

PHILOSOPHY · SCIENCE · RELIGION · THE ARTS

TheoSophia

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*SPIRITUALITY
AND RELIGION*

**Personalising
the Wisdom**

THE PATH

*Theosophy:
The Friend of
True Religion*

TheoSophia



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

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

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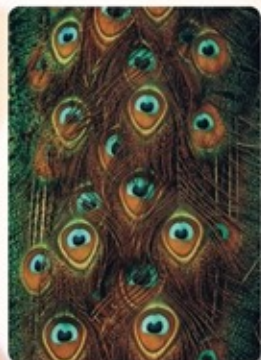
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THE MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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 Theosophical Society.



Cover:
Feathers
By Akshansh Singh
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TSNZ CONVENTION 2023

OUR JOURNEY

from Me to We, to the Oneness of All

12 - 17 JANUARY 2023

Assisting Branch: Whanganui

INTERNATIONAL GUEST SPEAKERS

Nancy Secrest



Visiting Guest Speaker

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

William Meader



Online Guest Speaker

William Meader has a reputation as a gifted, influential and respected teacher of the Ageless Wisdom. He is an international presenter on a wide variety of esoteric topics in the United States, Europe, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand where he works to assist people in the cultivation of their higher minds in order to better recognise the soul's guiding influence. He is the author of *Supernal Light* (2022) and *Shine Forth* (2004), as well as many articles. See www.emergentlight.com



Whanganui's central North Island location is within a three-hour drive from Wellington, Napier, Taupō and New Plymouth. Air Chathams flies between Auckland and Whanganui. The city has a blend of heritage architecture and modern creativity. The region is rich in history, culture and diverse natural environment.

See website: discoverwhanganui.nz

Nancy's Talks

THERE IS NO OTHER

Annie Besant, the second President of the Theosophical Society and the founder of the Theosophical Order of Service, said, "The spiritual man must lead a higher life than the life of altruism. He must lead the life of self-identification with all that lives and moves. There is no 'other' in this world; we are all one. Each is a separate form, but one Spirit moves and lives in all." Nancy's talk will discuss this concept while we explore – *Our Journey from Me to We, to the Oneness of All*.

IN THE SERVICE OF ALL

This presentation will give some of the history of the Theosophical Order of Service (TOS) and review how the TOS has and has not changed over the years, its purposes and activities. It includes an update of TOS projects around the world and discusses what service is and how we can best serve humankind, the animal kingdom and the earth itself.

William's Workshop

THE MASTER'S FOOTSTEPS

Initiation and the Pathway to Oneness: A one-day interactive workshop with online guest William Meader

Spiritual initiations are the benchmarks of development upon the ladder of evolution, and each can be viewed as a step on the pathway to Oneness. Every initiation indicates that the soul has taken a measure of control over some facet of the lower-self, the personality. They are known and proven markers of spiritual attainment, each representing an evolutionary footstep toward becoming a Master of Wisdom. Spiritual initiations therefore represent *The Master's Footsteps* pointing the way to enlightenment.

In this presentation, William Meader will closely consider the steps to be taken when on the *Path of Initiation*. He will deeply examine each of the five initiations and the changes in consciousness that they entail. The goal of this event is to deepen one's understanding of the ladder of evolution, and to become more aware of on which rung of that ladder he or she may be found.

Additional Topics to be Explored:

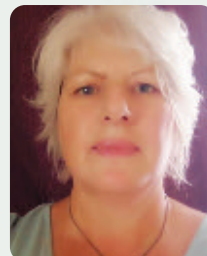
- The journey from individual to group consciousness, leading to Oneness
- Inwardly invoking a *point of tension* in support of initiation
- The nature of consciousness evidenced at each initiation
- Applying the *Rod of Initiation* upon the human causal body (soul vehicle)
- Methods designed to transform the personality in preparation for initiation.



NZTS SPEAKER
John Vorstermans



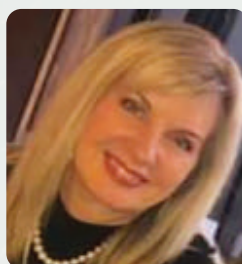
NZTS SPEAKER
Renée Sell



NZTS SPEAKER
Kirsty Morton



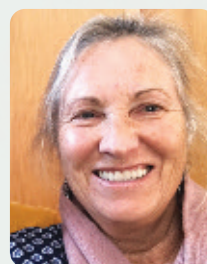
NZTS SPEAKER
Richard Sell



NZTS SPEAKER
Susanna Roskill



NZTS SPEAKER
Jim Scrivener



NZTS SPEAKER
Sue Harrison



LOCAL GUEST SPEAKER:
Claire McGrail is a practising
healer, musician and artist

INTRODUCTORY STUDY COURSE ON THEOSOPHY

An 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:

- Introduction to Theosophy and course overview
- Seven planes of consciousness
- Life after death
- Exploring reincarnation
- Karma
- Power of Thought
- Practical Theosophy – treading the spiritual path
- 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.

ONLINE WORKSHOP

Mastering the Transformative Power of Near-Death Experiences with Eben Alexander MD and Karen Newell

Saturday 10 September NZ Time: 9.30am – 11.30am

\$50 NZ Dollars per person to attend



Following on from two phenomenal Zoom Webinar sessions for TSNZ's wildly popular 'Online Theosophical Sundays' Science Series, Dr Eben Alexander returns with his life and business partner Karen Newell to run an online workshop. This will be held via Zoom and the link for this will be sent out once you have registered and your place is confirmed. **Registration at: www.theosophy.nz**

Around the world and over millennia, near-death experiences reveal the universality of a common spiritual realm. While there are differences based on cultural influence, reported similarities involve a movement from darkness to light, travel to another realm and contact with deceased loved ones.

Dr Eben Alexander's near-death experience in 2008 during a seven-day coma catalysed a complete shift in his formerly physicalist worldview. Coming close to death and surviving is a life-changing event for anyone. But for those who return with memories of a spiritual realm, profound transformation in attitudes, beliefs and values often occurs. Among these so-called 'after-effects' of near-death experiences are increased compassion for others, a sense of higher purpose, greater appreciation for life and losing any fear of death. Researchers explored the precise *cause* of these benefits. Touching some aspect of the spiritual realm seems significant. Dr Alexander believes that meditative and transcendental experiences can lead to comparable transformative effects.

Karen Newell, author and specialist in personal development has a diverse body of work founded on heart-centred consciousness. As an innovator in the emerging field of brainwave entrainment audio meditation, Karen empowers others in their journeys of self-discovery by demonstrating how to connect to inner guidance, achieve inspiration, improve wellness and develop intuition. She is co-founder of *Sacred Acoustics*, and co-author with Eben Alexander III, M.D. of *Living in a Mindful Universe*. www.sacredacoustics.com

SPIRITUALITY OR RELIGION?

Religion can be fused in some people's minds with spirituality, yet there is a difference. The *Theosophical Encyclopedia* says religion is 'A system of beliefs and actions which gives the members of that group an object for their worship and code of behaviour...' *Webster's Dictionary* and the *Oxford English Dictionary* include references to the service and worship of God, gods or the supernatural. Both agree that the word religion probably derives from Middle English, meaning to restrain, tie back or bind.

Spirituality is described by the *Encyclopedia* as '...a state of holiness or a life that reflects an awareness of the Spirit.' This is termed the mystical meaning of the word. The dictionaries define spirituality as being connected with the human spirit. But *Google* says: 'Spirituality is a broad concept with room for many perspectives. ...it includes a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves and typically involves a search for meaning in life. ...it is a universal human experience – something that touches us all.' I prefer this definition.

In this issue, writers on our theme include John Vorstermans (p.6), Tim Boyd (p.8), Vicente Hao Chin Jr (p.12), Henri Nouwen (p.15) and Michelle Osborne (p.16) plus books from the Geoffrey Hodson Library (p.23). David Wattam has written on clairvoyance (p.21) and intriguing books are reviewed by Jurij-Orest Tarnawski and Eric McGough. Read about the next TSNZ Convention (p.2) and book early. Also, an online workshop and study course are advertised on page 4.

May we all enjoy the renewal of spring and its force for positive change in the world and in our lives.

Pamela Zane

Editor

editor@theosophy.org.nz

REALMS OF NATURE

*Can you show love
in a test tube?
Create hate in a Petri dish?*

*Will scientists and engineers
economists or intellectuals
Ever match the wonder or
beauty of Nature?*

*This dichotomy between material science
and intuitive spirituality
need not exist.*

*Both are plains,
realms of nature
Each a part of
immense and minute creation.*

Clive Conland

DIARY DATES

2022

Sept 3-4	Immersion Weekend: <i>Exploring Theosophy</i>
Sept 10	Online Workshop with Eben Alexander MD and Karen Newell (see p.4)
Oct 2	New Plymouth Seminar

2023

January 12-17	National Convention in Whanganui
January 13	TSNZ AGM

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

FUTURE ISSUES 2022-2023

Date	Theme	Deadline
2022		
December	Theosophy in the World Today	1 October
2023		
March	Peace in a Time of Conflict	1 January
June	Wisdom and Discernment	1 April

Email: editor@theosophy.org.nz

New Zealand's National President of the Theosophical Society,
John Vorstermans, examines...



SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION

It sometimes come across the question: *Is Theosophy a religion, are we a church?* Looking at the meaning of 'religion', we find it refers to an exclusive set of beliefs. If you are a Christian, you cannot be a Muslim or Buddhist because their particular theologies are seen as different. In this sense, Theosophy is not a religion because members of the Theosophical Society can be from any religion, be they Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Zoroastrian or other. Each religion has its founder, whose message is the basis of the faith, such as the Buddha, Jesus, Zoroaster, each considered a personal saviour by their devotees. A Theosophist is encouraged to research religion (as well as philosophy and science) and through study, learn the underlying message taught by founders of all great religions, expressed in different ways, based on the culture of the region where the religion took root. H. P. Blavatsky, in exploring this question asserts:

"Theosophy is not a Religion" by no means excludes the fact that "Theosophy is Religion" itself. A Religion in the true and only correct sense, is a bond uniting men [and women] together – not a particular set of dogmas and beliefs. Now Religion, per se, in its widest meaning is that which binds not only all MEN [and WOMEN], but also all BEINGS and all things in the entire Universe into one grand whole. This is our theosophical definition of religion.¹

'Religion' is that which binds all together, which is something understood by Theosophists who see the common message and beauty in the core teachings of religions. In *The Key to Theosophy*, H. P. Blavatsky brings up this subject in speaking of the ancient Alexandrian theosophists. She says: "The chief aim of the Founders of the Eclectic Theosophical School was one of the three objects of its modern successor, the Theosophical Society, namely, to reconcile all religions, sects and nations under a common system of ethics, based on eternal verities."ⁱⁱ Further she speaks of Theosophy as the Wisdom-Religion, "... was ever one, and being the last word of possible human knowledge, was, therefore, carefully preserved. It preceded by long ages the Alexandrian theosophists, reached the modern, and will survive every other religion and philosophy ... Theosophy, as already said, is the WISDOM-RELIGION."ⁱⁱⁱ

As John Algeo put it in his article *Is Theosophy a Religion?* "Theosophy is not 'a religion', but is 'the Wisdom-Religion'." Understanding this Wisdom-Religion is the goal of the journey taken by the theosophist. It is not something defined, instead it is something to be experienced. Behind all the major religions, there are important ethical principles. H. P. Blavatsky emphasises the importance of ethics to be practised by a theosophist, for example, in the subtitle of *The Key to Theosophy: A Clear Exposition ... of the Ethics, Science, and Philosophy for the Study of which the Theosophical Society has been Founded*. The journey is intensely personal, of self-discovery, a going into one's heart that includes the essential steps of developing the universal ethics and values.

