

PHILOSOPHY · SCIENCE · RELIGION · THE ARTS

TheoSophia

June 2023 | Volume 84 No. 2

WINTER ISSN 1177-8032

WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT

The World Mother

The Power of Awareness

THE UNENDING PATH

TheoSophia



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

TheoSophia is published quarterly and is received by members as part of their annual subscription. For further information and back issues, turn to page 31.

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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Printed by H&A Design & Print, Whanganui. Telephone 64 6 345 3145

Published by: The Theosophical Society in New Zealand Inc.

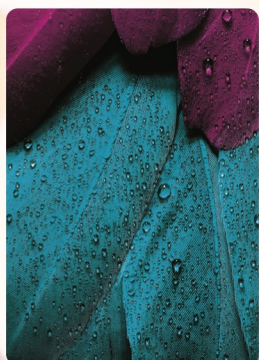
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THE MISSION OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

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 all Life.

July 2018 Naarden meeting of the Theosophical Society.

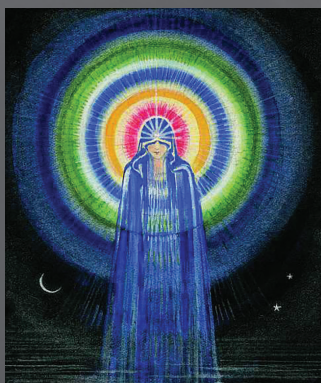


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Call for TSNZ Nominations for Governance Board Members

Nominations for Governance Board positions are now open, with terms for newly elected members commencing after the AGM in January 2024.

Two positions are available for a three-year term and due to a resignation, one Board role is available for a period of 12 months only.

For full details including eligibility, please go online to TSNZ website <https://theosophy.nz/jobs>

Application and nomination forms are available to download from the website.

Nominations must reach the Returning Officer by 4.00pm on Thursday 31 August 2023, 18 Belvedere Street, Epsom, Auckland 1051.

For further information, contact the National President at np@theosophy.org.nz or telephone (09) 523-1797 during office hours.

Be humble, if thou would'st attain
to wisdom. Be humbler still, when
wisdom thou hast mastered.

H. P. Blavatsky



INTRODUCING



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Wisdom & Discernment

In the history story of King Solomon (970 to 931 BCE) the book of Kings records that when asked by Yahweh what gift he would like, the young ruler asked for wisdom and discernment. According to 1 Kings 3, Yahweh was so pleased with this request it was granted and more blessings added, including a long life and riches. I have always thought that Solomon's request demonstrated that he was already wise and discerning. Wisdom sought is indeed wisdom found.

Theosophical writers on topics around this theme for our June issue are Richard Sell (p.4), Tim Boyd (p.6), Vicente Hao Chin Jr (p.10), Robert S. Ellwood (p.18) and Geoffrey Farthing (p.22) while the Geoffrey Hodson Library has books that focus on theosophy, wisdom and discernment (p.15).

TSNZ members' feedback from the April School of Theosophy ably led by Dr Ravi Ravindra testifies to the inspiration found there (p.16). A call for nominations to the TSNZ Governance Board is advertised (p.2) and Board member Paul Henderson has written from a personal perspective (p.13).

May you seek and find in theosophy the wisdom and discernment you need to flourish and grow, as you read this issue of *TheoSophia*.

Pamela Zane

Editor

editor@theosophy.org.nz

THE SPIDER WEAVES A RELATIONSHIP

*Fine textured threads emanating from within
The spider starts its course
In the streams of communication
The couple begin their journey
The magic of flexibility and strength
Intertwining and connecting
A common theme is woven by their discourse
The shape is repeated over and over
In a concentric pattern
To ensure the point of origin is emphasised
As if to make a message more pronounced*

*The wind tries to play havoc
But their true feelings stay intact
The light glistens on a fragment of the web
To accentuate a special moment
This point, this instant mirrors the whole
One tiny thread, one simple word
A link in a continuous bead of security
And if it breaks
The innate energy collects itself in an embrace*

*Spinning, unwinding
The memory into view
This small creature with endless lines of silky trails
The shared words with their own meaningful purpose
Will keep coming back
As long as the couple acknowledges the spider within.*

Murray Rogers

DIARY DATES

2023

August 5-6 Immersion Weekend

2024

January 11-16 National Convention 2024 Christchurch

January 12 TSNZ AGM

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

FUTURE ISSUES

Date	Theme	Deadline
2023		
September	The Journey of Self-Transformation	1 July
December	Living in an Interconnected World	1 October
2024		
March	The Hidden Side of Things	January

Email: editor@theosophy.org.nz

National President of TSNZ, Richard Sell, focuses on...

DISCERNING A NEW DAWN



It is widely recognised that the world is undergoing a tumultuous period and it is by no means a certainty that we will get through it. This is a critical period where humanity as a whole is growing in consciousness through means of conflict and disharmony, but one which also presents an opportunity for the individual to meet this challenge through development of the faculty of discernment and the transformation of what we have learnt, into practical application and ultimately, wisdom.

As a species we have made amazing advancements in scientific discovery, exploring our natural world, space, developing new medical and technological wonders, but the discovery of what is within us, about who we truly are, and our purpose for existence is lagging behind. Knowledge does not equate to wisdom and without wisdom humanity sits on a precipice. We would not hand our children dangerous toys to play with but this is exactly what we are doing for our species collectively with nuclear weapons, climate destruction, excessive materialism, economic disparity and so forth. We place too much importance on the intellect and the fruits of it. Much of this is due to ignorance of the true nature of the human being. The imbalance between the lower self and higher self is our riddle to solve. Madame Blavatsky in *The Voice of the Silence* expressed this unhealthy duality and emphasis on intellect alone when she wrote, "...but even ignorance is better than Head-learning with no Soul-wisdom to illuminate and guide it."

One of the greatest scientists of all time, Albert Einstein recognised and acknowledged this truth. He wrote "The intellect has little to do on this road to discovery. There comes a leap in consciousness, call it intuition or what you will and the solution comes to you and you don't know how or why. All great discoveries are made this way." Here Einstein is expressing that intuitive faculty, our Buddhic nature, which unfolds more and more as Soul wisdom is gained. In 1946, *The New York Times* quoted Einstein's belief that we need to change our focus if we are to move forward into a new paradigm: "A new type of thinking is essential if mankind [humankind] is to survive and move toward higher levels."

So, it is this striving for greater understanding and penetrating thought that will assist with our task of synthesis of the lower

self with the higher within us, that is key to our progression in evolution. In doing so, a change of perspective and focus is required. This is the paradigm shift which humanity is in need of – a new way of being, new concepts and thought patterns. Vitally, these patterns lean toward the spiritual and not the material. In the Mahatma Letters (letter 62), one of the Masters of Wisdom exhorts this very sentiment to Mr A. P. Sinnett – "you could TRY and impress yourself with this profound truth that intellect is not all powerful by itself; that to become 'a mover of mountains' it has first to receive life and light from its higher principle – Spirit."

So, what is Spirit, or Soul-wisdom and how do we obtain it? Knowing the distinction between the Knower and the field, as expounded in the *Bhagavad-Gita*, is a great journey of discovery. The Knower is Spirit, the field is the human body including its psychological nature and nature itself; in other words, the material world around us. Understanding that the physical body, our emotions and thoughts are not the Real us is paramount. The terrestrial body is born, lives and dies; what endures is the Soul, our Individuality which reincarnates again and again into the world to gain experience, develop faculties and eventually become master of these planes of existence.

Eckhart Tolle said what a liberation it was to realise that "the 'voice in my head' is not who I am. Who am I then? The one who sees that." This is identification with the true Self – Ego, Soul, Causal Body, Individuality, the Knower – it has many names. From this standpoint we can change our perspective to a wide encompassing view, one that takes into account considerations that we usually do not contemplate much – such as the purpose of life, why are we here, is there life after death and so on. This change of focus to the eternal rather than the transitory, requires a new type of thinking. Madame Blavatsky spoke of this needed change of thinking, towards the realm of Spirit:

...once that a student abandons the old trodden highway of routine, and enters upon the solitary path of independent thought – Godward – he[/she] is a Theosophist, an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth, with 'an inspiration of his[/her] own' to solve the universal problems.

Thinking thus differently, the person becomes more aware of the interconnectedness of everything and that they are part of

a whole. Aristotle said, "knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom" and the aspirant therefore realises self-knowledge is key to liberation for humanity and that self-transformation is the method. Jiddu Krishnamurti provides us some excellent advice on how to begin to master 'the wild steed', our personality with all its traits, character defects and imperfections. His little book *At the Feet of the Master* outlines four main qualifications for the Path: Discrimination, Desirelessness, Good Conduct and Love. He urges us to action saying that the teachings can only be fruitful if they are lived. He said, "it is not enough to say that they [the words] are true and beautiful; a man/[woman] who wishes to succeed must do exactly what is said. To look at food and say that it is good will not satisfy a starving man/[woman], he/[she] must put forth his/[her] hand and eat."

Through growing self-awareness, consciousness unfolds more and more, seeping into daily life and the personality responds. Better choices are made, less selfish motivations become evident. Knowledge now begins its metamorphosis into wisdom. The personality loses none of its intellect but love and compassion bloom, and the personality softens. This occurs life after life. We can see this process in action in St Francis of Assisi and others like him throughout history and it is ever ongoing. It leads to the union of lower and higher, and a new world opens up before the seeker, as the light of the soul shines ever more brightly through the personality. Swami Nikhilananda, in his book *Self-Knowledge*, lays before us this future:

Purity of mind, humility of spirit and unshakable self-control are required for the seeker after Brahma-vidya ... When he/[she] cultivates the Knowledge with diligence, with love, humility, faith and devotion, he/[she] is freed from the round of birth and death in the relative world.

There are thousands and thousands of people across the planet who are awakening to this new reality each year. The struggle is intense because there is always a natural resistance to change, and inertia is a major hurdle in the terrestrial world. The way is not easy, and suffering does occur. Suffering upon the spiritual path burns away that which no longer serves us. The path is of pruning and polishing, chipping away what is not needed. Michelangelo said that his magnificently sculpted statue of David was there all along – he only removed what was not needed.

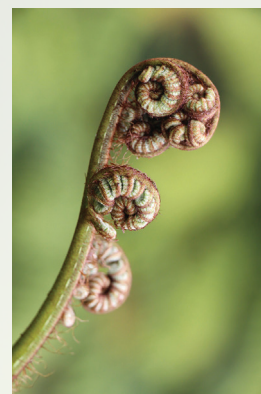
This is our journey to make and in doing so we create the new paradigms that the world so desperately needs. We alter our viewpoint, widening it, increasing our understanding of the eternal while gaining new perspectives of the Knower and the field. The heart centre too grows as a beautiful lotus. At the personal level this change morphs into deeper insight, keenness of judgment, greater self-awareness and wiser decisions. Wisdom is sure to follow and cannot be lost once acquired; it becomes eternally part of us.

We ourselves then become helpers of humanity. As these helpers grow in number, we may be able to take a step back from the precipice and look with hope, to a new dawn and a new future for ALL HUMANITY.

..... ◆◆◆

Richard Sell joined the Theosophical Society as a teenager and is a past President of the Auckland branch and was for seven years, the first Chair of the Governance Board for the New Zealand Section.

