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ESOTERICA

INSIGHTS INTO THE AGELESS WISDOM

Contributors: Robert Crosbie | Wayne Gatfield | Damon Scothern
Ronald Lewis

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From the Editor's desk

Dear Friends, Brothers and Sisters, welcome to your June edition of *Esoterica*. The summer solstice occurs in June in the Northern Hemisphere and marks midsummer: the 'longest day' and 'shortest night' of the year.

On this day, the number of hours of daylight are at their maximum, while the number of hours of night are at their minimum. However, while most people consider the summer solstice to be a day, it is an exact moment in time that falls upon that day. This moment comes when whichever hemisphere you're in is most tilted towards the Sun. This year, the summer solstice will occur in the UK on Sunday 21 June at 9.24am BST.

Since humans began using the Sun as a timekeeper, particularly when it came to the cycles in farming, the summer solstice has been marked with varying degrees of importance. Perhaps most famously, the ancient monument Stonehenge has for some time been the centre of a ritual celebration. Many modern-day religions gather at the site to mark the occasion: it is also one of the rare times visitors are allowed to walk right up to the stones themselves.

In this issue, we have a good selection of interesting articles. Robert Crosbie asks us *Can The Dead Communicate?* and gives us much to consider on this perennial subject. *The Language of the Soul* is the title of an article that is here published by kind permission of *The Theosophical Movement* magazine –



B.A. Fields

A Magazine Devoted to The Living of the Higher Life.

I would also draw your attention to *The Last Letter from the Mahatmas*, compiled by Damon Scothern. It is important that we have an accurate view of our society's early history so that we have the benefit of hindsight to guide us in today's changing times. The article, *Theosophy and the Return of the Christ* is taken from *The Theosophist* magazine and is written by Wayne Gatfield, who is the President of Bolton Lodge of the Theosophical Society in England and Wales. Wayne gives us the theosophical view of this much debated question.

I have included two short excerpts from the fictional work of Frank Herbert (*page 14*) and Ursula K. Le Guin (*page 27*). These are excellent examples for the focus of meditation aiding self-discovery.

Best wishes for a wonderful summer. ✨

Julie Cunningham Editor

The Language of The Soul

From *The Theosophical Movement* magazine



Rostyslav Savchyn

The Soul is pictured in the ancient teachings as the real Self man. There are many different conceptions of what man is and what the soul is. From Christian teachings we are led to believe that man has a soul, and may save it or lose it – the idea generally held in the West. But the conception of the ancients, and that of Theosophy, which is a re-presentation of this eternal idea, is different. The teaching is that Man is a Soul; that Soul is in fact the one who perceives; that it is vision itself, pure and simple, unmodified – not subject to change – and that it looks directly on ideas.

This idea presents the fact that the real Man in whatever condition he may be

existing, whether asleep or awake, whether in a physical body during his lifetime, or whether in another form of body after death or before birth, or before the existence of this planet or this solar system – that this real Man was the same Perceiver, then as now, the same Soul all the time; the Creator of all the conditions that have arisen; the intelligent Creator of this universe, in connection with all the beings below him and all the beings above him. Man thus forms part of one great Brotherhood, and this bond of brotherhood extends throughout, from the lowest being to the very highest.

They are all Souls; even the very lowest forms of matter are none the less Souls, for in the lowest form of matter is the power to

perceive, the power to act, the power to gain experience. The potentiality is the same in all, and that potentiality becomes a potency ever expanding as the Soul increases its range of experience. All the forms, the bodies, that compose the universe are the results of the experience and action of the souls inhabiting them. They are all the instruments of the soul, and we always act with others in any grade or class of beings. There is that unity of action which produces a similarity of instrument. In these similarities of instrument we play upon and are played upon by beings of the same class in the fullest degree, and by lower and higher classes in a greater or less degree.

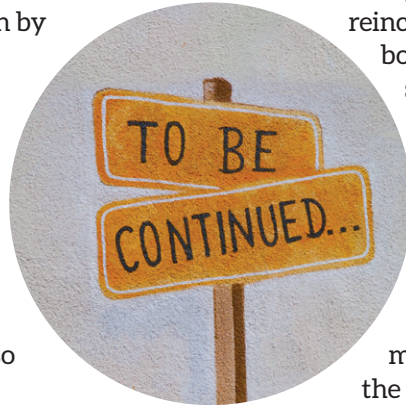
So, taking this conception that the Self is the same in each being, no matter how great that being may be, nor how low, we get another idea in regard to soul – that soul also represents the acquired experience gained through evolution by each and every class of being. Each individual being is not only Self, but, in addition, the acquired experience gained through contact with all other beings. Realizing that there are individual souls, we can see that the only differences between souls are in their degrees of acquired experience. Taking the soul from this point of view, then, as the acquired experience of individuals, when we speak of God, or the Over-Soul, the Universal Over-Soul, we simply mean the acquired experiences, or wisdom, of every soul and all souls. That would be the

meaning of the sentence in the Bhagavad Gita that the Self is “*Wisdom itself, the object of Wisdom and that which is to be attained by Wisdom*” – full consciousness of the union of all-souls, or Spiritual Identity.