Evidence of the essential step to 'fundamental transformation' or 'a path of spiritual perfection' in Theosophy is outlined in the three well-known spiritual classics. These are *At the Feet of the Master*, *Light on the Path* and *The Voice of the Silence*. Meanwhile, the 18th century British writer, James Miller, wrote in his tragedy *Mahomet the Imposter*, "true Religion is always mild, propitious and humble; plays not the tyrant, plants no faith in blood, nor bears destruction on her chariot wheels; but stoops to polish, succour and redress, and builds her grandeur on the public good."

Some clues are revealed on the method of study by H. P. Blavatsky, "Practical Theosophy is not one Science, but embraces every science in life, moral and physical. It may, in short, be justly regarded as the universal 'coach', a tutor of world-wide knowledge and experience, and of an erudition which not only assists and guides his pupils toward a successful examination for every scientific or moral service in earthly life, but fits them for the lives to come, if those pupils will only study the universe and its mysteries within themselves, instead of studying them through the spectacles of orthodox science and religions."^{iv} Each religion has sprung from the Wisdom-Religion forming offshoots and branches based upon and often originating from some personal psychological experience. Each shoot started originally as a clear and unaltered stream of the Mother-Source and, over time, becomes polluted with human speculations and even inventions due to personal motives. Many of these religions,

or creeds, have been overlaid with the human element and become dogmatised, changing the original message so it is no longer recognisable. It is only by searching, digging deeply into the message of the founder of the religion concerned and then comparing it to the messages of others, such as Jesus, Buddha, that some glimpse of the Source can be found.

John Algeo explains, "Every human being is going through continual change – anatomically, emotionally, mentally, which we can see when we observe a person. Each of us is aware of those constant changes inside ourselves, and yet we are convinced that there is a core, an essence, that is 'us' and does not change. Changes are of the 'accidents', aspects that do not really matter. Our 'essence' continues."

Religions have 'accidents' too. And the accidents are the things that make one religion different from another. It is adherence to those accidents, rather than to the essence of religion that has produced violence, persecutions and wars. It was doubtless of those accidents that the Master KH was thinking when he commented on A.O. Hume's essay *God*, "I will point out the greatest, the chief cause of nearly two thirds of the evils that pursue humanity ever since that cause became a power. It is religion under whatever form and in whatsoever nation" (*Mahatma Letters*, pp.57/274). It is noteworthy that the Master alluded to the 'form' (or accidents) of religion, not to its essence.^v

To answer the question, Theosophy is not a religion, rather it is the essence of all religions. The Wisdom-Religion, when found through the practice of ethical living, will awaken our ears to the voice of Spirituality that is within us all.

ⁱ Published In *Lucifer*, Volume III, November 1888. H.P. Blavatsky.

ⁱⁱ <https://www.theosophical.org/files/resources/articles/IsTheosophyReligion.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ *The Key to Theosophy* – page 2 + 3

^{iv} *The Key to Theosophy* – page 7-8 and 13

^v Published In *Lucifer*, Volume III, November 1888, pg 5, H.P. Blavatsky.

<https://www.theosophical.org/files/resources/articles/IsTheosophyReligion.pdf>

Is Theosophy a Religion: <https://www.theosophy.world/resource/theosophy-religion-john-algeo>

..... ❖❖❖

IN RESPONSE TO TITUS STEENHUISEN'S LETTER TO THE PRESIDENT IN *THEOSOPHIA* JUNE 2022

Dear Titus

My understanding is that Buddhi and Christ are both synonyms for the Spiritual Soul which is a state of absolute knowing, to awaken, a conscious devoid of any thought or action. There is a good description here: <https://www.theosophy.world/encyclopedia/buddhi>

Karma is a self-correcting force which tries to ensure the universe stays in balance. It is sometimes considered a moral law. When we do something for personal gain an imbalance is created. When we act for the good of others no karma is created. Motive is generally the driving force for setting karma into action. Our body, emotions and minds are considered to be the result of past karma, so the way we think and feel is due to patterns of thought from past lives which return to us in subsequent lives.

Developing mindfulness, so we are aware of our thoughts, will show us thought patterns that are strong in our minds. There are many types of thoughts which pop into our minds. Initially, it is important to simply be aware of them. Once we are aware, we can choose to give it attention which invigorates the thought form or we can choose not to focus on it when it arises, move our attention elsewhere and the thought will gradually lose its strength. There are myriads of life in the unseen world around us which through certain practices, we become aware of. These are difficult to close off once we have opened ourselves up to them, if we have created a rip in our auric envelope. The practice of mindfulness and compassion are two good ways to help with this.



Personalizing The Wisdom *The Relevance Of Applied Theosophy*

Tim Boyd, The International President of the Theosophical Society, explores what is really important in life.

When the Theosophical Society was founded in 1875, much that we have come to take for granted as teachings of the Ageless Wisdom were utterly unknown in the Western world. The language to describe the inner life and the hidden side of Nature was ill-formed in the West. They had to develop a consistent means of expression in order to plant the seeds of these ideas for the benefit of future generations. We are that future generation, the ones who, simply by virtue of being born into the world today, have ready exposure to the ideas of karma, reincarnation and the various levels of the inner life. With the passing of time the task of rooting these ideas in human consciousness has been done. The priority of our time has changed. Our need is to understand how we can apply and internalize the teachings.

Wisdom is impersonal. Although it permeates all, it exceeds the level of the personality. In the Bible there is an expression: "God is no respecter of persons." (*Romans 2.5*) The personal aspect makes absolutely no difference to the wisdom. In much the same way, Theosophy, the Ageless Wisdom, is unchanged and unchanging regardless of whether there are theosophists or not. It is one of the many paradoxes of the spiritual life.

On the one hand there is wisdom, which is utterly impersonal, and on the other hand there is the human being, the person, with all of our limitations and strengths. When we find that the truths expressed in the Ageless Wisdom tradition have value, then we embark on what many describe as the spiritual path. We commit to an effort to understand and draw closer to these truths, to internalize and make them active in a manner specific to our personal lives.

We each have a personality with its own particular features and idiosyncrasies. Our bodies, senses, emotions, minds and thoughts are differently calibrated according to who we are. Some of us are more

emotionally active, others are more intellectually inclined and some are more physical. From the Ageless Wisdom perspective, one way the personality has been described is "the soul's toolbox." It is a set of tools the soul can utilize to make itself felt in the world. The idea of "Personalizing the Wisdom" comes down to this: How can this wisdom become something that is active within our lives?

Recently I had the thought that it would be a valuable exercise for me to put in writing, in the most concise form possible, what is my understanding of living this life. No extra words, as simple as I could make it. What is the meaning and direction of this process of living and how does it relate to principles of the Ageless Wisdom? Albert Einstein said: "We must make everything as simple as possible, but no simpler." We have to refine and express our comprehension of wisdom, but there is a limit. We need to be careful about oversimplification.

The Buddha, after his experience of enlightenment, spent the next 50 years of his life attempting to teach a path to end suffering and experience self-transformation. Over the course of his life, he presented profound teachings in many ways. Toward the end of his life, he simplified his teachings to just three things: ⁽¹⁾ do no harm, ⁽²⁾ do good, ⁽³⁾ purify your mind. Each one of them connects to a vast body of profound teachings. For our benefit, the Buddha, as all great teachers, made things "as simple as possible, but no simpler."

Although H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) could express herself in very expansive language, she was not immune to simplification. In her introduction to *The Secret Doctrine*, she refined her presentation to three points that were of the highest importance in her view: ⁽¹⁾ the Absolute, ⁽²⁾ the cycles that govern human life and are active in Nature, and ⁽³⁾ the obligatory pilgrimage of incarnation in which we are all engaged. In order to expand on those three things, the next thousand pages of *The Secret Doctrine* were written.

We can
choose,
and those
choices have
consequences

There is a quote from the *Mahatma Letters* that expresses what I would like to share with you: “Theosophy must be made practical and has therefore to be disencumbered of useless discussion.” It goes on to say that “It has to find objective expression in an all-embracing code of life thoroughly impregnated with its spirit ... of mutual tolerance, charity, and love.” The manner in which we approach our life, society, friends and community has to find an all-embracing expression that is not merely situational. This is the task before us. To the degree that we expose ourselves to this Ageless Wisdom, with time we find that our view of the world and ourselves changes. Self-transformation is a fundamental goal of this work. We have to keep in mind that whatever we see as true or real is partial, conditioned by our inherent limitations. It is the highest that we are capable of at the moment but there is always a deeper possibility. It is best seen as our most recent highest understanding but always there is that which lies beyond our field of vision.

In my effort to simplify my understanding of the Ageless Wisdom, I came up with some aphorisms of my own:

- (1) Only a few things truly matter.
- (2) It is a marathon, not a sprint.
- (3) The world and I are complex, but it is all really simple.
- (4) We can choose.
- (5) We will know.
- (6) There is only one.
- (7) No words.

Obviously, these need some expansion:

(1) Ralph Waldo Emerson, one of the great American transcendentalists said: “Society everywhere is in conspiracy against ... every one of its members. ... The virtue in most request is conformity. ... Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.” So, the safeguarding of the integrity of the mind is most important. Of the few things that truly matter, this is one of them.

There are numerous practices we are encouraged to utilize in order to protect the mind. One such tool is ‘mantra’. The literal

meaning of this word is ‘that which protects the mind’. This is worth some exploration. What is it about mantra that is protective of the mind? With a confused, deranged, or poorly functioning mind, our spiritual path and our path through daily life will be clouded. By focusing the mind’s energies on sound and elevated meaning in a powerful way, mantra protects the mind from itself – from its conditioned and uncontrolled habitual functioning.

In the little book *At the Feet of the Master*, J. Krishnamurti makes a statement about study. In the theosophical tradition we talk about a three-pronged approach to the spiritual life: study, meditation and service. He says: “Study first that which will most help you to help others.” So, what is it that matters in terms of our study? Within the Ageless Wisdom tradition, the information, knowledge and facts that are possible to obtain is limitless. How do we determine what will be most valuable? No matter how long we live, we have a very short time. So, we experiment to determine that which will most help others. That is one of the few things that really matters.

In many spiritual disciplines great emphasis is placed on using the short span of a lifetime well. Because there are so many avenues into which we can pour our time and energy, we have to develop a sense of what is most important – a sense of priorities. I have a number of friends who have had near-death experiences (NDEs). Although the experiences may be slightly different, what is true in every case is that having left this world of embodied existence, even for a brief while and returned, each one returns with a different sense of priorities – of what is actually important. These are things we have to examine for ourselves. Look, see, and determine, based on our living and inner experience, what are those “few things that truly matter?” That is my first aphorism.

(2) “It’s a marathon, not a sprint.” Even from the perspective of a single life, it is a *long* journey from infancy to old age. There is an occult expression by Ibn Arabi: “God [Consciousness] sleeps in the rock, dreams in the plant, stirs in

the animal, and awakens in the human.” This is the arc of the unfoldment of consciousness from the mineral realm to the human, and of course there is an endless hierarchy of consciousness far beyond humanity. From the Ageless Wisdom perspective this one life is like a pearl on a string of many such lives. The thread of continuous consciousness connecting them is termed the *sutrâtmâ* in Sanskrit. The possibility for unfoldment of consciousness is not something isolated to this moment; it takes place as a result of actions and thoughts we bring to every moment over a long series of lives – “a marathon, not a sprint.”