Richard has presented theosophy throughout New Zealand and internationally. He also contributes articles to theosophical magazines and is active in promoting theosophy as a founder of the www.theosophy.world resource website. A keen student of all things theosophical, Richard is very interested in applied self-transformation and theosophical history.



The Unending Path

Tim Boyd, International President of the Theosophical Society,
examines what it means to be a theosophist.

In her short article titled *Practical Occultism* H. P. Blavatsky (HPB), co-founder of the TS in 1875 and author of *The Secret Doctrine*, makes a statement that is worthy of some consideration: “It is easy to become a Theosophist. Any person of average intellectual capacities, and a leaning toward the metaphysical can become a Theosophist.” She then goes on to elaborate other qualities of the Theosophist: Those “of pure, unselfish life, who find more joy in helping their neighbors than in receiving help themselves, who are ever ready to sacrifice their own pleasures for the sake of other people; and who love Truth, Goodness, and Wisdom for their own sake, not for the benefit they may confer — that person is a Theosophist.”

The only part I might take issue with is the idea that it is easy to be “that person”. It is interesting that her list of qualifications did not include membership in an organization. Practical occultism, on the other hand, was something of a very different nature; so much so that she states that even in the TS, there are few genuine practical occultists.

It is not unusual for people to become associated with the TS and wonder where they should begin. What is it that they can and should study? In my situation I travel the world interacting with theosophical members and groups. Sometimes it is surprising the areas on which theosophists choose to focus their attention for study. The choice is so broad that for some the study focuses solely on service to others, for some it is limited to the teachings of HPB, for others the cultivation of the psychic realm seems paramount. It is important to choose wisely, especially in the beginning, because with one small step in the wrong direction, it does not take long to find ourselves far away from the direction we had initially intended, and somehow lost.

So, we ask ourselves, what is the purpose of our study? I would say that it is to elevate the mind, elevation for the purpose of seeing clearly. An example might be the experience of going up to a mountain peak. There are many paths that go to the peak of the mountain, but at the top we find before us a vision of the patterns and the appearance of the Earth, impossible to see at ground level. We have a very clear vision of what is below.

Whatever peak experience we have, whether it is standing on a physical mountain, or the elevation that occasionally occurs spontaneously or in meditation, eventually we have to come back to earth. When we do, we find ourselves again engaged in our normal activities, living closely with the personality that we have cultivated over time. In the midst of our peak experience the binding force of the personality is temporarily forgotten, but without fail it returns. So, we have the experience of having seen, but now live our lives based on the memory of what we have seen.



Jack Kornfield, a widely known meditation teacher, made the statement: “After the ecstasy comes the dishes.” After this peak experience we are back washing dishes, taking children to school, going to the workplace, all of the very mundane things that compose a life, but somehow we do it differently; we are changed. In our theosophical approach this elevation is cultivated in the process of study, meditation, and service. From our perspective it would be good to have a complete teaching that develops us as holistically as possible.

In HPB’s writings she refers to many of the Tibetan teachings. One of them is the *Lam Rim*, a body of wisdom teachings typical to Tibetan Buddhism. It is also spoken of as *The Graded Path to Enlightenment*. It is thought of as a complete teaching because there is a step on this ladder of teachings suited to whatever our level of unfoldment may be. From the Mahayana Buddhist perspective there are three levels, “Three Scopes” — the small, medium, and great scopes.

The small scope is for people who are simply looking to find happiness. They want to find happiness within this ever-repeating wheel of birth, life, and death, or *samsâra*. They want a teaching that can give them happiness now, and an improved rebirth in a future life.

The medium scope would be those practitioners who have seen the folly of the repetitive cycle of suffering that we all are engaged in. They seek liberation from it. This is the path of the Pratyeka Buddhas, those who achieve personal liberation from *samsâra*.

Then there is the great scope, the Boddhisatva path, for those whose intention is to become enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings. This is the Boddhisatva vow and corresponds to the theosophical approach to the Wisdom Path.

In the theosophical teachings as well there are profound teachings given by wise beings suited to the many levels at which we find ourselves. Many of the books tend to be short, much like sutra teachings: compact, simple, one line perhaps. All the expositions are written to be expanded upon.

Even with the *Lam Rim* there is the large body of teachings, approximately 1,000 pages, followed by an abbreviated version of about 200 pages. Then they have something they would call the extremely abbreviated version, maybe two pages in length.

But each one of these texts connects with the whole body of specific wisdom teachings.

A little book like *At the Feet of the Master*, examines four qualifications leading to an actual entry into the path of discipleship. Another small book, HPB’s *The Voice of the Silence*, which she dedicated “to the few”, focuses on a more extended level of unfoldment, that of the Boddhisatva. A third theosophical jewel is *Light on the Path*, written by Mabel Collins, with its various admonitions. These are complete teachings that can guide us along this way, if we can make the connections from the short and abbreviated versions, to their sources.

When I was much younger, I was fortunate to have a wise teacher. Often, he would say things about the spiritual life which, at the time, seemed peculiar. One thing he said was that genuine wisdom teachings are safe from people who are not ready for them. He would give an example of someone taking a handful of diamonds and spreading them on the floor. He would say that someone coming into the room who could not recognize a diamond, would see them and say: “Your house is very dirty; there is glass scattered all over the floor.” But someone who knew their value, would perceive that the floor was covered with precious stones.

In the *Bhagavadgitâ* Lord Krishna makes the statement: “By whatever path someone approaches me, on that same path do I meet them.” The wisdom teachings are similar. We are nourished according to our level of unfoldment and need. The important thing for us is to remember that they are without limit.

So while it might be easy to become satisfied with the crumbs we are able to digest at this moment, our role is to elevate, to always reach and look further, to try to deepen our experience. What we find is that invariably, as something opens within us, those exact same teachings will speak to us in a very different way. That is the beauty of it. It is an unending path on which we are continuously supported at every stage.

Taken from December 2021 *Theosophist* and reprinted with kind permission.

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Artist, poet and theosophist, **Elizabeth Sell** has left us with valuable writing which reflects her deep wisdom.

The World Mother

The question is sometimes asked, 'Are there any female Adepts?' The answer is 'Yes there are'. In *Light of the Sanctuary*, the occult diary of Geoffrey Hodson, it says that the 'archetypal woman becomes at last unified and fully expressed as the woman Adept.' Feminine incarnations bring opportunity. The highest concepts of our higher selves embody the best of male and female attributes in unity. Archetypal woman expresses selfless sacrifice, profound tenderness, with great beauty and with deepest wisdom, boundless compassion and all-encompassing love.

It has been suggested that the bodies inhabited at Adeptship, are those used after Adeptship when they are needed. At the *Arupa* (Sanskrit meaning 'formless') level – Monads* are sexless – there is of course no male or female.

In the past the World Mother or the feminine aspect of Deity was known as Isis, Venus among others and also closer to our time, the Virgin Mary. Female Adepts like the World Mother can, and do take high offices, as she has. The Planetary Archangel Beings associated with the Lord of the World are collaborating with the work of the World Mother. The deep spiritual power of the World Mother, who is regarded as Our Lady of Light, is revered by the Roman and Greek Christian Churches and is held in deep reverence as the Blessed Virgin Mary. She occupies the position of the feminine aspect and agent of the Solar Logos. The Lady Mary is now a great spiritual Being. We are told that she is also the present holder of the title, Adept Queen of the Angels.

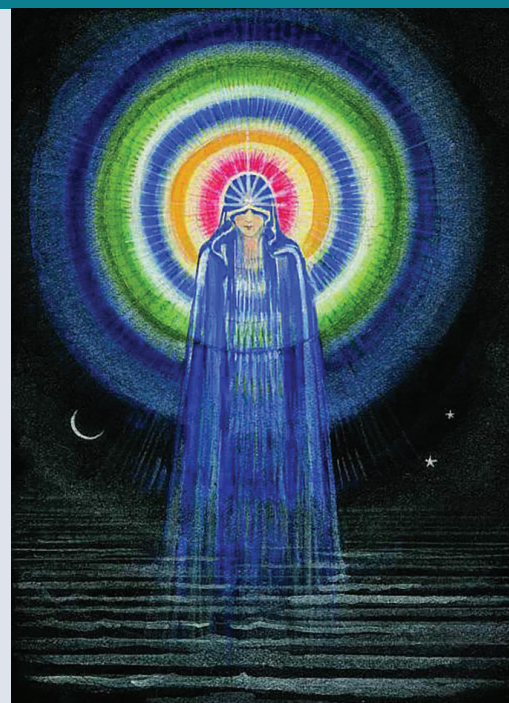
Our Blessed Lady Mary, as she is known in Christianity, was the mother of the Lord Jesus and as a woman in a female body, achieved Adeptship at that time. She started her life in 'Palestine practically karmaless' we are told and went through her life as the mother of the Lord Jesus with amazing patience and 'nobility' of Soul. She bore the body of the Lord Jesus so that it might be later taken over by the Lord Christ. Now a great love and light filled Being. In her life as the mother of Jesus, she attained to Adeptship and then moved into the Angelic or Deva Kingdom, so that she could help animals and people. The Lady Mary concerns herself with the women of the world and with the education and upbringing of their children. As the present Adept Queen of the Angels, her work is very much involved with prenatal life and birth,

where she is present and helps. The World Mother is involved through her

Guardian Angels from the first. At the eighth month she vivifies her thought form of herself and at the birth her blessing is sent to the mother and child. Another area she is devoted to is to mitigate the suffering of the world. The World Mother is deeply tender, filled with spiritual joy and great beauty and is a fully radiant Being of Light. Groups dedicated to her work could develop and express compassion and humaneness, which the world needs more than ever now.

The sick children are also in her care. An especially miraculous healing case that I was told about by her brother, a medical practitioner, was of a young child, his sister Rose [real names not used], who was dying of diphtheria and was expected to die that night. Her mother was at her side praying but eventually fell asleep. The antibiotic that she was to be given, she was allergic to and the suggested surgery would only extend her life by a day or two, so her mother would not agree, as it would only prolong her suffering.

Rose revealed what happened to her that night, when a brilliant blue light formed at the end of her bed and developed into a Lady in Blue. The Lady smiled at her and communicated to her mentally and although she could not give details she found it inspiring and comforting. Rose then looked around and realised that she could see another Being of light, 'with warm sunshine flowing from her heart into Rose's throat and then into her whole body.' Intuitively Rose said that she knew that these were angels who came with the Lady in Blue. After a time, the healing came to a close and Rose was happy, as for the first time since her illness started, she could breathe without a struggle. She felt that she was 'in a floodlight of warm soothing love.' Rose said that the Lady said goodbye while telling her not to be afraid and her vision slowly faded away. After all of this she felt hungry and woke her mother asking for food. This is unusual as it doesn't happen with those expected to die. The head of the hospital department



came, followed by the Chief Doctor who also examined Rose and said that she needed to be sent home as she might catch diphtheria again.

A few years later when they were both still young, their Mother came home with a book she had just bought from the Theosophical Bookshop. Rose looked at it with interest and exclaimed, excitedly to her brother to come and look. Rose was holding *Kingdom of the Gods* by Geoffrey Hodson. The pictures there were of the World Mother (plates 28–29, between pages 242–243). Rose said that was the Lady in Blue that was at the end of her bed when she had diphtheria in hospital. The second picture was of a healing angel (plate 25, pages 234–235) who Rose said was at her side sending a golden light that night to surround her. Her brother commented, ‘There are things in health and healing that we still do not understand. What happened then has not been explained, yet it profoundly touched and affected our family. It made us interested in looking for answers, while keeping an open mind about the existence of lofty Beings, about the divinity of humankind and the unity of life, other planes of consciousness which open when one lives a meditative life, as well as the possibility of the kinship of angels and people.’ We are told that during our spiritual development, the World Mother helps with the ‘mystical birth’ of the Christ consciousness in the Inner Self, when being admitted to membership to the Great White Brotherhood** at the time of initiation.