If we are to try to relate these conceptions to language we would, perhaps, have to clear up many ideas which we now hold. Supposing there is a real language of the soul, what would it be capable of expressing? Undoubtedly every experience through which it had ever been.

Theosophy teaches the doctrine of reincarnation – of successive lives, both on this earth and in other states of substance and consciousness. Continuity of Consciousness, or Spirit, is preserved through all these states and environments, and the record of all that occurred in all these lives is present at all times in any one life in manifestation, because the Self, the Spirit, is present. The language of the Soul would be capable of expressing all that we ever experienced.

In those past lives we have undoubtedly spoken different languages from those we now speak; in those personal existences we used languages now altogether deserted and forgotten by us as persons. But the memory of those languages must be there, if we are a continuing Self and preserve the continuity of experience gained, as well as the continuity of consciousness. Those old languages which we once used, in themselves amount to nothing, because any language and all languages are only the expression of the feeling and thought



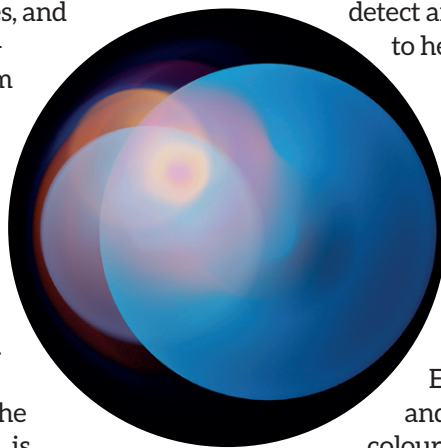
Reuben Juarez

of the individual soul; his emotions, hopes, fears, ideas and aspirations. So there must be at all times behind any language whatever, the basis for it – the Soul and its experience. Where is that recorded? It is impacted in the imperishable part of man's nature. It cannot be any spoken tongue what ever. What, then, is its nature?

To understand these propositions, we have again to consider the philosophy of Theosophy. Theosophy points out that matter is in seven states or degrees of substances, and each of these with seven sub-states, the whole ranging from the very finest, most plastic and enduring state down to the very coarsest – what we may call the material plane, or matter as it is known and suspected by us, with its many differing gradations and combinations. Man, as the highest and most evolved being concerned in the evolution of this solar system, is clothed in all these seven states of substance derived from the original primordial substance – the homogeneous matter from which every form is evolved. These degrees of substance are indicated in the seven colours of the spectrum; they are also pointed to in the seven notes of the scale of music.

The notes and colours are not exactly what we think they are: they represent the seven great distinct states of matter; sound itself, or light itself, represents the homogeneous state from which the seven notes and the seven prismatic colours are derived. Our colours and

our musical notes are only replicas of these – their reflections or correspondences in this one state of matter and sound with which we are acquainted. We know there are seven colours; we know that there are other octaves of colour beyond those, which our eyes are unable to transmit to us – some so high, some so low that our eyes will not register their vibrations. The same is true with sound. We are able to detect several, but there are degrees of sound beyond the highest we are able to detect and also sounds too low for us to hear.

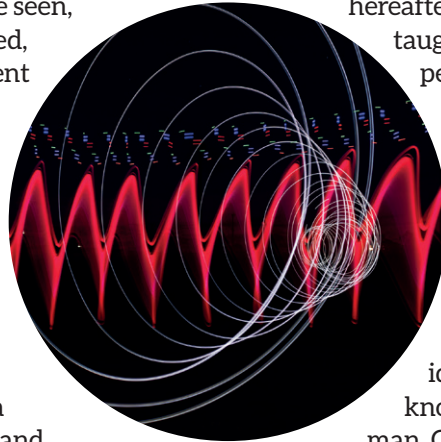


Egor Komarov

Let us call the Soul the Ego; perhaps that, for us, is the most compact expression for what is meant by Soul, since it includes both the one who perceives and his perceptions, both the one who knows and his experiences. Well, then, the Ego has a language of his own, and that language is one of colour, sound and symbol. It is a language that may be seen; that may be heard; that may be felt. It is by means of this language of the soul that the experiences of others may become directly known to us, comprehensible to us, no matter what vocal tongues we may use. This is why it was said in old times, as mentioned in the Bible, that the Wise understood every man speaking in his own tongue, although many different languages were used, then as now. It was because these Wise men could read back of the spoken language, that they knew the very thoughts, feelings and natures of the speakers.

That is why in any person's motion – even so simple an action as in moving from one chair to another – quality of the thought, the very nature of the person, is clearly shown by the assemblage of colours and shades of colours produced by the action. The same with any uttered sounds or speech, no matter what – the centres in the body are set in motion, each having its own particular tell tale colours and rates of vibration.