⁽³⁾ “The world and I are complex, but it is all really simple.” If we have had any exposure to the teachings of Theosophy, we come away with a sense that there is a great deal of complexity involved in these teachings. Just for starters, we speak of seven planes through which consciousness expresses. Add to that the thought that there are seven sub-planes for each of those seven planes.

This describes a multidimensional universe and us as multidimensional beings that live, grow, and exist within it. With all of these different currents as part of our makeup, complexity is the nature of things. But it is all really simple in this sense: All of these streams and activity are an expression of one consciousness – a universal consciousness, present throughout and expressing through its infinite forms. The interblending of numerous levels and forms of consciousness as the activity of one thing is not foreign to us, if we give it a little bit of thought. To take the analogy of our own body, within it there are countless processes going on simultaneously – the electrical processes with the nerves and the brain, the chemical, and the biological processes. There are trillions of cells that compose the human body, each one composed of an individual life with its own needs and form of expression. Yet they all come together to form this one thing that I call ‘me’, ‘I’. “This world and I are complex, but it is all really simple” when we dig down into it.

⁽⁴⁾ The fourth aphorism says: “We can choose.” So often we feel as if we are at the mercy of random forces of life. To a certain extent, of course we are. If we are standing outside and it starts to rain, we do not change the rain. Gravity is a law whether we like it, understand it, or not. If we step off from a bridge, we are going down. Those things we cannot control. What we *can* control is our mind, our response. I know people who, if it is raining outside on a given day, become unhappy, depressed, complain about the weather. “I can’t live my life today because it is cold, because it is raining”; this is common. There is an advice toward the end of the little book *The Idyll of the White Lotus* by Mabel Collins, which says: “Each person is their own absolute lawgiver, the dispenser of glory or gloom to their self; the decreer of their life, their reward, their punishment.” It describes an inner capacity always available when we are aware that we can choose. At the time I am writing this we are living in the midst of a global pandemic that has instilled fear, great uncertainty, even depression globally. This is the condition: there is a virus which poses a certain degree of threat, and has affected economies, populations and societies around the world. But does that mean that we have to succumb to being fearful? It does not. No matter how we live our life, a basic fact is that at some point it ends. So, we live our life with intelligence. We make choices that address our highest possibilities, recognizing that even “our highest” will elevate as time goes on. Focusing on the few things that matter, we cultivate our mind, and the capacity of our heart for a deepening level of compassion. Pandemic or not, we can focus on these things. We can choose, and those choices have consequences.

⁽⁵⁾ “We will know.” At the stage that we are in now, there are certain things that we do know; it is very little, but even during the course of one lifetime we are very aware that the scope of what we know and grow to understand has expanded enormously from the time that we were little children. The Bible says: “When I was a child I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became an adult, I put away childish things.” (1 *Corinthians* 13:11) Evolution, in

There are no words to describe what occurs within us when we actually experience these deep truths that we now study.

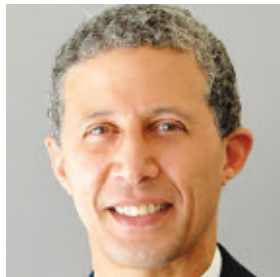
the spiritual sense, is what becomes one's focus. Evolution literally means 'unfoldment'. For example, if I had someone's photo and folded it many times, in the process of evolution/unfoldment I unfold one corner of it. From that unfolding I see an ear. For a time, the scope of my understanding of the reality of the person is only one ear. As more of the photo unfolds, we see more and more of the reality. Ultimately, we see it all. So "we will know" at some future point, if we persevere. Even if we do not persevere, this awareness will ultimately open as we are swept along with the evolving wave of humanity. Part of the choice that we make in exposing ourselves to Theosophy is to try to be in the forefront of this unfoldment, not just so that we can feel good about ourselves and have a good life and be happy, but because in this process of forced unfoldment, we are able to transmit something to humanity as a whole that is much needed in this world.

⁽⁶⁾ "There is only one." In the Three Objects of the TS, this Object is the first: "To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or color", or any of the separative elements that divide us. "Brotherhood" is another expression for oneness, unity, interdependence, and interconnection. These are words we use in our attempt to describe a fact of the universe.

The deepest problem that humanity faces, from the perspective of the Ageless Wisdom, HPB described as: "The heresy of separateness" – our deeply rooted conviction that each of us is fundamentally separate from everyone else and from all other things. Even though our deepest experiences of love and compassion demonstrate the underlying possibility of union, a separative view of life seems to be confirmed in our daily experience. The value of the previous aphorisms is that, together, they move us toward the experience of Oneness.

⁽⁷⁾ Finally: "No words." The *Tao-te-Ching* says: "The Tao (Way, Truth) that can be spoken, is not the eternal Tao." There are no words to describe what occurs within us when we actually experience these deep truths that we now study.

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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.

Renowned theosophical teacher and leader, **Vicente Hao Chin, Jr** describes the way toward spiritual initiation and realisation.

The Path

The Path is a term that refers to the time-tested pathway towards spiritual realisation. In theosophical literature it includes the narrow sense of the path towards spiritual initiation under the guidance of Masters of the Wisdom. While in many aspects, these two meanings of the Path overlap with one another, the present article shall outline their known features separately. These two need to be distinguished from each other:

1. The first one is a general path open to all. It is commonly referred to as the *mystical path*, which can be trodden by anyone who feels the inward call (the “divine discontent”). Its tenets are found in the mystical traditions of all major religions, and are included in what Aldous Huxley calls the *perennial philosophy*.
2. The second is a special case that endeavours to hasten the process by qualifying oneself for direct guidance by a genuine spiritual teacher. This Path is what may be considered as the *esoteric path*, a more difficult one fitted to those who have adequately prepared themselves.

THE MYSTIC

The path towards spirituality is well-known among all the religious traditions. It is known as mysticism. Thus, there is mysticism among the Christians (Carmelite, Trappist, etc.), Muslims (Sufism), Jews (Kabbalah), Buddhists (Zen, Theravada, Mahayana), Hindu (Yoga, Vedanta, and others). Examples of guidelines for such an inward path would be the *Sermon of the Mount* of the Christian gospels, *The Eightfold Path* of Buddhism, *The Paramitas* of Mahayana Buddhism, *The Eight Stages* of Raja Yoga.

Entry to the Path is always preceded by an inward “call” and a discontent of worldly things. Such a call is followed by an earnest search for the truth accompanied by sincere doubt and scepticism of outer forms of worship and belief. In one’s search, one finds various portals to the Path, and the individual must decide which gateway seems most suitable to oneself. Eventually, one discovers that the elements of various mysticisms are essentially identical. In fact, the Sufi teacher Hazrat Inayat Khan declares: “No one can be a mystic and call himself a Christian mystic, a Jewish mystic or a Mohammanan mystic. ... Mysticism is something which erases from one’s mind all idea of separateness, and if a person claims to be this mystic or that mystic he is not a mystic; he is only playing with a name” (*The Inner Life*). One of the most important elements of the mystic path is the purification of the self of its conditionings, desires and attachments. This stage involves pain and suffering. It is what John of the Cross calls the “dark night of the senses.” It necessitates what another mystical treatise calls a “cloud of forgetting” whereby the

individual gradually becomes detached from the things of the outer world (*Cloud of Unknowing*).

But the true motivation for treading the Path is not the rejection of the worldly life, but the inward call which is now being felt in the heart of the aspirant. A spiritual discipline is then adopted, which normally includes meditation and certain modes of living. It is this which eventually leads one to illumination or enlightenment. This in itself has various levels or stages that are recognized in different spiritual traditions of the world (for example, *hal* or *awhal* of the Sufis, the *jhanas* of Buddhism, the *mansions of the soul* of Teresa of Avila). These stages have their own subtle impurities that must be further cleansed, as in the Buddhist *jhanas* and the “dark night of the spirit” of John of the Cross. This ultimately leads to union with the Divine, the *Nirvana* of the Buddhist, the *moksha* (liberation) of the Hindus, and the *fana* (annihilation) of the Muslim Sufis.

THE ESOTERIC PATH

Spiritual traditions in the East and the West also speak of the razor-edge path whereby the development of the aspirant is accelerated through certain stringent rules and disciplines, and done under the guidance of a qualified Teacher. This path is not recommended to everyone as it requires certain qualities and preparedness not commonly attained by most aspirants. In the theosophical tradition it implies chelaship or discipleship to a Master of the Wisdom, which includes probation and trials.

The Greeks had openly distinguished between the exoteric and the esoteric path through the Lesser and Greater Mysteries that lasted for more than a thousand years. Christianity has such a tradition that began with Jesus himself when he said that he taught parables to the masses but gave the keys to mysteries only to the disciples. The Gnostics of the first few centuries of Christianity carried forward this tradition of a secret path. In the East it is known as *Gupta Vidya* (or secret knowledge). The Sufis have their *murshid* or teacher imparting the secret wisdom to the *mureed* (student).

In theosophical tradition, the same distinction is made between the open mystical path and the esoteric path. There are people who are good and spiritual. They can pursue liberation at their own pace and without any special disciplines imposed upon them. But to those who feel the need to enter the steeper path, then there is a way. During the lifetime of H.P. Blavatsky, the path of discipleship was directly available and many people formally applied for such chelaship. Many of them failed. Among those who were accepted (apart from Blavatsky), only one was known to have been accepted to join the Mahatmas in their ashram: Damodar Mavalankar.

The rules for such a path were laid down in many books, such as *Light on the Path*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *Instructions to the Esoteric School*, and many articles and letters, particularly the *Mahatma Letters* to A.P. Sinnett. In them, one point is repeatedly stressed:

One only inflexible rule has been ever binding upon the neophyte, as it is binding now – the complete subjugation of the lower nature by the higher. From the Vedas and Upanishads to the recently published *Light on the Path*, search as we may through the bibles of every race and cult, we find but one only way, – hard, painful, troublesome, by which man can gain the true spiritual insight. And how can it be otherwise since all religions and all philosophies are but the variants of the first teachings of the One Wisdom? (*Collected Writings of HPB (CW) 6:31*)

The following are some excerpts on qualifications needed for treading the Path:

... the first conditions required to reach it are an absolute disinterestedness, a boundless devotion to the welfare of others, and a complete indifference to the world and its opinions. In order to make the first step on that ideal path, the motive must be absolutely pure; not an unworthy thought must attract the eyes from the end in view, not a doubt or hesitation shackle the feet. (CW 11:135)

... the qualifications expected in a “regular chela” are:


1. Perfect physical health.
2. Absolute mental and physical purity.
3. Unselfishness of purpose; universal charity; pity for all animate beings.
4. Truthfulness and unswerving faith in the laws of Karma.
5. A courage undaunted in the support of truth, even in the face of peril to life.
6. An intuitive perception of one’s being the vehicle of the manifested divine Atman (spirit).
7. Calm indifference for, but a just appreciation of, everything that constitutes the objective and transitory world.
8. Blessings of both parents and their permission to become an Upasana (chela); and
9. Celibacy, and freedom from any obligatory duty. (CW 8: 294)

In H.P. Blavatsky’s *The Voice of the Silence* she also wrote of the open path and the secret path. The open path, she says, is the “way to selfish bliss.” It earns liberation for oneself. The “secret path” is one of renunciation and compassion: “to forego eternal bliss for Self, to help on man’s salvation. To reach Nirvana’s bliss, but to renounce it, is the supreme, the final step – the highest on Renunciation’s Path. Know, O Disciple, this is the Secret PATH” (VS, 145). It is the “Doctrine of the Heart” as opposed to the “Doctrine of the Eye.”