The World Mother is appointed to receive and channel prayers as she is the ‘Heart of Wisdom’ and the ‘Mother of Love’. In so doing, she accepts the devotion directed to the Lord Christ. There are many thought-forms of the Lady of Light and she does respond to them – for example in places such as at Lourdes.

In the next Root Race, the Sixth, more mystical people will become aware of the Angelic Kingdom. When this happens, we can imagine that more will be known about the World Mother. Also at this time compassion and humaneness will increase.

GLOSSARY

*Monad - HPB described the *Monad* as the basic unit of self in any being. It is equivalent to *Atma-Buddhi* and sometimes referred to as the Spiritual Soul.

** The Great White Brotherhood, also known as Great Brotherhood of Light or the Spiritual Hierarchy of Earth, is perceived as a spiritual organization composed of those Ascended Masters who have risen from the Earth into immortality, but still maintain an active watch over the world. The word ‘white’ in the Great White Brotherhood does not refer to Caucasian but to ‘good’. The word ‘Brotherhood’ denotes unity, kinship and no distinction of ethnicity, creed, gender, for example.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Kingdom of the Gods, Geoffrey Hodson

Light of the Sanctuary, Geoffrey Hodson

Miracle of Birth, Geoffrey Hodson

Sharing the Light, Vol. 1, Geoffrey Hodson

The Inner Life of Church Worship, Geoffrey Hodson – republished and available at Amazon

The World Mother as Symbol and Fact, C.W. Leadbeater - www.theosophy.world

ILLUSTRATION - page 8

World Mother painted by Elizabeth Sell

The World Mother is appointed to receive and channel prayers as she is the ‘Heart of Wisdom’ and the ‘Mother of Love’.



Elizabeth Sell was a long-serving member of The Theosophical Society in New Zealand. She presented Theosophy at her local centre in Auckland and wider afield in New Zealand. Elizabeth was editor of *Theosophy in New Zealand* magazine for many years, a wonderful artist and supporter of the Theosophical Order of Service as well as a poet. She was co-compiler and editor of the three-volume set *Sharing the Light*, of seer Geoffrey Hodson's work and compiler and editor of the books *Practical Spirituality* by John Sell, *Initiates, Initiations and the Path* and *Poems of Bliss* by Geoffrey Hodson.

The Power of Awareness

International theosophist **Vicente Hao Chin Jr** has studied this way of being and found means to transform lives.

There is perhaps nothing more powerful than awareness as a key element in human growth and the nurturing of the spiritual life. Without it, growth is basically mechanical, biological or instinctive. With it, new possibilities are unveiled. The capacity for conscious transcendence emerges and new, untapped levels of consciousness can then be scaled.

Human life has two basic preoccupations: first is the ending of pain and sorrow, and second is the pursuit of one's highest potential.

The cessation of pain and sorrow covers perhaps more than 90% of the preoccupations of the average person. We work and earn a living to avert poverty, economic deprivation or physical discomfort. We are driven, consciously or subconsciously, to protect ourselves from hurt, defeat, failure, rejection, humiliation, criticism, stress, distress, fear and a hundred other forms of vexations. A major world religion, Buddhism, is rooted in this basic issue of resolving the problem of human sorrow.

After one has attained a certain degree of stability in the balance between the pressures of living and the presence of inner equanimity, a person innately begins the pursuit of their higher potentials – what Abraham Maslow called the drive towards Self-Actualisation and, eventually, Self-Transcendence.

The role of awareness is vital in facing distress, pain or sorrow; one can either apply palliatives to ease the distress – which usually means dealing with the symptoms only – or go to the roots of the issue and resolve it permanently. Awareness plays an essential function in dealing with the root causes of distress, because the latter is ultimately a psychological reaction or state that can be resolved by transformation of consciousness rather than a change in external circumstances.

It is important to know the difference between *being aware* of something and *knowing* something. I may know that I am afraid, but I may not be aware of my fear. *Knowing* that I fear snakes makes me run away from snakes. Being aware of my fear makes me become conscious of, for example: my muscle tension, hardness of breathing, weakening of legs, butterflies in the stomach. The awareness of these states is a key to the dissipating of these symptoms of fear, leading to a state of relaxation and equanimity. Knowing does not result in such a calm state.

Unlike opinions and knowledge, awareness is non-judgmental and non-analytical. It neither likes nor dislikes, accepts nor rejects. It is simply aware. But this uncommitted state of consciousness has such a power that it is the single most important element in human transformation.

Let us look into specific examples of how the presence of awareness can bring about fundamental transformation in the life of an individual, not only in relieving distress but also in the pursuit of the transcendent or spiritual life. We will see that awareness plays a pivotal role in all human levels of consciousness: physical, etheric, emotional, lower mental, higher mental and spiritual.

Body pain and discomfort bring about psychological distress and unhappiness. Such pain can be alleviated or removed by medical means (e.g. drugs) which is temporary and may also have side effects. But the ultimate solution to the distress caused by biological pain is awareness. In awareness, we do not remove or avoid the pain. When it is unavoidable, we are able to experience it without feeling miserable. Try inflicting a safe kind of pain on yourself (such as pinching yourself in the inside of your upper forearm), first quickly, and second, with awareness, where you feel the gradual intensification of the pain-sensation with full awareness. You will note that while the body feels the pain and the consciousness perceives

Unlike opinions and knowledge, awareness is non-judgmental and non-analytical.

it, within the consciousness there is no suffering or misery. When there is no awareness, consciousness (or sense of self) automatically identifies with the physical pain and then one says or feels “I am in pain” (not just the body being in pain, but also the “I”). Many people may recall the self-immolation of a Buddhist monk prior to the Vietnam War where the monk maintained equanimity of body in a lotus posture while his body was burning. He did not move or utter a sound. This is possible when in a state of awareness.

Stress is the result of a complex combination of psychological pressure and physiological tension, resulting in strain, distress and unhappiness. When there is no awareness, stress accumulates and becomes chronic, leading to more severe disorders, both psychological and physical.

When awareness is introduced into daily life, something important happens. Tension or distress does not become chronic. Awareness of a tension leads to the subsiding of the tension. In the *Self-Transformation Seminars* [initiated by the author and presented by trained TS practitioners – ed.] participants are taught how to scan the body for such tensions and discomforts. With awareness and deep breathing, the hardened body part softens, the congealed energy flows naturally and the person attains a state of relaxation. The capacity to be aware on a moment-to-moment basis is a powerful antidote to stress and psychological strain.

Emotional distress of sorrow and unhappiness is caused for example by fear, depression, resentment, anger, hurt, grief, aversion or guilt. The factor that makes these distressful is the psycho-physical stress associated with these feelings. Without them, there is no unhappiness or misery. Such stressful reactions to situations (such as public speaking) or objects (such as snakes) dissipate with awareness of these states.

Awareness is an extremely potent solution to the problem of human unhappiness because unhappiness is basically caused by such push-button reactions that have become automatic and subconscious. These reaction patterns have been built or created through years of conditionings and traumas. They are essentially congealed psychic energy that has not been allowed to flow naturally during the experience and has become a template for future reactions to similar situations. Awareness

allows these bottled up energies to be released and one goes back to the normal unconditioned state.

Control of the mind is key. Now we come to the problem of the undisciplined and conditioned mind. From childhood to the present moment, our minds have been conditioned to think according to certain patterns and we may find ourselves unable to control them. For example, when focusing on a certain task, the mind may keep on going elsewhere. Or in the evening, we may be unable to sleep because disturbing thoughts keep intruding into our consciousness.

Our mind basically determines our destiny. We are what we think. Our actions are dictated by the most dominant thoughts in our mind. When these are habitually linked up with desire and bodily state, then we are virtually imprisoned by the conditioned pattern of our thoughts and habits *unless we become consciously aware of the situation* and deliberately institute changes within ourselves.

The basic technique of bringing back control over the mind constitutes the taming part of meditational practice. There are two stages in meditational practice. The first stage is the taming part, and the second is the awareness stage. This is because the mind has a dual nature: a gross part that produces images or words (called *rupa-manas* or mind of forms) and the subtle part that produces formless ideas (called *arupa-manas* or mind of no-forms), including abstract ideas, concepts or intentions. The first stage must be mastered before the second can be achieved.

The taming stage involves awareness of the activities of the mind, but at the same time makes use of techniques that instill in the grosser mind a new habit of thinking that is responsive to the inner will. Whereas previously thoughts may jump wildly like a monkey, they will eventually be brought into line through meditative practice. Standard meditational practices may involve the use of a mantra or of counting to focus the mind.

Awareness of Ideas and Intentions can be compared to a theatrical play, where we see the actors and actresses performing on the stage but we do not see the directors, scriptwriters, choreographers and other people who tell the actors what to say or do. Yet they are in a sense more important and influential in determining the outcome of the play than the actors

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and actresses. In our minds, we have the equivalent of these invisible directors and coaches. Behind our gross thoughts, there are subtle thoughts that determine what kind of thoughts will be produced. These are our prejudgments, ideas, intentions and other subtle thoughts that have no form or size. Yet they are there, powerful and influential. The only way to take charge of them is through awareness. This is the second stage of meditational practice. It is a constant state of awareness that sees the fleeting nature of things in the world and dwells more and more on the boundless and the objectless. This is the type of meditation that was taught by H. P. Blavatsky as outlined in her *Diagram of Meditation*.

Rationality and Impersonality are goals. It is after we have gained this mastery that we can truly become rational and impersonal through becoming aware of subconscious or subliminal influences that tend to warp our perception and judgment. We are then in a position to see their undue influence on our views and decisions. It is upon reaching this level that we begin to step into the portals of wisdom, where we see things as they are, undistorted by desires of the emotions or by prejudices of the mind.

In these ethereal levels of the consciousness, awareness opens up a new dimension in human life. It is the spiritual or mystical life. Its emergence is not like a sudden, blazing opening of the heavens but like the gentle creeping of the soft light of early dawn. This light of spiritual consciousness shines upon and influences the mind, such that the mind now becomes

more responsive to intuition. Blavatsky calls this the *manas taijasi*, or the Radiant Mind. Life and the world are now seen in a vastly different manner. In Hindu and Buddhist spirituality, this intuitive faculty is *prajna*. Awareness has made possible the quieting of the worldly mind and awareness is needed to sustain the link with the transcendent and to deepen realisation. *The Yoga Sutas of Patanjali* speaks of seven stages of this transcendent wisdom.

Transcendence of the Ego is achievable. The final bastion that prevents the consciousness from fully realising spiritual reality is the ego – the self-centre that has been necessary in the evolutionary growth of the human being. There will come a time when this centre must let go of itself. Meditative awareness will include seeing the very nature of the meditator themselves. The sage Ramana Maharshi recommended a meditation approach called vichara that keeps on inquiring “Who am I?”