Strange as it may seem to us, colours may be heard, sounds may be seen, and forms may be experienced, because all are merely different rates of vibration – the motion of Intelligent Consciousness, or Spirit. They are all correlated, and one does not exist without the others. They are merely aspects of that which is the real propulsion of the soul itself, or the conscious being. So, in our thoughts we have a great combination of colours and sounds, constantly changing their form, or appearance. Our brain is the finest material instrument we use. It, like everything else we use, is an evolution. It is the organ of thought on this plane of substance where we are now acting. If we think high and noble thoughts, then our brains become very susceptible to that kind of use. Every kind of thought has its own particular rate and range of vibration, its own particular colours. If we were acquainted with ourselves, in reality, we could read thought as we now read a book. We could read thoughts as we now hear sounds. If our brains



Somika Agarwal

are trained to high thoughts while we are awake; if we try to understand what we really are while occupying this physical instrument; what this body of ours represents; what it is capable of – then gradually the brain will begin to respond to something of our higher knowledge. It will carry forward and transmit more and more of the Language of the Soul, of all the garnered experience of the past.

The ideas that we have, even in regard to Spirit and Soul, to Life hitherto, here and hereafter, are those we have been taught. They are nearly all personal and keep us entirely on the personal plane – the plane of merely physical existence. They give us no true ideas whatever of the real inner self. We have not yet begun to think – in any true sense, in any true direction; and it is only true ideas that will give us

knowledge of the inner nature of man. Our habits are merely memory impacted in our nature, whether they be habits of body or habits of thought. We do not store knowledge anywhere but within ourselves; but sometimes we forget where we have hidden it, or we cover it up with a lot of the useless rubbish of mere mental activity. Most of our mental activity is applied solely to the things of this life, to things of the body; so, mankind is continually moving along a false path. No being, however high, can prevent this, because each man is Soul, is Spirit, is Consciousness – is of the Highest, however he use and apply his powers.

Theosophy endeavours to present to man what his real nature is; that he is first, last, and all the time SPIRIT. Spirit means Life and Consciousness – the power to see, to know, to experience. We all have that. That is common to all of us. It is not separate in self – it is the One Life in all beings of every grade. But we, as individuals, have evolved into individuals from the great Ocean of Life. We are Individualized Spirit, and so we each have a separate individual existence, which is continuous. In that sense we are an evolution, but an evolution of Spirit, not Matter – an evolution of Knowledge, not of form only.

This has been obtained through observation and experience; whatever differences exist are because of more or less experience, or a better adaptation and application of it; there is no difference in the Source or Potentialities of any being.

All this we shall find out, if we move along the Path shown. For it is not an uncharted path. Remember, others have been along that path before us. They are our Elder Brothers – Jesus, for example; Buddha for another; and all those who came at different times as Saviours to the many different peoples. They had all acquired the Language of the Soul. They all had a common body of knowledge. They come amongst men from time to time, as the intelligence of humanity progresses, and give out as much of that knowledge as the

then existing state of humanity permits. They came again in our own time; and greater than Those who so came there has not been. Why should anyone say that? Because other Saviours came to separate and distinct peoples, but the Message of Theosophy is not to any one nation, not to any one class of beings, but to the whole world.

That knowledge is obtainable by any self-conscious being for himself, for it is not a question of our ideas, of our present perceptions of morality or success, nor of external power, but of Spiritual perception – of the Language of the Soul. We may make all

the mistakes in the world, according to the world, in the body and through the body, and yet have a power of Spiritual perception that would do away with all mistakes. We would not have to have any vicarious atonement but would

*They come amongst men
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state of humanity permits.*

be able to act in a proper relation with every being. Our thoughts and actions would be in accord but we would have to go through the crucifixion of the false ideas in ourselves, and arise as the Saviour did, to the right hand of the Father – the Ego free from all these delusions which have caused him to maintain himself in sin, sorrow and suffering.

All men desire Spiritual knowledge, yet the great bulk will not abate one jot or tittle of their mental and physical absorption in present and worldly things to obtain the spiritual knowledge they say they ardently

long for. They will have to move on through suffering and pain till they really desire to know the truth about themselves. If any man thinks he can get that knowledge by merely desiring to possess it, or by desiring to possess it for himself alone, he is not in the position that would permit of his knowing it. The Language of the Soul can be acquired only when the being realizes that his duty is not to himself, but to the highest interests of his fellow men; not to “*save his own soul*” but to lead as many of his neighbors as he possibly can in the direction of the Truth, desiring nothing for himself.

This very attitude opens the flood-gates of spiritual knowledge within himself. Then he becomes the true enjoyer, using every power he has, all the knowledge he has, to benefit others. The man who has come to that knowledge

and is on the road to its realization finds “*spiritual knowledge springing up spontaneously in him self in the progress of time.*” He requires no books to tell him; he cares not what religions have been, that now are, that ever will be. He knows the truth about himself and consequently the truth about all others.