An aspirant who applies for discipleship will be accepted on probation. Afterwards they may be admitted to the four initiations that leads to *Arhatship*. These are: *Srotapatti* (one who has entered the stream), *Sakridagamin* (one who will return but once), *Anagamin* (one who will no longer return), and the *Arhat*, one who has attained Nirvana.

From *Ageless Wisdom* Chapter 7, compiled for *Introductory Theosophy*, reprinted here with kind permission of the author.





Vicente (Vic) Hao Chin Jr is an acclaimed international theosophical leader, speaker, educationalist and writer. He is the past President of the Theosophical Society in the Philippines as well as the Indo-Pacific Federation of the TS. Vic is the author of *The Process of Self-Transformation* and has compiled and edited the chronological edition of *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*. He is Editor-in-Chief of the *Theosophical Digest* and Associate Editor of the *Theosophical Encyclopedia*. Vic is President of Golden Link College, a theosophical school in the Philippines, envisioning the integration of self-transformation and academic learning, which he initiated and established in 2002.



Know Yourself

This meditation and quote from internationally acclaimed theologian and inspiring writer, **Henri Nouwen** are part of his legacy and worthy of reflection.

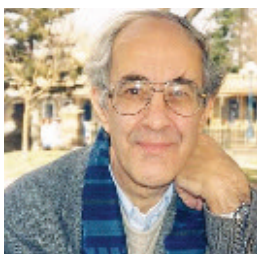
There can hardly be a better image of caring than that of the artist who brings new life to people by his honest and fearless self-portrait. Rembrandt painted his 63 self-portraits not just as “a model for studies in expression” but as a “search for the spiritual through the channel of his innermost personality.” Rembrandt felt that he had to enter into his own self, into his dark cellars as well as into his light rooms, if he really wanted to penetrate the mystery of man’s interiority.

Rembrandt realised that what is most personal is most universal. While growing in age he was more and more able to touch the core of the human experience, in which individuals in their misery can recognise themselves and find “courage and new youth.” We will never be able to really care if we are not willing to paint and repaint constantly our self-portrait, not as a morbid self-preoccupation, but as a service to those who are searching for some light in the midst of the darkness.

DAILY MEDITATION | JUNE 27, 2022

Nouwen also wrote several essays on the necessity of peace-making. This was in line with his conviction of the oneness of all peoples. He said:

To pray, that is, to listen to the voice of the One who calls us the “beloved,” is to learn that that voice excludes no one. Where I dwell, God dwells with me and where God dwells with me I find all my sisters and brothers. And so intimacy with God and solidarity with all people are two aspects of dwelling in the present moment that can never be separated.



Henri Nouwen (1932 – 1996) was a Dutch Catholic priest, professor, writer and theologian. His interests were rooted primarily in psychology,

pastoral ministry, spirituality, social justice and community. Nouwen was heavily influenced by the work of Anton Boisen, Thomas Merton, Rembrandt, Vincent van Gogh, and Jean Vanier. After teaching at the University of Notre Dame, Yale Divinity School and Harvard Divinity School, Nouwen went on to work with individuals with intellectual disabilities at the L’Arche Daybreak community.



Michelle Osborne delves into the core of theosophy
and what that means to her...

The Friend of True Religion

When considering the nature of the relationship between Theosophy and religion, it is helpful to examine the original purpose of the formation of the Theosophical Society and the corresponding ideals that it sought to embody as an organisation. While it was initially proposed by the founders to be a society for the investigation of religion and science, it was more specifically to be “the friend of true religion”¹ and to be firmly opposed to scientific materialism.

What was meant by this? The Preamble of 1875 contains clear acknowledgement of a Supreme Power and demonstrates an inner, spiritual intention from the outset. At the same time, however, it states that there were to be no dogmas to enforce and no creed to disseminate, the only axiom being the omnipotence of truth. This was expressed some five years later in the motto of the Society, *There is no Religion Higher than Truth*.

Religion, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (HPB) observed, had been “cursed with the intellectual extinguishers known as dogmatic creeds”² and plagued by blind faith. Any set of beliefs laid down by a religious authority as irrefutably

true was firmly rejected, as it would suppress enquiry and encourage narrow-mindedness. Indeed, freedom of thought was regarded as the *raison d’être* of the Theosophical Society. What was needed, it was said, was genuine, sincere searchers after truth.

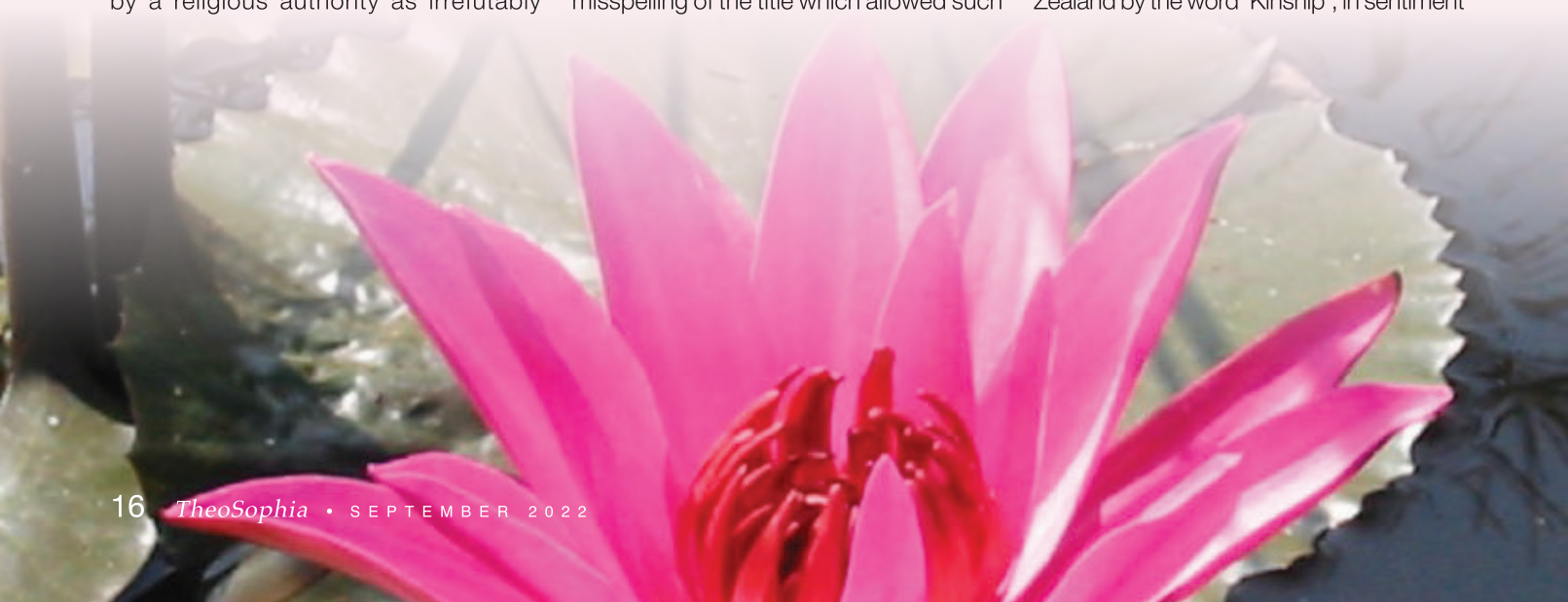
Yet on the other hand, strong caution regarding religious orthodoxy was not to be mistaken for atheism. HPB stated with equal clarity that every religion is divine in origin and that Theosophy denied deity “no more than it does the sun.”³ Nor did the challenge to religious conventions signify agnosticism. It was held that it was not only possible for the divine to be a known fact from an inner, spiritual point of view, but also that it was inevitable in the evolutionary scheme of things.

The Theosophical approach to religion has therefore at times been a vexed subject. When texts on Theosophy first began to appear in England, it was confused with Buddhism, especially with the publication of A.P. Sinnett’s book in 1883, entitled *Esoteric Buddhism*. In the introduction to her magnum opus *The Secret Doctrine* HPB points out that it was merely the misspelling of the title which allowed such

confusion to arise, *Buddhism* being a reference to Wisdom or Knowledge.

Further, in response to the mistaken impression that Theosophy was a new ‘sect’, HPB unequivocally declared that Theosophy is not a religion, but *is* Religion itself and the inheritance of all nations the world over. As ancient wisdom, Theosophy was demonstrated to be the essence of all religions merging back into their original element. This has more recently been summarised as “the Wisdom-Religion at the heart of all religions, found when all the encrustations, misinterpretations and superstitions are put away.”⁴

Theosophy thus reconciles the world’s religions; it does not dismiss them for their superficialities. The hand of friendship is extended to their common truth. HPB accordingly describes true religion as a bond which unites us and, even more, as a bond which binds all beings and all things in our entire Universe into one grand whole.⁵ In 1881, the overarching cause of unity was expressed as “Universal Brotherhood” in the first of the Theosophical Society’s Objects and though recently substituted in New Zealand by the word ‘Kinship’, in sentiment



We must cherish life whatever its form...

Brotherhood without distinctions remains the leavening power of the Society today.

Further enquiry into the meaning of unity implied in the First Object suggests why this is so. From an inner perspective it has a perennially relevant and sacred quality, one which is far from ordinary. Annie Besant, President of the Theosophical Society from 1907 until 1933, explained that the reason this object especially, must be accepted by all prospective members is because it is so conducive to the development of our higher natures. To live it perfectly would be “to eradicate all stain of separateness and to let the pure shining of the Self irradiate us, as a light through flawless glass.”⁶

Theosophy, also known in Sanskrit as *Brahma Vidyā* or Divine Wisdom, is therefore wisdom unvitiated, i.e. pure and uncorrupted, by worldly desires and aims and full of divine possibility. Yet it mostly eludes us. While unconditional love may be the fountainhead from which all religions spring, it is a rare mind which has no prejudice or barrier of any kind.

Nonetheless, there is within each of us the possibility of looking at everything in a new way, inspired by the spirit that transcends every partial view.⁷ Even the smallest of efforts to live a spiritually attentive and less self-centred existence will have a revitalising effect. When the inner, altruistic message of Theosophy is begun to be realised and lived, divisions everywhere will gradually cease.

Religion in its true sense has been further stated as “a recollection and a deep awareness of life being an indivisible whole.”⁸ This is where Theosophy and true religion meet. We must cherish life whatever its form, for we are all from the same divine source and all have the same divine goal.

...keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit.⁹

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Michelle Osborne joined the Theosophical Society's Dunedin Lodge in 1978 while an Anthropology student at Otago University and joined HPB Lodge on settling in Auckland in 1983. The inner, altruistic message of Unity which is unique to the Society has always inspired her. Through this message, she writes, “We can change our whole attitude to the people around us, especially those in our families and in our Lodges, working with them and helping each other in a kindly and mutually uplifting way. A reverent attitude may also be extended to all life, whatever its form.”

A Key to Your Inner World

By taking time each day, we can discover ways to live more harmonious lives, claims theosophist, **Barry Bowden**.