The presence of awareness is crucial in pivotal stages of human growth. In the spiritual life, it is the beginning and the end. Krishnamurti calls it *The first and last freedom*. It is the key to the mastery over our personal (or ‘lower’) nature, as well as our mind. Whatever meditational approach we use, it is essential that awareness should be present. When a technique is mechanical and we lose awareness, such as in a trance, then we must beware of it. Awareness is in fact the best assurance that we are adopting the right meditational approach.



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 the 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.

Paul Henderson describes a journey that is not for the faint hearted.

WHAT THEOSOPHY MEANS TO ME

History teaches us that in times of trouble, the congregation of churches increases as people turn towards the 'Divine' looking for guidance and meaning.

Membership records show that the Theosophical Society membership was at its highest following the Great War (the First World War). The Spiritualist, Catholic and Protestant churches all experienced increased membership as people attended, trying to understand, trying to make sense of the awful experience that war brings.

When I was a small boy in Liverpool, England I remember driving with my family on a Sunday outing and seeing a large church which had been on fire, and much of it had fallen. I asked "What happened?" I was told it was bombed during the Second World War. I was of course outraged as mental images of aeroplanes destroying our churches filled my mind. I was quite satisfied with this view until I realised that the destruction of the church was the result of an attempt to destroy ships in the harbour, not as I thought, the result of religious malcontents bombing our churches. The point of my story is, we need to ask questions until we receive an answer that we find satisfactory.

When we are young, we are taught a view of the world which is dependent upon our country of origin, its history and traditions. Many people live their entire lives without having any reason to challenge their beliefs. Generations of people have lived their whole lives without being given cause to question their original beliefs.

Born into a strongly Roman Catholic family, I was raised to have a love and respect for the authority of the church. Most teenagers have their rebellions, mine took the form of questioning the orthodox doctrines and I embarked on a quest for the Truth.

It is a very lonely journey when you relinquish certainty for uncertainty, but by undergoing that process I believe a higher degree of consciousness can be achieved. Mind you this is not a journey for the faint hearted.

The Theosophical Society offers a place where experiences of your journey can be considered, and discussed openly with others. Also, no matter what the background is, we all have a path to follow which is the journey to ourselves.



At 17 Paul Henderson joined the Whangarei Branch of the Theosophical Society and became Vice-President. He later moved to Auckland and became Vice-President of HPB Lodge. After a nine-year break from the TS to focus on raising children, he re-joined the Society and returned to Whangarei to look after his parents. He has been branch president there for 12 years as well as serving on the TSNZ Governance Board.

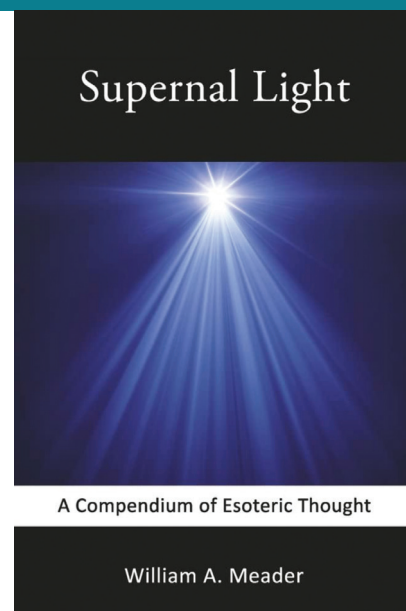


TSNZ member, Trish Lynch recommends a favourite book.

SUPERNAL LIGHT

A Compendium of Esoteric Thought

by William A. Meader



Supernal Light, in the title of this book, can be defined as the guiding light of Divinity that is hidden deep within each of us. As an individual increasingly awakens to the love and wisdom of the soul, this sacred life gradually begins to crest upon the shores of consciousness. The destiny of every human soul is to render service to a world in need. It is to express one's wisdom and love as a force of betterment to others. When this begins to occur, life will never be the same, for to be stirred by the soul is to become an agent of Supernal Light in service to humanity's upliftment.

The goal of this *Compendium of Esoteric Thought* by William A. Meader is to provide the philosophic foundations that can support each of us to more effectively sense the Supernal Light seeking expression through us. When built into the mind, the ideas offered by the esoteric philosophy can become anchor points for the reception of Supernal Light, for the nature of the light is largely governed by the content of one's mind and heart. I felt I received a deeper understanding of how the *causal body* – the inner vessel that houses the soul's consciousness – is the agent of reception and transmission of Supernal Light.

Throughout our countless incarnations, the lessons and experiences we have had are refined into wisdom and stored in the causal body. Our causal body is understood as the repository of all our wisdom. It also acts as the recipient of Supernal Light sensed within the mind as intuition. The causal body serving as the vehicle of the soul blends this divine light with the earned wisdom it already has stored within, and it does so for the purpose of delivering this divine synthesis to a world in need.

In the section *The Soul's Purpose and Destiny*, Meader gives much valuable information providing clues to the soul's purpose and inclination to serve. The Seven Rays, which I find so important in understanding ourselves on many levels, are explained very clearly considering their qualitative nature and how they support the soul's purpose and destiny.

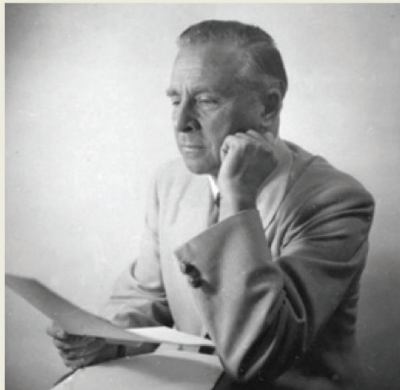
Meditation has been an extremely important part of my life and I found the chapter *Antahkarana* invaluable. While *The Bridge to Eternity* explains the science of Antahkarana and how occult meditation when understood and practised regularly, can help significantly in achieving soul alignment. Meader also believes that understanding the nature of initiation is very important as one journeys on the Upward Way. It is a topic that is of great interest to him and he ties the initiations in with the Veils of Illusion. He then uses esoteric astrology to explore the zodiacal veils.

I think most people would find the chapter *The Principle of Relationship* very interesting and challenging. Meader begins this chapter with, "The mystery of life can only be solved through a deepening understanding of relationship. Our human relationships are the greatest source of our joy and our suffering and provide the greatest challenges and tests in our lives." The sacred Principle of Relationship states that all expansions of consciousness occur through a deepening understanding of relationship.

William A. Meader's work – often described as a 'next step' in spiritual evolution – assists people in the refinement of their higher minds in order to align with the soul's creative intention. Meader is an influential and respected teacher of the Esoteric Philosophy. He has established an international reputation as a gifted communicator of this philosophy. His extensive teaching programme includes a diverse array of workshops, webinars and lectures devoted to nurturing a deeper understanding of the spiritual path from both an individual and global perspective. His previous book, *Shine Forth: The Soul's Magical Destiny* may be familiar to many. See also: www.emergentlight.com

I loved this book and it sits beside my bed where I can dip into it constantly. I especially like the layout with fairly large print and very clear headings. I thoroughly recommend it.

The Geoffrey Hodson Library



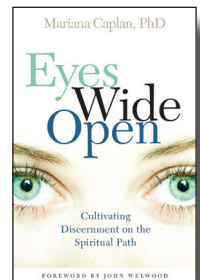
Make 2023 your year to commit to reading and studying more theosophical literature. The Geoffrey Hodson library at National Section's Vasanta House has the widest range of spiritual, theosophical and esoteric material available in New Zealand, all of which is free for members to access. For those outside of Auckland who are unable to access the library in person, borrowing is still a breeze. Simply make your selections from the catalogue online, <https://tsnz-library.theosophy.org.nz> and email us at library@theosophy.org.nz to have them posted to you.

Obtaining more knowledge and understanding of who we are and how to best make meaning and use of this life are some of the most important things we can do for ourselves, for others, for the planet, and for all living beings that are connected to one another in the ever-expanding universe. Reading is foundational, let's commit ourselves to keep on learning.

Wisdom and Discernment

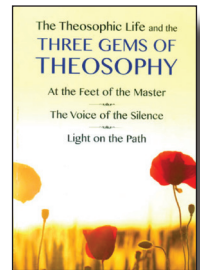
► EYES WIDE OPEN: CULTIVATING DISCERNMENT ON THE SPIRITUAL PATH by Mariana Caplan

The author supports readers in cultivating the acute judgement and discrimination that will help us to live a spiritual life with intelligence, clarity and authenticity.



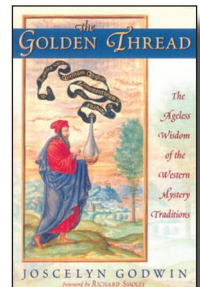
► THE THEOSOPHIC LIFE AND THE THREE GEMS OF THEOSOPHY by Alcyone (J. Krishnamurti)

This classic Theosophical text discusses the qualifications for a person to enter a spiritual path: Discrimination, Desirelessness, Good Conduct, and Love.



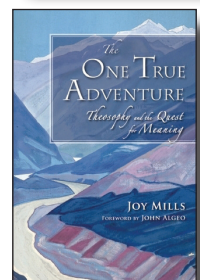
► THE GOLDEN THREAD: THE AGELESS WISDOM OF THE WESTERN MYSTERY TRADITIONS by Joscelyn Godwin

This book traces the thread of esoteric wisdom in the Western world, from classical antiquity to contemporary Europe and America. Among those whose wisdom he includes are Hermes Trismegistus, Zoroaster, Plato, the Rosicrucians, Freemasons and Theosophists.



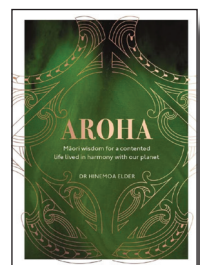
► THE ONE TRUE ADVENTURE: THEOSOPHY AND THE QUEST FOR MEANING by Joy Mills

Written over a long lifetime of highly productive work for Theosophy and The Theosophical Society, these essays represent a summary of the wisdom of a wise woman. Taken in toto, they are also a guidebook to the acquisition of wisdom by anyone who follows their guidance in pursuing the quest for meaning.



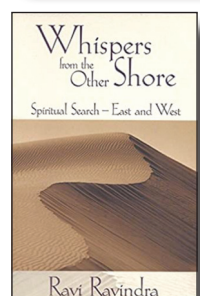
► AROHA: MAORI WISDOM FOR A CONTENTED LIFE LIVED IN HARMONY WITH OUR PLANET by Dr Hinemoa Elder

Discover traditional Maori philosophy through 52 *whakatauki* – simple, powerful life lessons, one for every week of the year.



► WHISPERS FROM THE OTHER SHORE: SPIRITUAL SEARCH – EAST AND WEST by Ravi Ravindra

The author explores spiritual wisdom from the perspectives of the Judeo-Christian heritage on the one side and the Hindu-Buddhist tradition on the other.



FEEDBACK FROM THE SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY 2023

Journey of Spiritual Search was the theme as Dr Ravi Ravindra led inspirational exploration

FROM PARTICIPANTS' REPORTS...

Along with recalling rich stories of Ravi's own journey with contemporary teachers and his reminder to us to come back to our own experiences to face the dual nature of ourselves, I am now pondering what has stayed with me.