Why do not all men take the path to this realization? Is it because they have no organs of perception, are incapable of seeing? No, it is because they will not listen; they will not take

what is given and try it out. They will rather follow anything that promises some success in this life. Yet they know just as well as anyone that they cannot take a single one of the “*successes*” away with them from the earth. When they go, they leave on earth every earthly thing they have accumulated. And they have to go, because they do not belong here; they are of Spirit, not earth; they are only working in this matter for a while. They all know that, and yet dream of “*possessions*.”

No one damned any of us to this condition in which we find so many. No conditions

compel us to stay in a state of mental unrest, inactivity or ignorance. All these things are imposed on us by our own hard and fast conclusions as to men, things and methods. These keep us fast bound in our present conditions and will continue to

hold us, as long as we maintain that attitude of mind, and cling to false ideas of God, of Nature, and of Man. We keep the doors closed of our own will. In ignorance? Yes; but who remains ignorant? Those only who will not hear, those only who doubt the Language of the Soul. ✨

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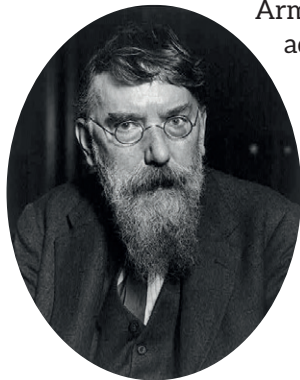
... it is because they will not listen; they will not take what is given and try it out. They will rather follow anything that promises some success in this life. Yet they know just as well as anyone that they cannot take a single one of the “successes” away with them from the earth.

George William Russell (Æ) and Theosophy in Ireland

George William Russell was born on the 10th April 1867 in Lurgan, County Armagh, Ireland. He later adopted the name Æ which is derived from the word Aeon which refers to eternity or very long periods of time in some traditions and cultures.

He grew up in Dublin and studied at the Metropolitan School of Art. He trained as a painter but also wrote poetry, novels, short stories and spiritual works. His poetry and paintings often dealt with Irish mythology and mystical visions. One of his poems titled *Answer* expresses the Soul's longing:

***The Warmth of life is quenched with bitter frost;
Upon the lonely road a child limps by***



Above: George William Russell (1867-1935), who wrote with the pseudonym 'Æ', was an Irish writer, editor, critic, poet, painter and Irish nationalist. He was also a writer on mysticism, and a central figure in the group of devotees of theosophy which met in Dublin for many years.



Above: Portrait of Æ, by John Butler Yeats. National Gallery of Ireland via Wikimedia Commons.

***Skirting the frozen pools: our way is lost:
Our hearts sink utterly.***

***But from the snow-patched moorland
chill and drear,
Lifting our eyes beyond the spirèd height,
With white-fire lips apart the dawn
breathes clear
Its soundless hymn of light.***

***Out of the vast the voice of one replies
Whose words are clouds and stars
and night and day,
When for the light the anguished spirit cries
Deep in its house of clay.***

Russell was also involved in Irish Politics and edited the *Irish Homestead Journal* for the Irish Agricultural Association.

He was active in the Celtic revival in Ireland along with W B Yeats. Yeats said Russell was: *"The one poet of modern Ireland who has moulded a spiritual ecstasy into verse... The most delicate and subtle poetry that any Irishman of our time has written."*

He was instrumental in the founding of what became the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, along with Yeats and Lady Gregory. His play *Deirdre*, based on an Irish legend, was performed there in 1902. To add yet another string to his bow, he also designed the costumes for the first production.

Russell joined the Theosophical Society in 1887, and was a pupil of H P Blavatsky when she was at Dublin in 1887. For a few years he lived in a small community of Theosophists at 3 Upper Ely Place, Dublin. In 1898 he married Violet North, a fellow Theosophist. With Charles Johnston, his brother Lewis Johnston, William Butler Yeats, H M Magee, and others, Russell established the first Dublin Lodge of the Theosophical Society in April 1886. He became friends with several American Theosophists such as William Quan Judge, James Morgan Pryse and Henry A Wallace.

He would meet in Dublin with Charles Johnston, W B Yeats and others to read excerpts from the Vedas and Upanishads.

James Joyce, another acquaintance, also had an interest in Theosophy at the time. Russell published much of Joyce's early works and helped to further his career as a writer. P L Travers, the author of *Mary Poppins*, was another author helped by Russell. She came

from the USA to England in 1924 and her interest in Mythology and Folklore brought her into contact with Russell and Yeats.

The Irish writer George A Birmingham stated: *"He is a man of extraordinary prodigality of mind. Ideas, the hoarded gold of others, are scattered by him with amazing profusion. There is probably no writer today who does not owe something to Mr. Russell."*

According to Ernest Augustus Boyd, one of the earliest historians of Irish revivalism: *"As vital a factor in the evolution of Anglo-Irish literature as the publication of Standish O'Grady's History of Ireland, the two events being complementary to any complete understanding of the literature of the revival. The Theosophical Movement provided a literary, artistic and intellectual centre from which radiated influences whose effect was felt even by those that did not belong to it."*

It is interesting to discover the contribution of Theosophy to Irish culture at the time, lead mainly by George William Russell.