In the world of many people, each is different in many different ways – internally and externally. Some people seem more intellectually oriented, focussed on thoughts and reasoning. Others more creative, focussed on and sensitive to feelings. Yet others are action oriented, the direction of their action determined by thoughts or feelings – whichever is more dominant. These three modalities reflect the three streams of human evolution.

If we are honest with ourselves most of us would acknowledge that we would like to change ourselves, to live a more harmonious life; but our actions let us down. People say one thing but often do something entirely different – not necessarily because they are dishonest but more often because we act with a lack of awareness. We are often out of tune with ourselves or at least part of ourselves.

We want to live in a peaceful world yet we ourselves lack peace. Our domination by emotions like anxiety, annoyance and worry demonstrate that peace and harmony have not yet found a place to live within us. Analysing our emotions will not lead us to freedom, but understanding the impulses that drive our actions will reveal a great deal about our inner world. How often do we jump up to do something without thinking? This is an impulse. The earlier we go back in evolution the more impulse driven we were. The animal kingdom is almost completely impulse driven – except for the angelic kingdom's guidance and welfare. Each time an impulse comes we need to be aware of it. If we follow impulses, they will continue to control us, and we will continue to wonder why we end up doing what we do not wish to do. If we emphasised awareness, rather than

focussing so much on thoughts, we could learn more quickly.

I have done this myself, for months and it showed the dramas within; being aware of them gives you choice in action. Often when I went to get something to eat, I became aware it was an impulse. The real intense desire was to get up and do something without a clear objective. This is impulse!

Austrian occultist and social reformer, Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925) said in his book, *The Philosophy of Freedom*, "If I have an impulse and I follow it, my freedom is an illusion!" With this awareness, we find many mysteries of life within ourselves and the world. Ponder this for it has the power to transform your life.

When we are born and for our formative years, the conscious mind is barely awake – if it were awake, our memories of the day of birth would still be fresh in our minds. However, our reactions began forming then and the first seven to nine years are critical in establishing emotional memory. As a result, we have emotional memory which works completely differently from mental memory. Initial reactions form trigger points that we will refer to in later life. They are called reactions.

A song or smell can trigger emotional memories, and vividly take us back to an earlier time in our life, with the full sensation of that time. This is something that the memory of the mind lacks.

Our emotions are the seat of reactions in life, so we need to learn how to feel how we are, without attachment, simply feel, without the mind getting in the way.

Much later, will and wisdom begin to drive actions, after we have worked our way through the vast underground network which is the basis for many actions. It is where our fear to live and die comes from as well as numerous other restrictive emotions. Our wish to change will remain forever thwarted, if we rely on thoughts. Thought is only one small part of the equation

of wisdom, so to leave actions to be guided by thought means feeling good for a day or two before our actions revert to instinctual patterns. To change our actions, we need to take time to listen to, or more correctly, feel, exactly what we are feeling without analysis – this means spending time alone.

Many years ago, scholar, Enrich Pfeiffer asked Rudolf Steiner, “Why is it that the spiritual impulse is so weak in the human being today? People often try for many years with no real obvious results.” Steiner answered, “The plant of today lacks the nutrition to connect thought with will.”

How could this have anything to do with us? Occultism has the answer. If we look at a chart of the planes of existence, we see the Physical reflected in the highest principle of this current cycle of evolution of Atma or Spiritual will. On the physical level, the plant is supposed to have nutrition capable of energising a part of the Etheric body into action. The two lower aspects of the Etheric guide all of the blood, digestion and elimination in the physical body. So, perhaps it is worth our while to investigate nutrition a little more than we do. Geoffrey Hodson said the first step to Self-realisation is a perfectly healthy physical body.

We are so busy looking for the brief enjoyment of the outside world, as it calls to us ceaselessly through the illusion of the mind, that we miss the inner symphony of life that is playing all the time. What this really means is that we rob ourselves of lasting inner joy by choices made every minute. The choice is to live in the moment.

It is possible to think that living in the moment is simply forgetting about the future and past and being aware of what is around us. However, this is only partially true. Really living in the present moment means that we are able to integrate the future and the past, by not allowing our consciousness to be moved from where we are to a place of illusion. It is an illusion because we leave the present moment and visit the past or future. You can observe this easily for yourself and when you do, it becomes real. By proving it, observing it, realising it, you come to know it from the inside out. Do not misunderstand how

powerful this is. Rudolf Steiner said,

You have done more for your real spiritual development if you have succeeded in transforming a single deep-rooted trait, than if you have acquired unlimited external knowledge.

Becoming aware of a trait is the first step in transforming it. The next step is to be quietly with yourself and allow yourself to feel it. Take away all resistance to the unpleasant or pleasant feelings, without words or analysis and all the ‘hows’ that flow from that.

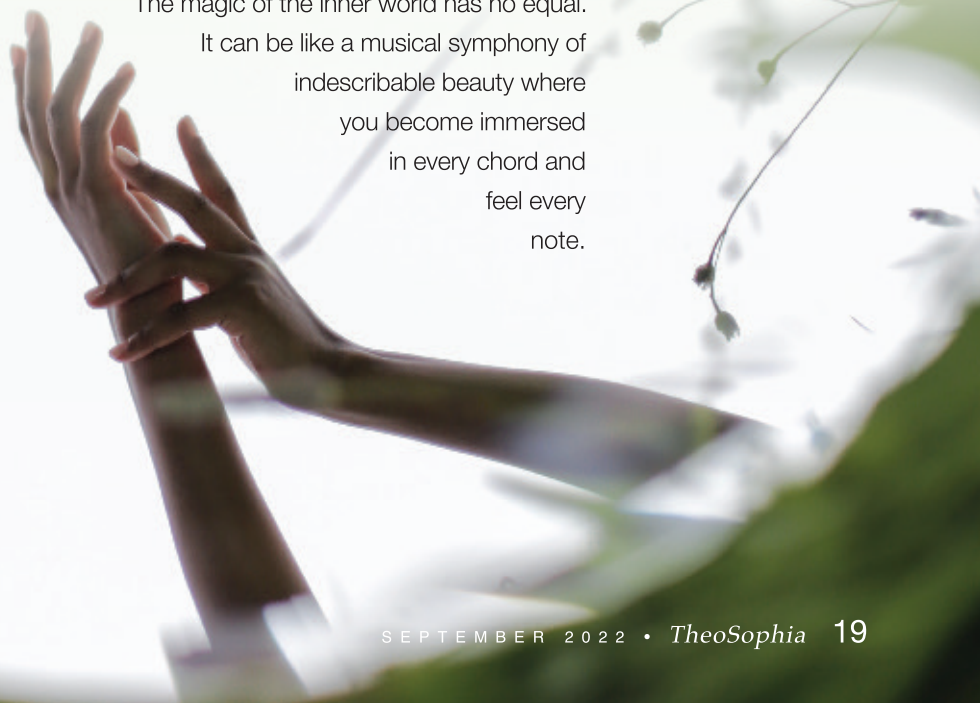
We need to take time for ourselves, for meditation, contemplation. It is easy to say that we do not have the time or that we already do this but it is just not working. If that is our thinking, we must be honest and acknowledge that what we are really saying is that “I’m not important enough.” This is the truth of the matter, because even five minutes a day is 1,000 times better than none. Five minutes a day is better than 30-60 minutes once a week. Five minutes can grow and ultimately transform your life.

Slowly the drivers of our life show themselves again. While seeing them does not stop them, it brings understanding to our life, and meaning can follow. We have all of the secrets of the mystery of life within us, waiting for us. All we need to do, is do – not think, which can derail our positive actions. The doing comes from will and when we trust to act with thought-free awareness, we begin to access the Higher Mind. This is the path of inner and world peace: stopping the struggle that rages within us, with understanding.

The magic of the inner world has no equal.

It can be like a musical symphony of
indescribable beauty where
you become immersed
in every chord and
feel every
note.

...living in
the present
moment
means that
we are able to
integrate the
future and the
past...



In the silence of our intuition, the wisdom of the Divine Mind can come to us and speak...

You begin to realise your inner world is with you all the time – a core of indescribable Sacred Silence, surrounding you, interpenetrating you and others. We waste our time with small things that are at best a distraction, while the inner world waits for us to enter, waits to impart understanding and embody wisdom in action.

In the silence of our intuition, the wisdom of the Divine Mind can come to us and speak, yet everything is understood. We begin to feel and know, through the universe and ourselves in this space, that we are affecting everyone on the planet and why for the first time we can understand nature, listening to her silent voice. The famous writer, thinker and statesman, Johann Goethe (1749-1832) said that nature speaks to us constantly but betrays none of her secrets. All this then, becomes a key to your Inner Life.



Barry Bowden having farmed most of his life, changed to organics and later to Steiner's methods – in partnership with nature. Barry is an avid reader of classical Theosophy, learning lengthy tracts by heart for his own enjoyment – and that of others. He has practised what he read and finds Theosophy transformational. A National Lecturer for the TS in Australia, Barry started a TS group in Toowoomba, held a School of Theosophy in Perth and is a much-appreciated speaker in New Zealand.



David Wattam describes his own experience of an unusual phenomenon.

What possibilities could there be if we were all able to hear sounds that are usually vibrating in a way that we cannot register with our physical ears and if we could see vibrations not discernible to our eyes?

Vibrations produce in us the sensation which we call light. Light issues from an object or is reflected from an object and we 'see' it. Our hearing abilities function because certain physical attributes we possess can respond to vibrations within a limited range, and so we hear sounds. What possibilities could there be if we were able to hear sounds that are usually vibrating in a way that we cannot register with our physical equipment, and if we could see what is not visible because the vibrations are not discernible? We have within us and around us an etheric field which draws energy from the sun and the earth.

Some people called 'sensitives' see and hear more subtle sounds that are indiscernible to others; dreams can appear to convey messages and sometimes a compelling force may direct them into action. Some sensitive people can perceive or experience insight by, for example, holding an object and experiencing an impression of something relevant to a previous possessor of the object. I was enthused by the writings of Damodar, Olcott and Leadbeater in Theosophical Society literature. They gave examples of their many personal experiences and were persistent in applying spiritual principles to their lives.

During your present life you are responsible for building the 'being' – you – who is a temporary grouping of five aggregates: a collection of physical and mental characteristics or forces that constitute your personal *khandas*, a Pali word or *skandas*, a Sanskrit word. Planes or spheres of consciousness above the etheric are the astral, a much looser arrangement of particles. However, the astral body does have constant association with the physical body. All physical matter has astral matter incorporated within it and there are sub-planes of denser astral matter. The physical

body of humans and animals has a dense astral counterpart and a looser astral mist surrounding it. Commentators say that this astral aura is constantly changing according to thoughts and emotions of the recipient. No part of the astral body is permanently connected to any part of the physical body.

The *chakras* are centres of force – some people call them psychic or sacred centres. There are seven major centres spread throughout the physical body, according to Indian tradition, or six major ones according to Chinese tradition. These centres correspond to the seven colours and notes of the musical scale. As people evolve and these centres are awakened, the astral body gains the power to interpret vibrations that were not discernible previously. The chakras are entry points that allow the higher planes to impact on the astral body. There is an inrush of a primary force, that enlivens the astral matter. The capability of the astral body to respond to a larger range of vibrations becomes aroused and comprehension is increased. The vortices may be glowing or pulsating with light, resulting in providing the ego with additional perception, or the movement of the vortex may be very sluggish and the corresponding light very dim. The complete astral body is continually passing through the chakras in stages.