Ravi reminded us that ancient writings were scribed long after the teachings were given out and that they varied in whom they were for at the time; hence meaning and understanding can alter significantly. Ravi also shared that at some time serious students of the spiritual quest will surpass written teachings and go within, in order to journey back home to the spark of themselves and the unknowable nature of that beyond. Ravi's explication of facets of Eastern and Western wisdom permeating Indian and Abrahamic cultures, highlighted the nature of the quest within or beyond ourselves. He explored the constant dance of the dual nature of ourselves. He prompted us to remain impartial and steady in this process. Quoting from ancient and contemporary writings, Ravi explored themes such as Sacrifice, at the heart of spiritual endeavor. One is not left with definitive answers, but rather a recognition of a line of enquiry that invites a quest for more, reflecting Ravi's statement from the first day of having a strong wish to meet with searchers rather than believers.

Joy Breayley

The information in this well-thought-out course was balanced and logical in its presentation. It can be taxing listening, concentrating and taking notes over a number of days but this didn't prove to be the case at all due to well-timed breaks and daily Mind & Body Integration exercises run by Priscilla. While the exercises were challenging for some, it proved how much a divide there can be when it comes to operating our physical bodies and relaxing the mind while trying to operate them in coordination. Priscilla's explanations while running these sessions gave me extra insight into my Wild Goose Qigong practice. Also, I have never enjoyed meditation time as much as I did during this school. The 30 minutes whizzed by.

Since leaving the school and returning to home life, I have found myself recalling Ravi's words. Ravi's memory for Bible passages and other writings and teachings was impressive, and presented non-judgementally. That they are expressions of Truth - not the Truth, was stressed by this remarkable teacher.

I am so grateful and delighted to have had a place in the school and a stay in Vasanta House. It was a very happy time that allowed some beautiful moments of connection with other attendees. I offer my extremely grateful thanks to the tireless workers who enabled this visit by Ravi and Priscilla. WELL DONE!

Bethne Gardner

There was a whisper. Ravi is coming. I'm in. I don't even care what the theme will be. You see, I've had the joy of sitting in on one of his workshops before, at the School of Wisdom 2013 in Adyar. I knew this would be next level. Ravi and Priscilla truly delivered in true fashion.

*Straight out of the box Ravi asked us two big questions that set the tone: "Who am I?" and "Why or what am I here for?" There's enough in that to keep us going for weeks. In true Ravi fashion we were straight into the Rig Vedas, extracting ancient text. Then *The Secret Doctrine*. Throw in a little Greek translation and it's not long before you land in the New Testament, quoting Paul and John. We have snippets from Aldous Huxley and Annie Besant. It becomes apparent very early that this is all about us. Not so much about who we are, but more about, how we are. The big S of self, versus the little s. The Soul versus Ego, our light versus our darkness. Clarifying in depth to bring about a deeper understanding and emphasizing the unavoidable truth. Nothing can be done without impartial self-enquiry. Big statements, big quotes and big questions of ourselves. We talked of spiritual teachings, the need to have love in our lives and of Karma and its implications, while bringing it back to ourselves with questions: "How do I give birth to God in me?" and "How do I prepare myself for that?" And Ravi is saying "Don't take my word for it, go find out for yourselves." All who look for the light earnestly eventually become the light. That was some five days and I walked away shining.*

Don Harrison

Thanks to the National Section for creating the new Meditation Room. We were there at 6.30 each morning and could feel the energy growing. As always loved the community building in the upstairs kitchen. The space nurtures new friendships and gives opportunity for incredible conversations at all hours of the day and night.

Toni Weir

AND FROM A VISITING AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPANT...

There was much richness in Dr Ravindra's knowledge in the fields of philosophy and comparative religion across different traditions. His appreciation of the depth of the writings of St Paul where people are said to have both a spiritual and a material nature aligns with the Theosophical view as expressed by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky. Similarly, references to familiar giants in Philosophy such as Iamblichus, Plato and Aristotle, assured me that Ravi's life-long pursuit of study and reflection in search of unbiased truth, is superb. Dr Ravindra's interpretations of the Bhagavad Gita, most revered work in the Hindu texts, assisted in my better understanding of some of its allegories.

T'SNZ management and staff did an excellent job putting this together. The five-day event was fully booked with actively engaged participants from all walks of life and diverse cultural, educational and spiritual backgrounds. It was also an opportunity to connect with new friends. I have been fortunate and privileged to have attended and am most grateful.

Michael Svoronos



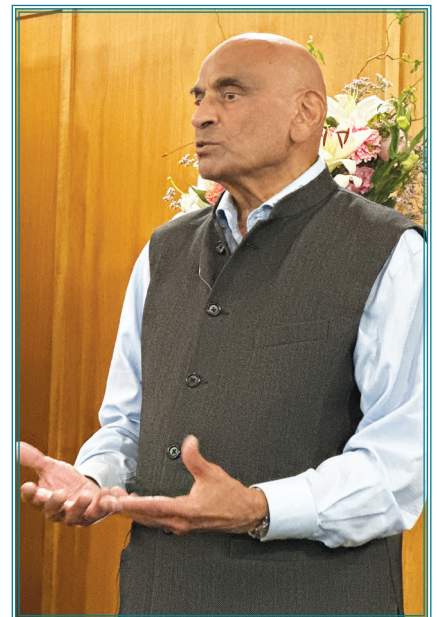
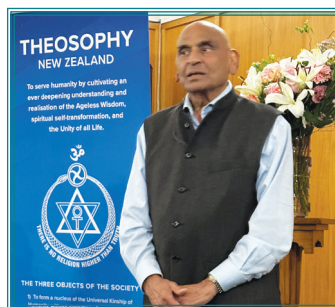
Melanie Closs (National Vice-President), Richard Sell (National President), Dr Ravi Ravindra (Director School of Theosophy 2023), Priscilla Murray, Renée Sell, John Vorstermans, Michael Svoronos (TS member, Sydney Australia).



Saturday night creative evening.



Talented operatic singer Christina Ellison.



Dr Ravi Ravindra

Renowned American scholar, **Robert S. Ellwood**
brings his study to a conclusion.

THEOSOPHY on War and Peace

PART TWO

It was during the period between the World Wars, and during the Second World War, that Theosophy, or perhaps one should say Theosophists, attained greater prominence than before or since in the political life of several nations large and small. These persons were by no means entirely motivated by Theosophy in their political decisions, and their attitudes and actions in regard to war and peace issues are often contradictory one to another. Nonetheless I believe that by examining their careers one can discover certain fundamental presuppositions that can in turn be related to Theosophy in the age of progressive messianism.

George Lansbury (1859-1940) was a long-time M.P. and prominent figure in the British Labour Party, serving as editor of the Labour national paper, the *Daily Herald*. In 1931 he became leader of the Labourite parliamentary opposition, at the time of the erstwhile Labour Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald's controversial formation of a "National Government" coalition to confront the crisis of the Great Depression. Lansbury, an outspoken socialist since the 1890s, rallied those Labourites unwilling to support the coalition, and had that party then attained power would have become Prime Minister himself. He was also an uncompromising pacifist who had opposed World War I, and was a founder of the Fellowship of Reconciliation to aid conscientious objectors.

In 1935 he resigned his leadership position in parliament because he could not concur with his party's support of sanctions against Mussolini's Italy over the invasion of Ethiopia. While he had little sympathy for the fascist dictatorship, he believed that economic sanctions were simply war under another name. (It should be added there is reason to think that Lansbury's resignation on this matter

of principle may have been partly arranged by powers within the Labour party who felt the times demanded fresh leadership.) In the remaining years of his life, the former parliamentary leader worked assiduously for peace in a darkening Europe by visiting numerous capitals and conferring with leaders.

Lansbury was a decided Christian, an active member of the Church of England who based his pacifism on Christian principles and was generally so identified. The press always called him a Christian pacifist; few sources other than Theosophical identify him as a Theosophist. With some justice, for the Christian pacifist position has rarely been put more forcefully than in a passage like this by Lansbury:

Jesus and his disciples handed on the blessed truth that love of God through love of mankind is the law of life. By this statement of fact, he once for all destroyed the terrible doctrine that out of violence and slaughter connected with war, and out of the competitive struggle for wealth, the best character traits are developed. It is not possible to gather figs from thistles or develop love from violence and destruction. We cannot show our reverence and love of God through crushing our enemy in the dust or forcing our business competitor into bankruptcy.

At the same time, Lansbury was a Theosophist. He tells us in his autobiography, *My Life*:

I joined the Theosophical Society in 1914, just after the outbreak of war. This was owing to Dr Besant asking me to become a member of a committee of workmen to whom, under Sir Edwin Lutyens as architect, she had entrusted the erection of the Theosophical headquarters in Tavistock Square ... but I had never thought of joining the Society till I

came into close contact with the men and women on whose behalf we were carrying out this piece of work at Tavistock Square. I was asked to lecture for the society on Socialism and on Labour questions, and I also attended theosophical lectures. As a result of some talks with David Graham Pole I found myself able to accept the only condition of membership imposed by the Society, which is that all who join shall work together to establish a universal society based on Brotherhood. The Society has no other tests, theological or otherwise... I do not claim any more consistency for members of this society than for others, but I have personally received from my association with them more help, more encouragement to live my own life and express my own opinions and develop my own thinking than from any set of people with whom I have come in contact... It may be said I am prejudiced because of the great help I have received from some members of this Society in my political work, and especially in connection with the *Daily Herald*. It may be so, but... I am content to record my grateful thanks and appreciation of the friendship of... members of the Theosophical Society and Order of the Star.

It is clear that Lansbury as Theosophist was pre-eminently a result of the fact that, in the days of Annie Besant's leadership, the Society attracted the sort of people who were sympathetic to his concerns for pacifism and social justice, willing to talk with him about them, to listen to his lectures, and to give him much-appreciated practical support in his high-minded ventures. As indicated, most books and articles refer to him only as an Anglican and Christian pacifist, and in his own writing and speaking he gave far more attention to Christianity than Theosophy. Yet, perhaps in light of Theosophy's claim to represent a wisdom behind all religions, as well as its claim to espouse complete freedom of thought (a value very important to Lansbury) he saw no contradiction in the commitments. It is clear from the above passage that he valued what he believed the Theosophical Society represented, as well as his Theosophical associates, very highly.

Yet differences with Besant are apparent. At his death, early in the war he had tried so hard to prevent, the *Christian Century* spoke of him as "a saint in politics," and commented that while many might have considered his Christian pacifist efforts "a waste of energy and a revelation of pitiable naivety," "we (*Christian Century*) believe no life devoted to any great aim as completely as Lansbury's was devoted to peace is ever thrown away." At the same time, George S. Arundale, editor of *The Theosophist*, published in Adyar, and International President of the (Adyar) Theosophical Society spoke of Lansbury as, "Fundamentally a Theosophist all his life," for he "was saturated with the brotherhood spirit." Arundale added that "war as a factor in evolution, though it has a constructive place in my philosophy, had no place in his, he was uncompromisingly for peace. While Dr Besant, in the war of 1914-1918, was supporting the Allies in the true warrior spirit, Mr Lansbury was opposing it in the spirit of the pacifist... Mr Lansbury was one of the greatest pacifists of his epoch... a genuine Theosophist."