Russell wrote many articles for the *Irish Theosophist* magazine and in a letter to the Irish writer Sean O'Faolein he stated:

"You dismiss H. P. Blavatsky rather too easily



Above: *An Apparition*, by George William Russell, 1921.

as "hocus pocus." Nobody ever affected the thought of so many able men and women by "hocus pocus." The real source of her influence is to be found in "The Secret Doctrine", a book on the religions of the world suggesting or disclosing an underlying unity between all great religions. It was a book which Maeterlinck said contained the most grandiose cosmogony in the world, and if you read it merely as a romantic compilation, it is one of the most exciting and stimulating books written for the last hundred years. It is paying a poor compliment to men like Yeats, Maeterlinck, and others, to men like Sir William Crookes, the greatest chemist of modern times, who was a member of her society, to Carter Blake, F. R. S., the anthropologist, and the scholars and scientists in many countries who read H. P. Blavatsky's books, to assume that they were attracted by "hocus pocus." If you are ever in the National Library, Kildare Street, and have a couple of hours to spare, you might dip into "The Proem" to "The Secret Doctrine" and you will understand the secret of the influence of that extraordinary woman on her contemporaries."

Of his view of W Q Judge, he wrote to his friend Carrie Rea: "I have sent you today... a book which I hope you will like "Letters that have helped me". They are written by a man whom I consider the wisest and sweetest of any I have ever met W Q Judge. I have more reverence for him than for another human being I know of. I hope they will mean as much to you as to many

of us. They are not badly written; but do not think of fine or beautiful phrases when reading them, but only of the things it is good to live with and ever to keep in mind. I think he says only things he knows."

Russell was a prolific writer on many subjects, but probably his most famous book is *The Candle of Vision*. It is written in his highly poetic style and deals with clairvoyant vision, mystical meditation and his encounters with the hidden side of nature. Nowadays the book is readily available online and is well worth a read.

Another of his works was *Song And Its Fountains*. In this Russell wrote: "Looking back on the past I have a vivid sense of a being seeking reincarnation here, beginning with those faint first intuitions of beauty, and those early dreamings, which were its forerunners. It was no angelic thing, pure and new from a foundry of souls, which sought embodiment, but a being stained with the dust and conflict of a long travel through time, carrying with it unsated desires, base and august and as I divined it, myriads of perceptions and a secret wisdom. It was not simple but infinitely complex, as a being must be which has been in many worlds and all it had experienced has become part of it. If there was an original purity of being it had become corrupted, yet not altogether for there was in it, I believe, some incorruptible spiritual atom, carrying with it maybe some perception of its journeyings with deity. It had worshipped in many houses of prayer and kept the reverence it had paid and had been in many a gay and many a ruined heart. Out of ancient happiness it could build intoxicating images of life, and out of ancient sorrows it could evoke a desolating



Above left: An early edition of *The Candle of Vision*; and above right: *Song And Its Fountains*, both works by A.E.

wisdom that would crucify the infant joy ere it could run to its light."

I don't think many writers have been able to express their feelings and experiences in such a beautiful and meaningful way. It truly captures the poetry of the Celtic Spirit and the depths of inspirational language that is in many ways lost in the modern world.

A 1975 biography by Henry Summerfield is titled *That Myriad Minded Man* and is a very accurate description of Russell, as his talents seem to be never ending!

It is strange then that he seems to be almost forgotten in Theosophical circles today when his contribution in the early days was so prolific and far reaching. However, there has recently been a revival of interest in Russell's work in Ireland and his contribution to Irish culture is again being recognised. As a Theosophist he produced some of the most inspiring and uplifting work in the movement's history. This is in the field of poetry, painting, writing and lecturing, as well as the example of the man himself who had such a positive influence on all who were fortunate enough to meet him.

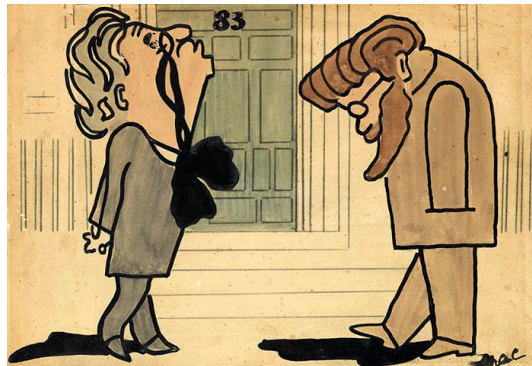
After the death of H P Blavatsky and William Quan Judge in 1891 and 1896 respectively, he left the Theosophical Society

and formed the Hermetic Society.