In time I became aware that everything has an aura, even the sunset. Complementary colours to the ones seen with ordinary vision appeared when I consciously attuned my thinking, although occasionally the colours appeared unexpectedly without prompting. I have read that the mental plane – that can be thought of as a separate plane – does not rely on vibrations. It is said to be a dimension where anything anywhere is instantly able to be seen and be known. There are teachings in the eastern occult traditions that group this mental dimension of emotion and thought together and use the term *Kama-Manas*, meaning ‘desire mind.’ Above this combined aspect they refer to a level of pure thought as the *Manasic* plane. These descriptions are used to understand what is an amazing

system of nature that is intertwined and interdependent, just as radio waves are.

Beyond these there is the *Buddhic* plane, where vibrations are not present. This is the plane of the true ego, often referred to as the Divine spark that becomes individualised as it descends into incarnation and becomes a soul, a personality. When the time arrives to depart the physical body, it discards irrelevant aspects and retains only the ‘spiritual’ portion to include in the *buddhi*.

Regular meditation practice stimulates the opening of the chakras. C.W. Leadbeater describes in his book, *How Theosophy Came to Me*, how his chakras were opened to allow the *kundalini* energy to flow and promote the natural flow of his inner qualities. He said he had no clairvoyant attributes previously. In another book, *The Inner Life*, he states that “physical meditation is not for the ego, but for the training of the various vehicles to be a channel for the ego... we shall become.” The effort to succeed in this must come from the individual. Patience and constant persistence are necessary. It may take years to achieve obvious progress, but progress is being made. TRY.

REFERENCES:

Leadbeater; *Clairvoyance*;
The Theosophical Publishing House.

W.E. Butler; *How to Read the Aura*;
The Aquarian Press.

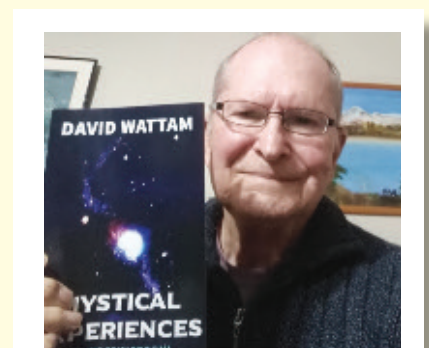
Leadbeater; *Dreams*;
Theosophical Publishing House.

Leadbeater; *The Inner Life*;
Theosophical Publishing House.



“...physical meditation is not for the ego, but for the training of the various vehicles to be a channel for the ego... we shall become.”

C.W. Leadbeater



David Wattam's varied career included running coffee bars, KFCs, pizza stores and an Italian restaurant, before becoming a driving licence testing officer. He lives in Auckland and has a son and grand-children. David has written the book, *Mystical Experiences: A Memoir of My Spiritual Unfoldment* where he describes his gradual awakening to his inner spiritual potential. The book draws on diaries that David kept for over 25 years.

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.

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

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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>

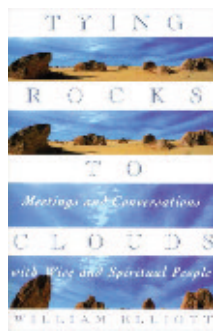
Spirituality and Religion

A selection of titles available to borrow from the library:



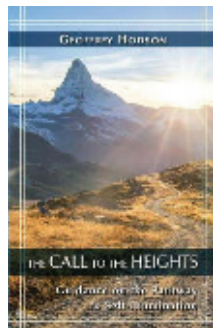
GROWING INTO GOD: A beginner's guide to Christian mysticism
by John R. Mabry

Many of us have had a taste of the experience of God; here we learn how to let the experience grow and deepen and affect our lives.



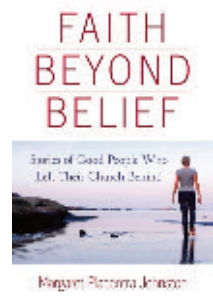
TYING ROCKS TO CLOUDS: Meetings and conversations with wise and spiritual people
by William Elliott

Elliott travelled the globe to meet the world's foremost spiritual figures and directly find out their answers to the fundamental questions of existence: The people he met represent every major religious tradition.



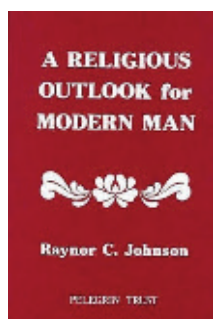
THE CALL TO THE HEIGHTS
by Geoffrey Hodson

More than 25 people testified to having seen and/or "... conceived, written, and published as an offering to those who are experiencing an inward longing for spiritual light and truth" ... *Geoffrey Hodson*



FAITH BEYOND BELIEF: Stories of good people who left their church behind
by Margaret Placentra Johnston

This book gives us a good way to understand those who have rejected their own church but are still engaged in a spiritual search beyond the conventional language and categories that left them feeling empty.

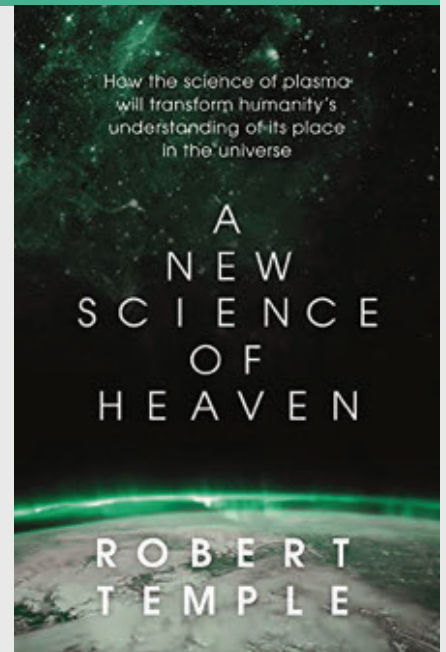


A RELIGIOUS OUTLOOK FOR MODERN MAN
by Raynor C. Johnson

The author says, "I have formed the conviction that certain basic things in religion are true, important and relevant to life... (and) the essence of religion is something to be experienced in living rather than something to be believed."

Akaroa based Jurij-Orest Tarnawskj reviews a new book and contributes his thoughts on the subject.

A NEW SCIENCE OF HEAVEN



A *New Science of Heaven*, Robert Temple's new book, has a most significant and potent title. This is enhanced by the sub-title: *How the science of plasma will transform humanity's understanding of its place in the universe.*

"Heaven" is essentially equated to his "place in the universe." A plasmoid is an individuated unity relating to the totality of existence. Is this alluding to a transpersonal consciousness; a soul in existence in a larger field? Plasma being 99.9% of the substance of the Universe, the need to relate energy/consciousness to this context becomes obvious.

A solar energy outburst from the sun involves plasma/light/sound as a spiral 'Birkland-current' and reaches all planets of our Solar system. Various oscillations/vibrations/sounds convey a transformative pattern/structure/form. This matrix of energies is both qualitative and informational. I want to stress in the flow of energy is INFORMATION to potentially transform LIFE! This quote from *Education in the New Age* (page 19) by Alice A. Bailey seems very appropriate to this discussion.

The 'substance of the plan'... "It might be of value here if I clarified my use of the words 'higher ego.' As you know, if you have read *A Treatise on the Seven Rays*, Vols. I and II (Esoteric Psychology), the soul is an aspect of the divine energy in time and space. We are told that the Solar Logos circumscribed for His use and for the meeting of His desire, a certain measure of the substance of space and informed it with His life and consciousness. He did this for His good purposes and in conformity with His self-realised plan and intent. Thus, He submitted Himself to limitation. The human monad followed the same procedure and – in time and space – limited itself in a similar manner. On the physical plane and in the physical body, this phenomenal and transient entity controls its phenomenal appearance through the two aspects of life and consciousness. The life principle – the flow of divine energy through all forms – is temporarily seated in the heart, while the consciousness principle, the soul of all things, is located (temporarily as far

as the form nature of a particular human unit is concerned) within the brain. As again you know, the life principle controls the mechanism through the medium of the blood stream, for 'the blood is the life,' and uses the heart as its central organ; whilst the consciousness principle uses the nervous system as its instrument, with the intricate extensions of the organ of sensitivity, the spinal column."

The *Gayatri-Mantram* strongly comes to mind! The key concept to engage is that there is a continuum of FLOW of Livingness. There is a choice to enter into the streams, strands and currents within these fields of Plasma. As the complexity of context pertaining to plasma is revealed in this book, do the newer terms actually coincide with the earlier understanding related to the "Vitalist-substance" Aether and the Esoteric framework of Alice A. Bailey? The affirmative 'Yes' is a distinct possibility! Interestingly Robert Temple mentions a burst of light at conception and release (transition/death) inferring "continuity of consciousness." Yes, the existence of a Soul as a Plasma-structure is now becoming affirmed. Another way of expressing this 'Soul' is calling it the middle-principle of consciousness between Spirit/Matter. Continuity of individuated consciousness is the persistence of the soul.

Simultaneously with the reading of Robert's new book my investigations into the research of Nikolai A. Kozyrev has deepened my grasp of Torsion/Scalar waves and their influence upon concepts such as 'Time' and 'Space'. Nikolai's experiences in incarceration underpin his "revelations." Mystical unfoldment and intuitive functioning were evident as he was the only one, in the original group of scientists jailed, that survived. He saw his "revelations" as postulates that would be verified through observations over time. He was able to create an energy (plasma/torsion field), "a rainbow bridge of consciousness (*antahkarana*)" linking to higher realms of aether/plasma. This is soul-consciousness acting through the will or intention to create a relationship between the soul-infused personality and the

intuitive, *buddhic* functioning. Nikolai's ideas also have pertinence to Robert's research; this I may later attempt to elucidate.

The true comprehension of these latter two concepts of Time/Space has been partially revealed by a deeper study of *Through the Curtain* by Viola Petitt Neal and Shafica Karagulla. My understanding, garnered from Viola and Alice, pertains to both the di-electric and electric forms of energy. This is also being elaborated in a developing article which may become part of an emerging book. Viola's writing correlates seamlessly with the book by Alice A. Bailey... *A Treatise On The Seven Rays*. These two sources of esoteric writings are now evidently being supported by the emerging alternate Science which is challenging the mainstream, established science paradigms. Robert's writing is about this "emerging alternate Science"; hence its importance. His circle of friends includes many scientists such as David Bohm and researchers. This intimate relationship has made him privy to much that knits or weaves his book together. Robert is also a collector of books and articles. His thorough examination of resources relates threads of knowing that would elude many. He is definitely a spider at the centre of his web of "relationships" untangling a web of deceit.

Robert Temple's book is centred upon the acceptance that PLASMA as the fourth state of matter composes 99.9% of the substance of our universe. The inclusion of all matter as a small "precipitation" from plasma is possible and alternatively the human is also composed of "plasma" aspects which relate to their present "magnetic/electric" aspects. Yes, "Birkland Currents" are in our solar system; within the vastness of space and within the human form.

I need to state that I have some training in aesthetic expression as a sculpture/art teacher and the esoteric through Trans-Himalayan Wisdom Teachings by Alice A. Bailey but I have little formal science training. Yet my curiosity about sound, sacred geometry and the creative process is strong. This Taurean questing for truth, comprehension and the aesthetics of design compels the path that is trodden. My synthesis approach needs much more refinement and development but I am writing to highly

recommend Robert Temple's book as being a crucial scientific statement that is bringing unity between the metaphysical/physical and the spiritual/materialistic.