Both sides, the unity and the evolutionary necessity, the Tingley/Lansbury and the Besant/Arundale sides, can be discerned in the case of the third man under review, the sometime Theosophist Henry Agard Wallace (1888-1965), New Deal Secretary of Agriculture and Vice-President of the United States 1941-45. As a wartime ranking official in a belligerent power, he had to come to terms with the

It is clear that Lansbury as Theosophist was pre-eminently a result of the fact that, in the days of Annie Besant's leadership, the Society attracted the sort of people who were sympathetic to his concerns for pacifism and social justice...

moral questions, and like Arundale see potential for epochal good in the conflict, though his inner disposition was undoubtedly much closer to that of his fellow-politician/idealist, Lansbury. Like Tingley, he was very much in the American idealist/utopian/reformist tradition; like Besant and Arundale, he was in a position of some responsibility in the time of a war both hellish and of immense moral consequence. In the end, his view of the Second World War was almost apocalyptic, though perhaps less in Arundale's style than as a way of reaching Tingley's utopian vision. It was the final crisis which could usher in virtual fulfilment of a millennial human dream, the era of the Common Man.

Religion and spirituality were always important to the shy, gawky Wallace, who incidentally was also a sometime vegetarian, a teetotaler and rather ascetic, like Lansbury. Wallace was well known for his interest in 'mysticism' and 'occultism', particularly when they afforded a vision of the unity out of diversity for which he pined, that value so important to Theosophy but potentially at odds with evolutionary struggle.

Arthur Schlesinger, in *The Coming of the New Deal*, provides an insightful overview of this side of the New Deal Secretary of Agriculture and later Vice-President. Schlesinger suggests that what particularly appealed to Wallace, "was the hope that the vision of spiritual unity might enable him to join together the two halves of his own personality. For as both scientist and mystic, both politician and prophet, both opportunist and idealist, Wallace was split down the middle. This interior division produced not creative tension but a wavering and torment of dissociation which he sought constantly to exorcise by mysticism or to bridge by rhetoric." (p.33) Part of that process may have been his membership in the Theosophical Society. Wallace joined the Society in Des Moines, Iowa, on June 6, 1925, when he was editor (1921-33) of his family's farm journal, *Wallaces' Farmer*, and resigned on or before November 23, 1935, when he was Secretary of Agriculture. He was also active in the Liberal Catholic Church in Des Moines between 1925 and 1929.

As early as 1912, Wallace had met the Irish poet, mystic and agrarian reformer George Russell ("AE"), who was strongly influenced by Theosophy. His interests were shared by Wallace, and in 1930 the two mystical agronomists began corresponding. Through Russell, Wallace, now editor of *Wallaces' Farmer*, established links with others of similar bent. One correspondent was Charles Roos, a poet and Theosophist who was involved with the Temple of the People in Halcyon, California, a communalist offshoot of Theosophy. Wallace and Roos exchanged ideas on finding a new "religious ... expression for the American people," a need which at that time he felt acutely. In November 1931 Wallace began a correspondence course with the Temple; its leader, William Dower, was able to inform Wallace that the future Vice-President had "a splendid knowledge" of Theosophical fundamentals. One imagines he must also have been aware of Katherine Tingley and her other Theosophical community on Point Loma.

In 1932, however, Wallace's religious experimentalism was caught up by a "flap" over a talk he gave to a group of ministers in Des Moines, in which he reportedly opined that the world needed a "new religion." This remark produced a predictable flurry of criticism from the orthodox, and may have led Wallace to realise that his universalist and esoteric spiritual interests could have unfavourable political consequences. Mark L. Kleinman notes that after this event "his Theosophical spiritualism receded into the deep background of his public thought," to be replaced by relatively more conventionally Christian expressions of his religiosity.

Nonetheless, the values that had earlier led to the Theosophical quest remained to animate many of Wallace's public positions from the background. The cabinet secretary was particularly intrigued with the ideas of unity out of diversity and of coming eschatological events that might hasten the advent of unity in world history ... the unity and fateful evolution sides. He was fascinated by symbolism; the Great Seal of the United States, with its phrase *E pluribus unum* held his attention, and even more the reverse side, with its incomplete pyramid and

the words *Novus ordo seclorum*; he induced Secretary of the Treasury Morgenthau to put the reverse on the new dollar bill in 1935 by telling him that *Novus ordo* was Latin for New Deal!

There were others. Among Theosophical statesmen of the same period was Rex Mason, wartime Minister of Justice in New Zealand. Among those said to have been influenced by Theosophy, though not members of the T.S., were Mohandas K. Gandhi, for whom the *Bhagavad Gita* was only allegorical of the general struggle against evil, in which none of us can rightly be non-combatants but which is most truly fought by non-violent means; and Augusto Sandino, the Nicaraguan mystic revolutionary.

We may note that the theme of progressive messianism or millennialism seems to interpret 20th century Theosophical attitudes toward war quite well, though with a split between the present-unity-emphasising utopians and pacifists, and the evolutionary-necessity mystic warriors. All Theosophists engaged in the public affairs of our troubled century have professed a kind of idealism, a potent vision of the better world informed by justice and undergirded by spiritual realities. But their visions have also been shaped by a sense that we are living in eschatological or apocalyptic times, a time perhaps like that of the great battle of the *Bhagavad Gita*.

Thus, for some, war was an instrument of on-rushing destiny, and the ripening karma of individuals. For others, its ways are so incompatible with those of the Kingdom of God that it could hardly serve as means to that glorious end. What all had in common was a dramatic view of history in which actions and choices on the world stage were important. They were in fact to be the deeds of heroes, worthy of Rama or Krishna, and ought to be made out of a heroic commitment to accelerating human evolution, in which mutation into human perfection was not an impossible dream.

..... ◆◆◆

...for some, war was an instrument of on-rushing destiny, and the ripening karma of individuals.



Robert S. Ellwood (born 1933), American academic, author and expert on world religions, was educated at the University of Colorado, Berkeley Divinity School. He was awarded a PhD in History of Religions from the University of Chicago in 1967. He was Professor of World Religions at the University of Southern California and is now professor emeritus. In 1988 he received a Fulbright Research Grant to study new religious movements in New Zealand and spent six months here working in the national library in Wellington.

The Ancient Wisdom

In this outline, Englishman Geoffrey Farthing revealed some of his great understanding of this broad topic.

All life activity, in total, is one process and is subject to One Law...

The Ancient Wisdom has always been in the world. It is knowledge of the nature of things and of human nature. It is the Wisdom of understanding and compassion, of which all of us feel in need in the depths of our being. If what follows seems somewhat impersonal and technical, it is because much information is being given in a relatively short space, but a careful reading will show its relevance and significance to each of us personally. To be wise we have to learn to apply the principles of the Ancient Wisdom to the detailed circumstances of our lives. In this Wisdom we sense our own strength, our own self-sufficiency. It gives us hope and the courage and determination to face life, however hard. Let us never belittle our inherent powers – *"I said, Ye are gods."* (John X, 34)

THE WISDOM

The Ancient Wisdom is knowledge, in depth, of the nature and processes of the Cosmos as a living whole. This knowledge in the present time is represented in part by that of modern science, religion and philosophy, but science and religion are at times mutually antagonistic. The Ancient Wisdom claims to be interested in truth as represented by what is, as opposed to any dogmatic statement of truth, on whatever authority. And there is only one Truth. Truth cannot be contradictory.

The Ancient Wisdom, however, discloses to us that behind the scenes of our objective existence there are whole worlds of normally invisible powers, forces, energies and even entities representing Life in its dynamic aspect.

Those known sometimes as the Masters of the Wisdom, who are very much further along the evolutionary path than the great majority of humankind at its present state, occasionally make efforts to enlighten us. They have discovered that the way into the knowledge of these inner workings of Nature is by a knowledge of their own natures. They have given us some specific teachings for our guidance. The road is beset with difficulties, not so much in the nature of the journey itself as in our immaturities and defects of character. The following headed paragraphs are an outline of some of the more important aspects of the great teaching.

THE COSMIC UNITY

Cosmos here means everything that significantly comes within our field of consciousness and activity, including our world and all that is in and on it, including ourselves. The Universe is a comprehensive whole. This means very much more than that it is an aggregate of a multitude of parts. There is One Life. All life activity, in total, is one process and is subject to One Law but both the Life and the Law each have an immense variety of modes of action. All activities, all action of whatever kind, whether the movement of physical bodies, the urges of desire or the flow of thought, derive from a common, original power or energy source.

Everything and every creature shows forth two essential aspects: one, an energy, life or spirit aspect, and the other, a material or form aspect, the latter giving expression to the former. All faculties need a developed vehicle or organ through which to function. Polarity is observable throughout nature as spirit-matter, positive-negative, male-female, etc.

In religious parlance, the Unity can be regarded as Deity, or God. The Ancient Wisdom is pantheism in the sense that there is nothing apart from or outside of this Unity, the One from which all comes and into which all returns at the end of a vast period of activity.

THE UNIVERSAL LAW

Universal Law is the synthesis of all natural laws. It is the total of all processes in the Cosmos. It is exemplified in the great rhythms of Nature. All things, from the greatest to the smallest, have a beginning, continue to be for a time and then drop out of existence. There are cycles of being and non-being; of alternation; of ebb and flow; of inbreathing and outbreathing; of activity and rest; of life and death. But things are given time to fulfill their function in the scheme of things. The Law ensures that the Universe is self-preserving. The maintenance of harmonious equilibrium in all its parts means that there is a direct relation between cause and effect, whereby all action is balanced by reaction.

This Law must never be regarded too mechanistically. As a living process it applies in the nonphysical realms of being as well as the physical. It has moral aspects and repercussions when it is often called the Law of Karma, by which in the long-run humanity gets its just desserts. As we shall see, however, the balancing process is continuous and, as far as any one person is concerned, it extends to the periods before and after an earth life.

In simple terms the law means that everything is, and is as it is, as the result of what went before. The process is infinitely complex; no cause can be wholly isolated from other causes and therefore no effect is a simple issue. In the case of human activity, a further complication is the effect of motive. Similar actions will

have different consequences according to the intentions behind them. An action with a kind motive will have an effect very different from one done out of hate.

Another aspect of Law is progression or evolution, the bringing into activity of faculties inherent but latent. This unfolding of the potentialities of the inner Life in everything proceeds continuously by ever-ascending cycles, in all the realms of Nature.

THE CONTINUITY OF LIFE

The chain of causes and effects is also continuous and eternal. The persisting thread behind all comings and goings is Life or Spirit itself. It is the forms and entities which give expression periodically to the persisting life which come and go continually. Each thing fulfils some purpose in the total scheme of things. Each thing experiences life in terms of its own being. In this respect each thing has its own experience and, in a greater or lesser degree, the life functioning in it has a degree of consciousness of its own. Consciousness is Life operating at various levels throughout the whole composite complex of existence.

When a living form, and according to the Wisdom there is nothing else, has served its purpose it dies and disappears, decomposing into its component elements, but the life persists in the inner subjective worlds. This process applies to individual people. As we shall see, each person has an individual persistent life thread which occupies successive, associated personalities, one after the other, with more or less long intervals of earth years in between, but the essential person persists virtually indefinitely. This process is that commonly known as reincarnation. According to the law of cause and effect, each successive personality is conditioned by and is, in fact, the result of the actions and experience of previous lives. There is a causative continuity between them.

HUMANITY'S COMPLEX BEING

We are familiar with the classification of a human as body, soul and spirit. The Wisdom more specifically tells us that he/she is a sevenfold being, comprising a lower trinity and

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a middle and an upper duad. The lower triad is that of the physical body, an ethereal counterpart of it and vitality or life force. The middle duad consists of that principle in a human which is associated with feelings, emotions and desires (Kama), closely associated with the principle of mind (Manas), the faculty of thinking, imagining, remembering and so on. Those mental functions, when associated as they almost wholly are with the person in earthly surroundings, are regarded as being of the concrete or lower mind. The combination of the lower triad, the body, its ethereal (astral) double and its vital principles, together with the middle duad, constitute the person as the *personality*. By and large this is the selfish human, self-concerned with interests little beyond him/herself or immediate family.