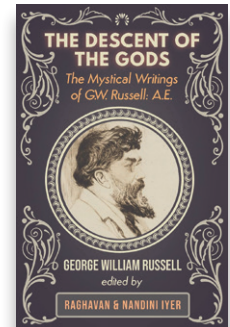
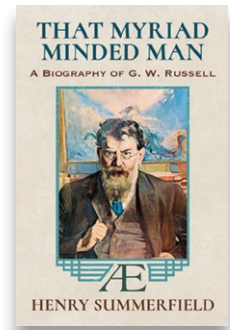
P G Bowen said of him: "Before all else, AÆ was a Theosophist. With the crystal sincerity, and childlike simplicity which at all times distinguished him, he revealed to me that his aim in life overriding all else was to bring knowledge of the World of Spirit "where all hearts and minds are one" into the clouded sphere of human thought. He sought to bring it to Ireland, his own country, first and foremost, not because he ever forgot the equal needs of the rest of the world, but because he held, and held rightly, as every true Theosophist will agree, that we should cultivate the field which lies nearest to hand with the tool which stands most convenient. His literary pursuits were not followed as a way leading to gain and fame, things to which he was supremely indifferent, but because they furnished a ready channel created by "the instrument built up by many lives," (his personal

selfhood), through which might flow "something of the rhythms of the ONE Life", and with their touch "restore to some sort of tune the jangled strings of human consciousness".

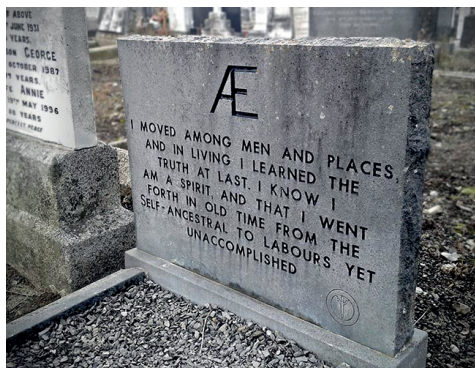
After his wife died in 1932, Russell moved to London. In 1935 he toured the USA lecturing on Rural Politics. In February he became ill and had to sail home in March. After an abdominal



Above: *Chin Angles or How the Poets Passed*, a cartoon by Isa (Isabella) Macnie, depicting Yeats and AÆ walking past 83 Merrion Square to visit one another without seeing each other. Apparently depicting a real event, the image was published in the *Irish Independent* on 26 September 1924. Image from Keough-Naughton Institute for Irish Studies.



Above: Books dealing with the life and writings of George William Russell - *That Myriad Minded Man* by Henry Summerfield, and *The Descent Of The Gods, The Mystical Writings of G W Russell, A.E.*



Above: Russell's gravestone in the Mount Jerome Cemetery in Dublin.

operation it became obvious that he had a terminal illness and he died on July 17th in a nursing home in Bournemouth. He was taken back to Dublin where his body lay in state in Plunkett House in Merrion Square, where he had worked for many years for the Irish Agricultural Organisational Society.

finest, most gifted, and most colourful people I ever knew. Never anything but the utmost humility, simplicity, sweetness and light. May God grant that the Irish may be able to produce such a man again." ✨

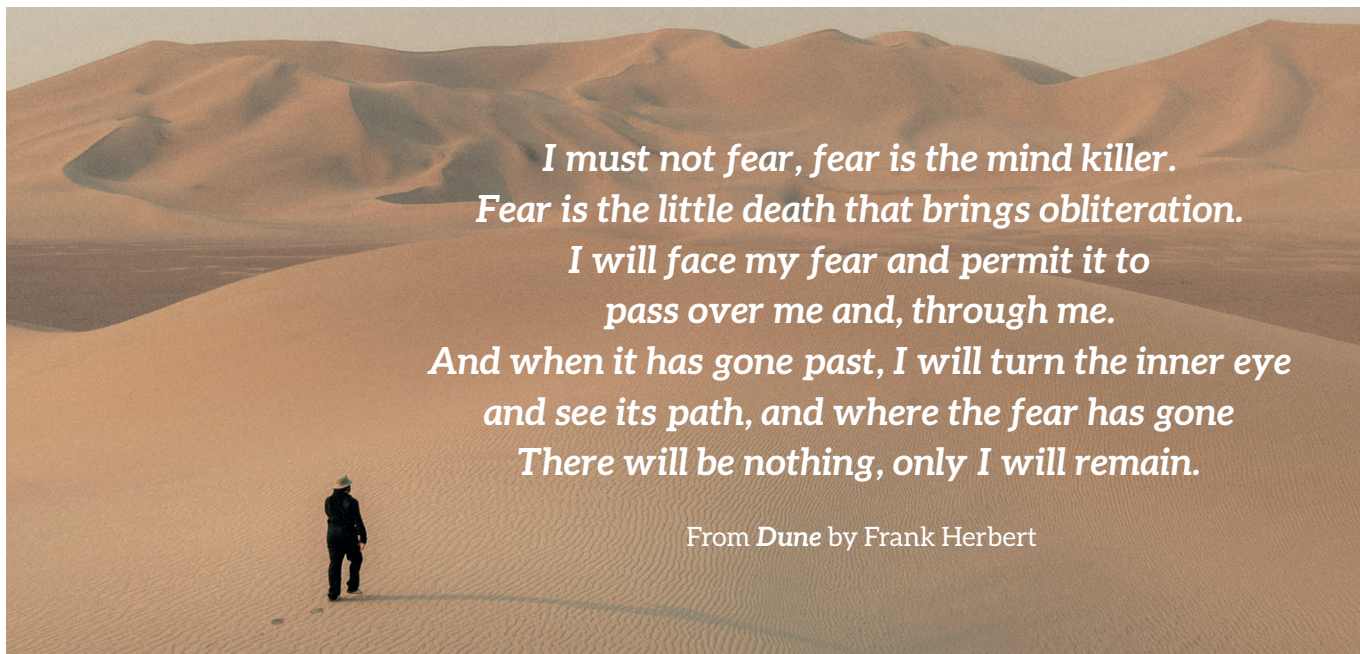
Original author unknown.