Please consider this extract that I happen to be reading just now from *Annie Besant: An Autobiography* (2nd Edition 1893 Page 241): "After studying with H. P. Blavatsky, Annie moved from being a Materialist/Atheist towards a spiritual viewpoint..." This is what humanity is presently being challenged to do. Robert Temple's book, *A New Science of Heaven* somehow also invites this transition to happen now. But more than this, Annie's words could be easily transposed and re-written by Robert within the "Plasma-Context."

For what is man in the light of Theosophy? He is a spiritual intelligence, eternal and uncreate, treading a vast cycle of human experience, born and reborn on earth millennium after millennium, evolving slowly into the ideal man. He is not the product of matter, but is encased in matter, and the forms of matter with which he clothes himself are of his own making. For the intelligence and will of man are creative forces – not creative ex nihilo, but creative as is the brain of the painter – and these forces are exercised by man in every act and thought. Thus, he is ever creating round him thought-forms, moulding subtlest matter into shape by these energies, forms which persist as tangible realities when the body of the thinker has long gone back to earth and air and water. When the time for rebirth into this earth-life comes for the soul these thought-forms, its own progeny, help to form the tenuous model into which the molecules of physical matter are builded for the making of the body, and matter is thus moulded for the new body in which the soul is to dwell, on the lines laid down by the intelligent and volitional life of the previous, or of many previous, incarnations. So does each man create for himself in verity the form wherein he functions, and what he is in his present is the inevitable outcome of his own creative energies in his past.

This is such an exciting time in all our lives as we accept the challenges and create the new transformed Earth Community.



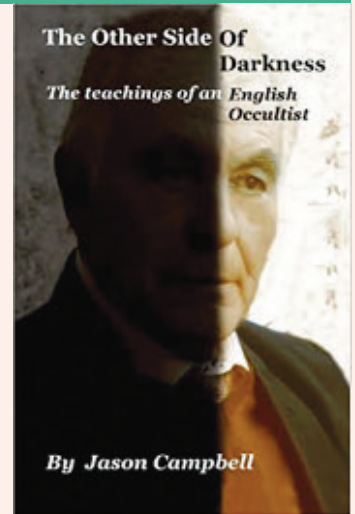
Jurij-Orest Tarnawskj lives at Akaroa's Southern Lights Centre where he is a trustee, teacher and caretaker. He has a Master's Degree in Esoteric Psychology and a long association with the Theosophical Society in Australia and New Zealand.

THE OTHER SIDE OF DARKNESS

The teachings of an English Occultist

by Jason Campbell

A book review from Eric McGough, Past-President of the English Theosophical Society.



A friend recommended this book to me because he knew that I had been an avid reader of Carlos Castaneda's books in the 1970s. I read the book and loved every word.

The author, Jason Campbell, writes about how he met his teacher and underwent an apprenticeship with him starting in 1972. This is a fascinating account, told in the first person with endearing honesty and humility. We do not often have access to the training of apprentices in the occult tradition and this is one of the best that I have ever read.

The Other Side of Darkness is full of occult/theosophical teachings as well as experiences involving elementals, ghosts, poltergeist, and etheric and astral travel. This is a wonderful book about the author's experiences during an apprenticeship with an English occultist. I could not put the book down and actually read it twice; as did several members of the English TS. I think it deserves a wider readership especially within the theosophical family, as it reaches effortlessly into the heart of what we study in our theosophical learning. It is delivered unassumingly with candour and takes the reader into that rare and precious relationship between master and pupil.

Jason is not computer savvy and has no idea how to publicise his book – his publisher's role is solely to get material into print. I think that is a shame because the book is very readable and really useful for all seekers, particularly theosophists.

I highly recommend this superb book. It will inspire, fascinate, instruct and delight in equal measure. Because of the pandemic, it has not reached the book shops yet. I got it from Amazon searching for "Jason Campbell *The Other Side*".

THE OTHER SIDE OF DARKNESS The teachings of an English Occultist

by Jason Campbell

ISBN-13: 979-8507481361

Theosophical Digest



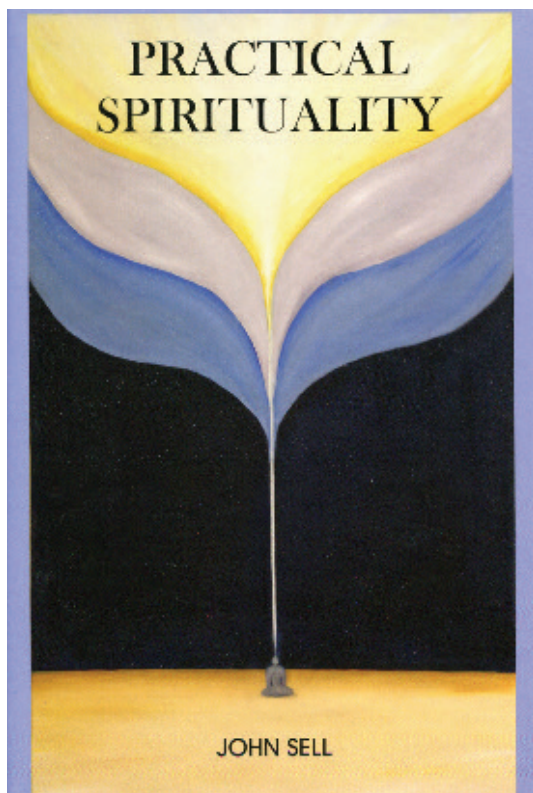
The *Theosophical Digest* is a quarterly magazine which condenses wholesome articles on meditation, comparative religion, Ancient Wisdom, art of living, health, science, theosophy, spirituality, philosophy and more.

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 thedigests@gmail.com or post a note to Theosophical Digest, Box 183, Kaeo 0448 or phone Maureen on 09 405 1653.

PRACTICAL SPIRITUALITY Selected Works of John Sell



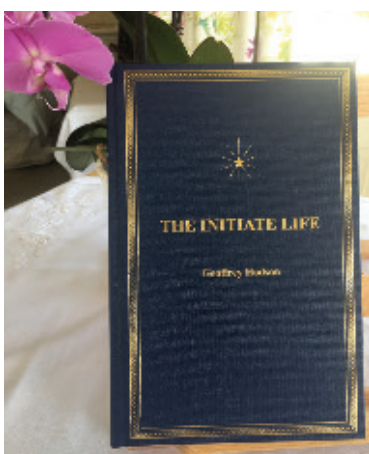
Two of John Sell's qualities that come through this book are his sincerity and his ability to engage the reader... This is evident in every chapter, providing uplifting support as the reader delves into what are often difficult and complex issues on the path to self-understanding and personal transformation.

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

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

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

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



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).



Carol Collier, National Coordinator

for the Theosophical Order of Service, New Zealand,
wishes you a bright, warm and beautiful Spring.



Spring, a lovely reminder of how beautiful change can truly be, is a time for rebirth, renewal, more sunshine and warmer temperatures. Let us welcome the Spring and all that it brings.

*“Turn your face to the sun and your shadow will fall behind you.”
– Maori proverb.*

We are excited to learn that International Secretary of the TOS, Nancy Secrest, will be an international guest speaker at the next TSNZ Convention. We are looking forward to welcoming Nancy back to New Zealand.

UNITY – TOS THEME FOR THE YEAR

TOS supporter and friend, Barry Bowden, has offered the following contribution for our TOS theme:

“It is that existence is ONE THING, not any collection of things linked together. Fundamentally there is ONE BEING. The BEING has two aspects, positive and negative. The positive is Spirit or CONSCIOUSNESS. The negative is SUBSTANCE, the subject of consciousness. This Being is absolute. There is nothing outside it. It is ALL-BEING. It is indivisible!” Thus wrote Helena Blavatsky. If we lived with the temporary self as all that is, we know what the world would look like – just look out your window now, where money has become the God to many people. Distrust of others’ motives is commonplace, and division has spread among the people of our communities. The animals are seen as things to be used, bred in cruelty to serve the brutal desires of humans. ... The whole of nature is seen as a resource, even among spiritual communities. I wonder if we lived with a sense of unity, would we trust our brothers and sisters as we could feel their sorrows and joys? ... Kindness would be the currency of the people... safe in the knowledge that we are free from pain, mistrust and heartache. Animals would know us as their friends... Fear would leave them as it would us. We would live in harmony with Mother Earth. We would know the subtler worlds and the beings existing in them. We would know that we still must grow, but now the other person’s problems are more important than our own. Which world do you live in?

TOS FUNDRAISERS

RAFFLE: TOS supporter Barbara Zanarb has made two beautiful pet blankets and generously donated these to raffle. All proceeds go to the Golden Link College in the Philippines. Tickets are \$5 each.

AUCTION: Further to the silent auction, winner, Paul Henderson, received Elizabeth Sell’s beautiful painting *Poppies*. Thank you, Paul for your most generous bid. Proceeds have been donated to the Ukraine Fundraiser.

POEMS OF CONTEMPLATION has arrived. This book of poems by Elizabeth and John Sell, with artwork by Elizabeth, is offered for purchase. Funds raised will go to TOS NZ Projects. Purchase price is \$30, please see donation slip at the bottom of page 29.

TOS HAWKE’S BAY PROJECT

A special project run by Sue and the Team at the Hawke’s Bay branch to provide funds to buy a motorbike for a Bali group called *Helping Hands across the Sands*. They distribute food to a village and care for Negar Orphanage and rescue home for battered children. The bike is used for supplies, school trips and doctor visits. The following message was received from Ellen: “I want to say thank you so much for the donation to buy a second-hand motorbike, in good condition. We use the motorbike for school, and to do the groceries, it really helps us in our daily life. We are grateful for your donation. We pray and hope for you, all the best. May God always bless you all.”

TSNZ/TOSNZ FUNDRAISER WORKING WITH TOS HUNGARY FOR REFUGEES OF UKRAINE

A very big ‘Thank you’ goes to all those who generously donated to this cause. An amazing \$21,070 was collected by July. An update has been received from Adrienne Nagyiday, General Secretary of the TS in Hungary and member of the TOS Board:

We have been supporting Ukrainian refugees to the best of our ability. This international TOS help from many countries is a great support. 625 thousand Ukrainian refugees have since arrived in Hungary. Most of them continued to travel somewhere after a short stay here, but approximately 20-25% of them remain – Mostly women and children. So far, we have donated durable food, medicine and toiletries through various religious charities and volunteer organisations. In the centre (which is our apartment) of the TS we received families fleeing for 1 or 2 nights. We have recently been in contact with Migration Aid, who have rented a workers’ hostel (300 people) which is maintained exclusively by 40 volunteers and donations only. At their request, we purchased equipment for a playroom, garden tent and a children’s sandpit for a garden stay... [we transformed] the accommodation into a permanent

accommodation for those who stay here. They asked for help. For example, they need cabinets. So in the following, our plan is to use such durable tools, e.g. help them with the donation of furniture and the equipment needed to educate the children. We are grateful for all the support.

Dear Renée and Carol and all TOS supporters in the geographical distance far but lovingly close to New Zealand. Your brotherly love is amazing. I greet you from Budapest with a grateful heart and love!

URGENT PLEA RECEIVED FROM TS IN THE UKRAINE

Nancy Secrest has forwarded an urgent plea for help from Svitlana from the TS in Ukraine. If you wish to support them, please send funds to the NZ TOS Bank Account in the Donations section, your name, and Ukraine as reference.