Mind, however, is dual, with upper and lower aspects. Its upper levels reflect the inner or spiritual side of humanity's nature. The higher aspects of thought are of a nature different from those of the associative, sequential processes of normal thinking of the lower mind. The higher reaches of the mind have to do with intuition and insight, perceptive intelligence of a high order. These more spiritual levels of the mind are closely associated with the truly spiritual upper duad, and form a threefold entity, referred to in the literature as the Ego, or the *individuality* as distinct from the *personality*. The two higher principles are universal ones, not private to any individual human. The highest of them is the Spiritual Essence of Cosmos, and the other is the vehicle through which that Essence is manifest at the highest level. These two become individual to any given person only insofar as they are reflected or focussed into the highest level of the individual mind. They represent the Divinity in humanity, reflecting the Universal Divinity.

The person is mortal as far as the body, its associated 'life' principles and middle psychic principles are concerned. This means that the 'personal' soul is mortal. The higher elements of mind, however, together with the spiritual duad, constitute immortal elements of being. They are the inner or higher Self, the Ego, which persists through many, many personal lives.

DEATH AND LIFE

What we call death is the withdrawal of the coordinating life principle from a body, without which the body starts to disintegrate. After the death of a person their nonphysical personal principles also pass through a similar disintegration process, in sequence. The process is complicated and only an outline of it is given here. Normally, at death, the person rapidly reviews the life just lived, then becomes unconscious. While this unconsciousness persists, a process of 'ingestion' takes place. This initially involves a struggle between the higher, spiritual, and the lower, personal principles of the person for the content of the last life's experience. If this had a sufficiency of spirituality, and mostly it has, it is assimilated into the Ego and forms the basis of a blissful, conscious but subjective state, which lasts for a very long time, usually many centuries. During this time the 'personalised' Ego feels itself to be experiencing life in ideal surroundings with associates whom he or she would most like to be there. After the Ego's entry into this state the psychic remains of the ex-personality disintegrate and their 'materials' disperse, but something of them remains to condition the next personality. The period of bliss eventually comes to an end, unconsciousness intervenes again, and the Ego, having exhausted the previous life's potentials, seeks a new birth. The processes of reincarnation are started. These involve the re-accumulation of substances to form the mental, karmic and astral principles around 'atomic' nuclei carrying residual personal characteristics to the new soul. When this formative process is finished, the new personality is ready for another physical body. This is provided by parents who will supply the conditions of birth and environment according to the karmic desserts of the new personality. In this way justice is done. There is neither arbitrary dispensation of inherent qualities to a person, nor arbitrary allocation of the circumstances into which the new person will be born, nor is there chance in the process. It is all according to Law.

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE

We have already seen that, in the various forms that life inhabits, the potentialities of Universal Spirit are gradually being unfolded. During the life cycle of anything, it experiences the vicissitudes of life. Experience may modify its inner principles. Where such modifications occur, they constitute change, maybe infinitesimal, maybe very great, but they are cumulative and can become significant in the vast stretches of evolutionary time. Changes in an inner principle demand a change in outer form to express them. This is the *modus operandi* of evolution, from the within to the without. This general evolutionary process applies to the individual human being. The real purpose of life for us is to unfold our proper *human* potentialities. In ours, as in the other kingdoms of Nature, experience is the teacher. Experience has, however, to be related to the Law and a person must learn that in the long run what they are, is the result of what they have done. What a person is, to a large extent, determines what they will do and so what will befall them. If what they have done is not in accordance with the Law and its essential harmonies, the person brings disharmony and suffering into their own life. Eventually they, individually and collectively, must learn this truth. The Ancient Wisdom tells us that we can change our circumstances only by changing ourselves. There is no other way.

HUMANITY'S RELATION TO COSMOS

According to the Wisdom's teaching humanity occupies a very special place on the evolutionary ladder. We are the only beings on earth reflecting in our own beings the total constitution of Cosmos. This means to say that the elements of a person's nature are miniature replicas, in all respects, of those of Nature generally from the highest, the most spiritual, to the lowest, the dense physical of our objective existence. There is a scale of correspondences which links our principles to what are known as planes of Nature. These planes of Nature actually consist of lives, of hierarchies of living beings, with ever-ascending levels of consciousness and power.

Another example of the evolutionary scale is the kingdoms of Nature. It is said that there are three elemental kingdoms below our mineral

one. Above that we know of the vegetable and animal kingdoms, and above the animal is the human. The teaching tells us that the human state is transcended by three superhuman ones, about which we cannot be concerned here, except to note that the evolutionary process continues beyond the human stage. So, humanity is at the top of the evolutionary scale of beings having physical bodies on this planet. We are therefore responsible not only for ourselves but for all the kingdoms below us. As we gain in knowledge and power we become more of a potency for the benefit or otherwise of what is beneath us in the scale of being. To this extent we are responsible for them, especially where we have taken possession of the earth's surface and learned to exploit its mineral, vegetable and animal resources.

The Wisdom teaches, by way of Universal Law, that there is nothing, no outside 'divine' intervention, that humanity can look to for any betterment of our lot or for any self-improvement. We have to do the job ourselves or it will not be done but we have inherently all the powers and all the time we can possibly require for the great work, not just the span of one earth life. Nevertheless, this is the world of causes; what has to be done must be done here on earth; it cannot be done in the hereafter.

HUMAN INSTITUTIONS

By such institutions we mean, for example, religious systems and those of education and government, with which last, however, we are not concerned. The Ancient Wisdom does not concern itself directly so much with the institutions, the collectives of human enterprise, as with the individuals who comprise them. Each person must learn proper responsibilities and learn to act accordingly, conscious of them. The Ancient Wisdom in education would place emphasis on character training rather than on the acquisition of book-learning; on the cultivation of intelligence rather than on mere memory; on self-sufficiency and self-confidence rather than on dependence on 'authority'; on the development of trust rather than on rivalry through competition which engenders the sense of power through superiority; on friendly helpfulness and a proper sharing of

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environment.

possessions and skills and so on. If from an early age we could be imbued with these attitudes as guiding motives and learn in our living in a way that exhibits the highest human qualities, many of our social problems and the world's national and international difficulties would disappear. A willingness to understand the difficulties of others, as *people*, is essential if the various sections of humanity are to live together harmoniously, as a whole. Modern communications are increasingly forcing us to realise that the mutual interdependence of people is already a fact.

In matters religious the Wisdom, which really is religion itself, does not concern itself with any dogma or compulsory beliefs or customary usages, but only with the truth. While its teachings are based on truth, it does not claim that they are to be regarded as all truth in themselves but as indicators and guides towards truth. The truth of its teachings has to be discovered by every person for themselves, by study and observation and thought, and especially by self-study. The feasibility of the teachings can be checked to a very large extent by the ordinary person applying the law of analogy. If an aspect of the law such as, for example, that of periodicity applies at one level of being, it can be assumed to apply at other levels of being.

Even an intellectual appreciation of the principles of the Ancient Wisdom can, when open-mindedly applied, clear away many of our misconceptions and superstitions and hence our fears. If, for example, the nature of Deity in an all-inclusive sense is realised, we can soon see that much of what is commonly said and believed about 'God' could not possibly be true. We are brought up to believe that God is a spiritual *entity* with certain attributes, some only too human, that 'He' is the Creator of the Universe and its Governor, and so on. In the light of the Ancient Wisdom these things could not be. There can be no such process as creation as is normally understood; creation can only be a transformation of what was there before into another state or form. Nothing comes, or can come, from nothing.

The process of cosmic-becoming, in every sense, extends from the infinite past into the infinite future, bringing with it the necessary changes demanded by the ever-unfolding life. Deity cannot be either a creator or a governor. By a like token Deity cannot have qualities or attributes. Adjectives such as all-loving, almighty or omniscient cannot apply to that which is Itself all power, all love, all quality of any kind. In 'God' is both the faculty of knowing and all that can be known. God is the TOTALITY. But 'God' of Itself cannot act, cannot do or be, or love, or know anything. God is love itself. To know God is to become aware of our own complete nature. In all happenings, of whatever kind on earth, God never acts directly. All action is through the hierarchies of beings at all levels of being. In human affairs it is people who do things, sometimes in 'His' name, presuming to know 'His' will. Will, however, is the Law, the inevitable way in which everything in Cosmos must behave according to its nature. This could be said to be Divine Will, the universal program, so to speak. People must come to attune their individual wills and hence humanity its collective will, to the Universal Will, if peace and harmony are to reign on earth.

The Ancient Wisdom, however, is far from atheistic. In rooting its system in Universal Unity, the All, and in humanity's direct relationship with it, through cosmically reflecting constitution, the Wisdom says humanity can come to know the 'God' in itself – its real Self – identical with the universal ONE SELF.

All people are indeed essentially our brothers and sisters. This fact is realisable as an ultimate end, a final consummation, and an intimation of it can be sensed, quite meaningfully at times, as we progress along our religious way.

THE PATH

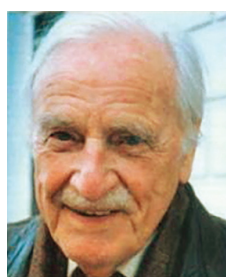
The religious way, as has been said, is the way to and through self-knowledge. Sooner or later, we begin to know ourselves as an agglomeration of little selves that manifest habitual wants, desires, justifications and postures, and all differently at different times of every day. Having become aware of this, we have to learn eventually to become *single* minded, with a continuity of

intention and attention. Paradoxically, this collected attitude manifests in us as *impersonality*. In consciousness we become liberated from the domination of our separate self-concerned selves. Each of these has its immediate and intense self-interest triggered into action or reaction, mostly quite automatically and unconsciously to our inner Self, by the circumstances of everyday life. A liberation of consciousness in this way is a realisation of oneself as a new person in a new environment. It eradicates totally all fear. In this new liberty we realise our eternity, as cooperatives in the grand, ever-unfolding panoramas of universal life.

So teaches the Ancient but Ageless Wisdom as we have it from its Masters, the Elder Brothers and Sisters of Mankind. They will ever inspire those of us who are worthy, having qualified ourselves to be of real help to humanity as it struggles along the same road to perfection which they have trod. All of us, however, can aspire.

Thou shalt love the Lord, thine Inner, Real and Divine Self, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy Self. (*Matt. xxii, 37-9, paraphrased*)

Taken from <https://theosophy.nz/> and edited for gender neutrality – Ed.



Geoffrey A. Farthing (1909 – 2004) was an English lecturer and writer who was very active in the Theosophical Society, Adyar. He served the Theosophical Society in England in many capacities, including a term as General Secretary. Geoffrey was also a member of the Executive Committee of the European Federation for a number of years, and a member of the Society's General Council.

Theosophical Digest



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

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A Union of those who Love in the service of all that suffers



Carol Collier, National Coordinator
sends light, love, peace and gratitude to members
and friends of the TOS...

As I write this, I am enjoying the inspiration of the School of Theosophy with Ravi Ravindra who is accompanied by his wife Priscilla Murray. TOS NZ was fortunate to have a special TOS evening at this event on the Saturday night. It was a cozy evening with poetry, music, mandala colouring and sharing.