Further Reading

The Descent of the Gods: The Mystical Writings of G W Russell - AE: Edited and introduced by Raghavan Iyer and Nandini Iyer, 1988. Published by Colin Smythe, Gerrards Cross.

That Myriad Minded Man: Henry Summerfield, 1975. Published by Colin Smythe, Gerrards Cross.

A final word by US Vice President Henry Wallace (1941-45) sums it all up: "*Æ was a prophet out of an ancient age. He was one of the*



*I must not fear, fear is the mind killer.
Fear is the little death that brings obliteration.
I will face my fear and permit it to
pass over me and, through me.
And when it has gone past, I will turn the inner eye
and see its path, and where the fear has gone
There will be nothing, only I will remain.*

From *Dune* by Frank Herbert

The Theosophical Society in England and Wales

Summer Convention 2026

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Food For Thought

The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

From *Theosophy*, November 1952



In the novel, it is important to note that Dr. Jekyll sought to separate out his evil side with the help of medication, through scientific studies, and that served to speed up his self-destruction. Each day he was able to see more clearly “*that man is not truly one, but truly two.*” In his own person, he recognized dual natures, engaged in a sort of perennial war. Dr. Jekyll realized that even if he was identified with either a good or a bad personality, he was both, as these were two aspects of himself. As time passed, he was more and more troubled by these dual personalities. It was evident that the intellectual side of the personality does not restrict a person, while the moral side of the individual limits freedom, guided by morality, norms, and rules, thus dividing good from evil. He wondered if only each personality could be housed separately! In that case, “*the unjust might go his way delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright twin; and the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path, doing the good things in which he found pleasure, and no longer exposed to disgrace and penitence by the hands of this extraneous evil.*”

Dr. Jekyll succeeded, by a drug mixture, in objectifying his other “*self*” as Mr. Hyde. This is the moment when for the first time Dr. Jekyll transforms into Mr. Hyde, and that is when evil starts taking over him. The feeling experienced was that he would rather be Mr. Hyde than “*good*” Dr. Jekyll. It is interesting to note that moral degradation brings about a reduction in his stature. Thus, “*I knew myself, at the first breath of this new life, to be more*

wicked, tenfold more wicked, sold a slave to my original evil; and the thought, in that moment, braced and delighted me like wine... I was suddenly aware that I had lost in stature... And hence, I think, it came about that Edward Hyde was so much smaller, slighter, and younger than Henry Jekyll. Even as good shone upon the countenance of the one, evil was written broadly and plainly on the face of the other.”

After every such transformation as Mr. Hyde – which was a welcome outlet for Jekyll’s lower impulses and passions, and during which his “conscience slept” – when he was transformed back as Dr. Jekyll, he woke again to his good qualities seemingly impaired. He would even make haste to undo the evil done by Hyde. “It was Hyde, after all, and Hyde alone, that was guilty.” But can Dr. Jekyll thus justify the wrong done? It is he who brings Hyde into being and is therefore responsible for the evil acts of Hyde. But clearly, it is Hyde, evil personified, who has the upper hand. But the day came when Hyde, nourished by exercise, threatened to overthrow permanently the balance of Jekyll’s nature. In his final confession, the doomed doctor wrote: “I was slowly losing hold of my original and better self, and becoming incorporated with my second and worse....Between these two I now felt I had to choose...that it fell out with me, as it falls with so vast a majority of my fellows, that I chose the better part and was found wanting in the strength to keep it.”