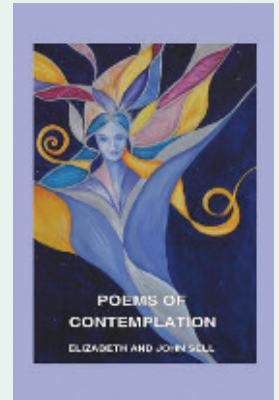
John Vorstermans and Renée Sell with Whangarei's Paul Henderson who won Elizabeth Sell's painting *Poppies*.



Beautiful dog and cat blankets, made by TOS supporter Barbara Zanarb.



Bali based *Helping Hands Across the Sands* workers with the motorbike funded by TOS Hawke's Bay.



Poems of Contemplation by Elizabeth and John Sell.

No soul that aspires can ever fail to rise; no heart that loves can ever be abandoned. Difficulties exist only that in overcoming them we may grow strong, and they who have suffered are able to save.
Annie Besant



To help contact:
CAROL COLLIER

Phone:
027 668 4554

or
 Email:
tos@theosophy.org.nz

Please donate to help the work:

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- NZ Kids Fund Project in the Hawke's Bay* \$.....
- NZ The Waikato Teen Parent Project* \$.....
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- Individual child sponsorship \$150 per child India/Pakistan (circle preference)* \$.....
- Pakistan Schools (Literacy Centres) support ongoing* \$.....
- Golden Link College, Philippines* \$.....
- Poems of Contemplation* \$.....
- Direct credit to a/c 'TOS New Zealand'*

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

Vegetarians Today



From the New Zealand Vegetarian Society, **Margaret Johns** has some great ideas for Spring!

Spring! Even though the timing of the seasons is changing as the world moves on and changes, Spring heralds the start of new life after the cold winter months, a time for spring-cleaning, new habits, new thinking, new ways of eating perhaps? People ask “what is a vegetarian/vegan diet?” It is sustenance and nutrition for the body, necessary for a healthy vehicle for the spirit; but it’s more than that. It is consciously choosing to eat health-giving foods that cause as little harm to other sentient beings as possible.

The last few months have been busy ones for NZVS staff and volunteers. This year’s Think Kind competition, launched in May, is a competition open to all students from year 0 to 13 and aims to get students thinking about being kind – to animals, our planet and each other. Students can choose any project, such as an essay, short film, poster/mural, scratch coding project, speech, dance, school fundraiser or a petition, as long as the topic relates to being kind to animals (and how this helps animals and the environment). More information is available on the NZVS website along with last year’s finalists and their entries.

The Vegetarian Approved and Vegan Certified programmes run by the NZVS continue to expand and there is plenty of choice available now for people wanting a quick and easy ‘instant’ veg-n option to help with meal preparation. A list of the approved and certified products can be found on the NZVS website.

On food: Members of the NZVS joined the Taiwanese Women’s

Association of New Zealand for their annual AGM and sustainability event held on 3rd July. This includes a special vegetarian dinner organised by TWANZ to raise funds for the NZVS. As Julia Clements, President of NZVS said, “Yet again the TWANZ outdid themselves with an amazing sustainability evening. The vegetarian food prepared by their volunteers was very tasty and beautifully presented. Their volunteers also do a fantastic service helping out in the community in so many different areas and we are very appreciative of their help in fundraising for us.”

“Take the first step in faith. You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.” I recently came across this quote from Martin Luther King which can apply to many areas of life, including starting on a plant-based diet! So, with World Vegetarian Day coming up on 1st October and World Vegan Day on 1st November, why not arrange your own veg-n feast? Plan a special vegetarian lunch or dinner and invite friends and neighbours to join you in celebrating the day. Or just challenge yourself to increase your plant-based meals. There are plenty of delicious recipes available from the NZVS website (www.vegetarian.org.nz) and there is also the NZVS 21-Day Plant Based Challenge which not only gives you recipes but also nutritional and other support over the 21 days of the challenge.

Here’s a nice simple but tasty cutlet recipe to try:

LENTIL CUTLETS

25g margarine/oil/butter

1 tablespoon wholemeal flour

½ cup plant-based milk

1 400g can lentils OR 1½ cups cooked brown lentils

4 tablespoons breadcrumbs

1 small onion, chopped

1 tablespoon parsley, chopped

3 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

Seasoning

½ cup walnuts, chopped

Breadcrumbs to coat and oil to fry in.



1. Make a roux by heating the oil in a saucepan. Mix in flour, stir and cook 2 minutes. When flour is coming away from the edges of the saucepan, gradually add milk and bring to boil, then simmer and stir until it thickens.

2. In a bowl combine the cooked lentils, the roux and remaining ingredients. Note that the Sanitarium can of lentils is already flavoured. If using fresh lentils add seasoning and a little soy sauce. Cover bowl and stand aside for at least one hour to enhance flavour and firm up mixture. Shape into patties or cutlets, dip in breadcrumbs. Heat oil in frying pan and brown the patties.

3. Serve with vegetarian gravy, potatoes baked in their jackets, green vegetables and carrots or pumpkin and tomatoes and maybe a freshly made side salad.

www.vegetarian.org.nz for more information, recipes and to order a copy of *Home Tried Favourites*.

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



Vasanta House Library



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

Cost to members is the return postage, non-members may join for \$50.

Vasanta House Accommodation

Casual accommodation is available at TS National Headquarters, Vasanta House in Epsom, Auckland. There is a range of rooms: single, double and bunk rooms with and without en-suite plus kitchen and laundry facilities. We welcome those in sympathy with the TS Objects and willing to abide by vegetarian, smoke-free and alcohol-free requirements. For bookings and more information please contact the office 09 523-1797.

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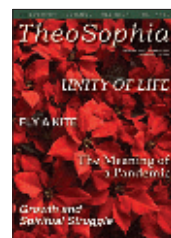
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Theosophy literally means divine wisdom: *theosophia*. Theosophy illuminates the scriptures and doctrines of religions, by unveiling their hidden meanings; thus justifying them at the bar of intelligence, as they are ever justified in the eyes of intuition.

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>

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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
President: Richard Sell
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
President: Susanna Roskilley
Website: <https://theosophy.nz/centres/canterbury>

DUNEDIN

Venue: 469 Hillside Road, Caversham
Meetings: Wednesdays 7:30pm
Contact: 034556917@theosophy.dn@actrix.co.nz
President: James Fox
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
President: Maureen Paterson
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
President: Sue Harrison

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 / tnewplymouth@gmail.com
President: Jim Scrivener
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
President: Heather Bell
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
President: Helen Sussmilch
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 / tswlgtn@gmail.com
President: Simon Webber
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
President: Kirsty Morton
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 / mjcloss2014@gmail.com
President: Paul Henderson
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.com

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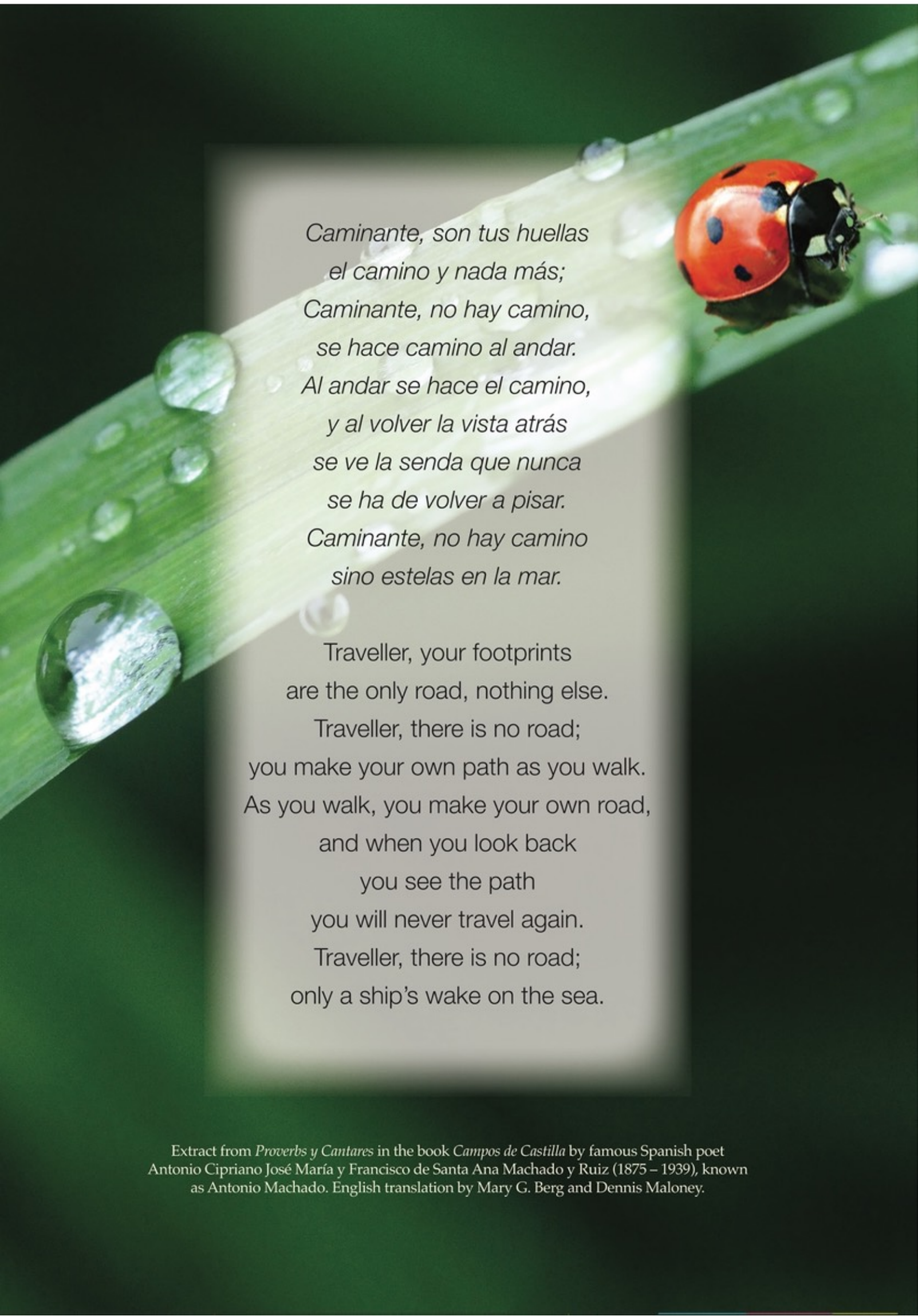
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Please Note: Due to Covid Restrictions, branch meetings may be postponed

A close-up photograph of a green leaf with several clear water droplets. A red ladybug with black spots is positioned on the right side of the leaf, facing right. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

*Caminante, son tus huellas
el camino y nada más;
Caminante, no hay camino,
se hace camino al andar.
Al andar se hace el camino,
y al volver la vista atrás
se ve la senda que nunca
se ha de volver a pisar.
Caminante, no hay camino
sino estelas en la mar.*

Traveller, your footprints
are the only road, nothing else.

Traveller, there is no road;
you make your own path as you walk.
As you walk, you make your own road,
and when you look back
you see the path
you will never travel again.

Traveller, there is no road;
only a ship's wake on the sea.

The whole order of nature evinces a
progressive march towards a higher life.

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky



September 2022