma Vidyā* or its modern Greek name of *Theosophia*, Theosophy comes to the world as at once an adequate philosophy and an all-embracing belief and ethic.

It was once said of the Christian Scriptures by a devotee that they contained shallows in which a child could wade and depths in which a giant must swim. A similar statement might be made of Theosophy, for some of its teachings are so simple and so practical that any person of average intelligence can understand and follow them, while others are so lofty, so profound, that the ablest strains his intellect to contain them and sinks exhausted in the effort.

Annie Besant
1897

When I look inside and see that I am nothing, that is wisdom.
When I look outside and see that I am everything, that is love.
And between these two, my life flows.

From I Am That by Nisargadatta Maharaj
– Indian Guru 1897-1981



March 2022