We are dedicating this issue to the recent flooding in New Zealand from cyclone Gabrielle that caused devastation and destruction in the Hawke's Bay and wider regions and communities. TOS NZ worked with the NZ Theosophical Society President Richard Sell and put out the call out for an Emergency Appeal for flood relief in the Hawke's Bay. We fundraised for three weeks. All proceeds donated went to the 'Hawke's Bay Disaster Relief Trust Fund', an official website. Through the generosity of the members of TSNZ and TOS NZ we raised \$7,655.00. Thank you for your support and kind-heartedness towards our sisters and brothers in need.

TOS Volunteer and Theosophy Centre Coordinator Sue Harrison in the Hawke's Bay has offered a personal account of the first five days after the cyclone and following on from this we have a creative response from Hawke's Bay member Helen Dynes to the tragic disaster. See below for these.

Lastly, I would like to let you know that we raised \$1,484.00 at the TS Convention from our TOS NZ table. A wonderful result with a large portion of these funds going into the Hawke's Bay Flood Relief Fund. Thank you, New Zealand, so much for your continued generosity.

CYCLONE GABRIELLE, SERVICE AND SURVIVOR GUILT by Sue Harrison

On the 14th of February parts of New Zealand were severely damaged by Cyclone Gabrielle. Where I am, in Hawke's Bay, some areas have been destroyed.

DAY 1

No power, no phones. What is happening? Not too worried at this stage...

DAY 2

Still no power or phones and no way of knowing how family and friends are, let alone the horror that is happening so close by. Helicopters, fire engines, ambulances, a constant stream.

DAY 3

More of the same. People trying to get supplies, but with no power it's grab what you can where you can.

DAY 4

The reality is starting to unfold; many dead, many homeless, bridges out and roads destroyed.

DAY 5

And for me, the survivor guilt starts to kick in. It's my first experience of a major event; my home and my family's homes are all fine. But the news is horrific, the images we are seeing bring tears, the stories of survival don't bring joy, they bring horror at the near misses. I am not coping and my spirituality, at this point, starts to get in the way of me needing to have guilt. Thank goodness I am aware of this. So, for me, it's finding a place to volunteer, to do my small part. Slowly we start to heal and be grateful for the survivors, and grateful that family and friends are ok. So many people out helping, volunteering, what a great show of love that happened here. This is a very long recovery, physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially for most here. Our part at our lodge, has been to show compassion by listening to our members' stories and looking at how we keep our hearts open in hell. How do we hold Inner peace? Our new normal, Namaste.



Artwork by Helen Dynes

SILENT AUCTION

Helen Dynes, Mixed Media Artist, TSNZ member and TOS supporter from Hawke's Bay Lodge generously donated a signed artist proof from her latest limited edition. I was blown away by this and how through all of this tragedy, Helen has chosen to gift

something very special so that others may benefit. It shows how suffering can bring out the best in human nature. An artist proof print has a connection to limited edition prints. It is commonly known as a copy of the photograph and is not a part of the numbered edition. These prints are used as a test print by the artist and kept for their personal collection. We feel very honoured to receive it.

The title is *JOY* – inspired by the poem by Kahlil Gibran. Helen completed the painting the week before the devastating cyclone hit. Helen brought the original painting home but everything from her art studio was lost when her Artists’ Village was wiped out. This is where she did her work and kept her art supplies. All that was left was the printing press. Helen has lost so much and suffered in so many ways. However, she has found the capacity to choose to help others through service by offering this proof to be the prize in a silent auction with the proceeds going to projects TOS NZ supports. The TS teachings have given her so much that she wanted to give back to others in their time of need. Helen’s gift is a reflection of the motto of TOS: “A union of those who love in the service of all that suffers.” The silent auction will be drawn on 30 June 2023 and the print will go to the highest bidder. The winner will be advised soon after. If you would like to bid, email: tos@theosophy.org.nz



TOS supporters at the NZ School of Theosophy, pictured here with international guests, Dr Ravi Ravindra and his wife Priscilla Murray.



TOS National Director, Carol Collier with Hawke's Bay member Helen Dynes at the special poetry, music, mandala evening at the School of Theosophy.

I believe that to meet the challenge of our times, human beings will have to develop a greater sense of universal responsibility. We must all learn to work not just for our own self, family, or nation but for the benefit of all humankind. Universal responsibility is the key to human survival. It is the best foundation for world peace, the equitable use of natural resources, and through concern for future generations, the proper care of the environment.

His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama

To help contact:
CAROL COLLIER

Phone:
027 668 4554

or
Email:
tos@theosophy.org.nz

Please donate to help the work:

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

Address:
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Donations

- ☐ Urgent Plea, Ukraine Project \$.....
- ☐ Emergency Pakistan Flood Appeal \$.....
- ☐ TOS Christmas Convention Raffle \$.....
- ☐ TOS General projects (we choose for you) \$.....
- ☐ Poems of Contemplation Book (all funds for TOS NZ Projects) \$.....
- ☐ NZ The Waikato Teen Parent Project & Women’s Refuge \$.....
- ☐ 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 encourages all of us to grow our own.



The NZ Vegetarian Society is celebrating its 80th birthday this year. Although society in general has changed a great deal since its formation, particularly with regard to eating habits, there's still work to be done in regard to society's attitude towards animals. Scientists still experiment on animals in the mistaken belief that what works on animals will automatically work on humans; the banning of caged hens has come into force this year, but there is still a long way to go with regard to animal welfare and the right of animals (including birds and fish) to a happy, harm-free life. We need to evolve a way of living that treats all earth's resources as gifts to be shared sustainably for the good of all. For instance, when thousands of hectares of Amazonian forest is stripped do we think about how many medicines are gifted to us by the plants and trees of that same source?

Changes to our weather patterns, caused by numerous contributing factors, resulting in the floods and cyclones during

January have caused all thinking people to look at where our food comes from. Ideally, it would be good to try to grow as much as possible close to home to save transporting food round the country (as well as importing it); this would not only enhance its quality but also cut down on emissions caused by transport. Space available need not limit what can be grown, according to a book I re-discovered in my library recently. Janet Luke's *Embrace Your Space* has some wonderfully practical ideas on balcony gardens, windowsill/window-box gardens, bottle gardens, vertical, hanging and even rooftop gardens. What a great way to enjoy colours and perfumes of flowers and to enhance the flavours in your favourite dish with fresh herbs!

VEGETARIAN BURGERS

(Serves 3-4 people)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 cups cooked chick peas • 2 cups cooked, mashed pumpkin • ½ cup sesame seeds, toasted • ½ cup sunflower seeds, ground • 55 gms sesame seeds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Tbsp tomato paste • 1 small onion, finely grated • 1 cup soft tofu, mashed • seasoning |
|--|---|

DIRECTIONS

- To cook chick peas, rinse, cover well with fresh water, bring to boil, and simmer until soft for approximately 35 minutes. Drain.
- Put into a bowl, and mash.
- Cook pumpkin with skin removed. Mash.
- To toast sesame seeds, place them in a saucepan over a medium heat, stir frequently until browned. Add NO oil/fat. They brown very quickly, watch carefully. If preferred, dry toast the sesame seeds by placing in a shallow-sided dish and microwave for 1 minute.
- Combine all ingredients in recipe in a bowl and mix well. Shape into burgers.
- Place on a greased oven tray.
- Bake at 200°C for about 20 – 30 mins.
- Alternatively form into patties, in one-tablespoon lots, dip in breadcrumbs and fry gently in heated oil.

For nutritional information and to sign up to our 21-Plant Based Challenge, visit www.vegetarian.org.nz

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.

Theosophical Bookmarks – Order Form

Code	Description	Quantity	Code	Description	Quantity
<input type="checkbox"/> A1	To live to benefit mankind – H.P. Blavatsky.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/> B4	Peace – A. Besant.....	___
<input type="checkbox"/> A2	Invocation – A. Besant.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/> B5	Rainbow – C. Jinarajadasa	___
<input type="checkbox"/> A3	The Gayatri.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/> C1	The Holy Ones Invocation – A. Besant	___
<input type="checkbox"/> A4	The first step – H.S. Olcott.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/> C2	The Dew is on the Lotus – Sir Edwin Arnold	___
<input type="checkbox"/> A5	Only as we go out (blue font) – N. Sri Ram.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/> C3	The Golden Stairs – H. P. Blavatsky	___
<input type="checkbox"/> B1	The World Mother – A. Besant.....	___	<input type="checkbox"/> C4	The Rainbow Bridge.....	___
<input type="checkbox"/> B2	Only as we go out (white font) – N. Sri Ram	___	<input type="checkbox"/> C5	Unity – A. Besant.....	___
<input type="checkbox"/> B3	O Hidden Life – A. Besant	___			

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

Name:.....Total amount:

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

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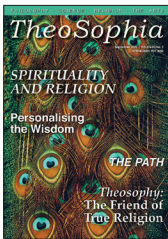
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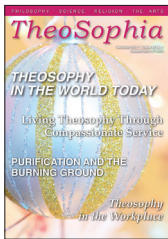
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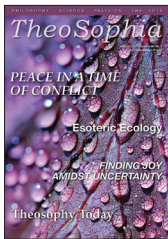
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Theosophy

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

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

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

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

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

DIRECTORY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN NEW ZEALAND

BRANCHES

AUCKLAND

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

DUNEDIN

Venue: 469 Hillside Road, Caversham
Meetings: Wednesdays 7.30pm
Contact: James Fox
0272 923 699 / thedunedin@gmail.com
President: James Fox
Website: <http://www.theosophy-dunedin.org>

FAR NORTH

Venue: Theosophy Centre, Waikare Ave, Kaero
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>

AFFILIATED CENTRE

HAWKE'S BAY

Venue: Cedric Alexander Hall, 5 Devonshire Place, Taradale, Napier
Meetings: 2nd & 4th Thursday 7.00 pm
Contact: Sue Harrison 027 976-1563 / hawkesbayts@gmail.com

NEW PLYMOUTH

Venue: 30 Hine Street, New Plymouth 4310
Meetings: Public - see newsletter on website
Members - 1st & 3rd Wednesdays 7.30pm
Contact: Jim Scrivener 021 251 1011 / tsnewplymouth@gmail.com
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: Catherine Austin
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: 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.co.nz

WAIKATO THEOSOPHICAL STUDY CENTRE

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

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The background of the entire page is a soft-focus landscape. It features a calm body of water in the foreground, reflecting the light from the sky. In the middle ground, there are rolling hills and some small, dark silhouettes of trees or structures. The sky is a deep, vibrant blue, with a few wispy clouds and a bright, glowing area near the horizon where the sun has set or is about to rise, creating a lens flare effect.

REALITY

Whatever plane our consciousness may be acting in, both we and the things belonging to that plane are, for the time being, our only realities.

As we rise in the scale of development we perceive that during the stages through which we have passed we mistook shadows for realities and the upward progress of the Ego is a series of progressive awakenings, each advance bringing with it the idea that now, at last, we have reached “reality”; but only when we shall have reached the absolute Consciousness, and blended our own with it, shall we be free from the delusions produced by *Maya* [illusion].

H.P. Blavatsky

A lily or a rose never pretends
and its beauty is that it is what it is.

Jiddu Krishnamurti



June 2023