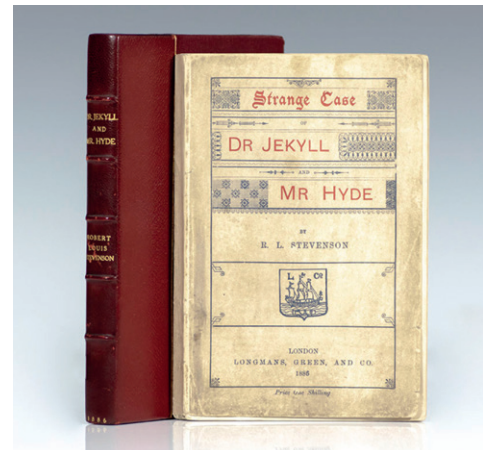
The story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde draws our attention to the dual nature of man. Each one of us is a mixture of good and evil. In the story, Dr. Jekyll seeks to separate out evil from good by means of a potion. In the course of

spiritual progress, such separation is the result of sustained aspiration and efforts to live the spiritual life. In an ordinary person, the good and bad tendencies exist as complex collective forces, but when one decides to achieve some spiritual goal, and resolves to allow his higher nature to govern him in his life, then these tendencies begin to separate into two opposing forces of good and bad tendencies – represented in the Gita as Kaurava and Pandava armies.

Arjuna represents an individual who has resolved to develop his better nature. Like Arjuna, in the Gita, every individual who resolves to develop his better nature faces opposition from the lower tendencies and faculties, “which have their camp and base of action upon the Astral and other hidden planes.”

The threshold has to be crossed before entering a room or a house. It is as if someone sitting at the threshold of the house or a room prevents you from going inside the house or a room. Likewise, in moving from the familiar, personal, and often base nature, to the unfamiliar and spiritual nature, we have to face and conquer, at the threshold, the evil in our own nature, in the family, race, etc.

Mr. Judge tells us



Above: *Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is an 1886 Gothic horror novella by Scottish author Robert Louis Stevenson. It follows Gabriel John Utterson, a London-based legal practitioner who investigates a series of strange occurrences between his old friend, Dr. Henry Jekyll, and a murderous criminal named Edward Hyde.

that the “*Dweller is the combined evil influence that is the result of the wicked thoughts and acts of the age in which anyone may live.*” H.P.B. mentions that the chela is not only called upon to face all latent evil propensities of his own nature but also the evil tendencies accumulated by the community and nation to which he belongs. Each one of us is forming our individual Dweller. At first, our selfish, personal, and unkind thoughts, feelings and actions do not seem to produce any effect on us. We produce thoughts, feelings, or actions and then forget them. Although we forget them, these have not disappeared but remain in the invisible astral sphere or zone that surrounds us. Coalescing with other thoughts, feelings and actions, in time, a form is built, which is magnetically linked to us. At first, it will not reveal itself as a shape but may infuse in the aspirant a sense of horror, or a feeling

*“... every duty left undone,
every moment of sloth,
every feeling of fear,
anger, and envy, goes to
form the Dweller.”*

of fear. Later, it takes a definite shape.

Our Dweller is about us all the time. Everything that conflicts with good is an operation of that Dweller. We are in Kali-yuga, the dark age, which is characterized by

selfishness, competitiveness, and declining moral values. We are influenced by the thoughts and feelings of our fellow men. Their thoughts and acts tend to reinforce our Dweller. *“The greatest Dweller we have is doubt, suspicion, fear, lack of faith. These are outward exhibitions of the Dweller.... These Dwellers have to be conquered. We must have absolute faith; absolute faith in our power to learn, and*

an unbounded confidence in that which is being taught us,” writes Mr. Crosbie. In fact, every duty left undone, every moment of sloth, every feeling of fear, anger, and envy, goes to form the Dweller.

But there are also weapons to fight the Dweller. Every time we foster good aspirations, every time we use our will to overcome sloth, every time we are able to overcome fear, superstition, and blind belief, every time we respond to insult, anger or ill-will with kindness, charity, and forgiveness, we are building the weapons to fight the foes in the final battle. Every time we listen to our conscience, we are using one of our most potent weapons for the fight but most of the time we tend to ignore the message which comes from the Inner Ruler. We would do well to nip in the bud our weaknesses. We must watch for the occasions when, however small a degree, we let sloth overcome will.

Regular self-examination is necessary to become aware of the weak and strong points in our character. One day we may become aware of our tendency to have uncharitable thoughts. We know that it is not good, but we also know how terribly hard the fight will be before we can overcome this tendency. We know that we have to fight hard to be able to stick to our aspirations, or even to our resolutions, and not let them fade away through lack of will-power.

Sometimes we may discover that we have begun to consider ourselves so important or good that we are all the time criticizing others. We might be so occupied with criticism of others that we have no time left to look at our own weaknesses. Often, this creates the

delusion that we are always right and others are all wrong. Thus, we build the most harmful of all Dwellers – pride, or the perverted sense of “I,” or the exaggerated self-importance, which is the most difficult foe to fight. As we progress on the spiritual path with greater aspiration and strong determination, more marked is the separation of the good from evil in our nature. Our faults and weaknesses begin to assemble and take shape, and when the process is completed, it becomes PapaPurusha, the evil Dweller, of which Mr. Hyde in the story may be regarded as a faint shadow. But our aspirations and our effort to lead a higher life also begin to take shape creating Punya-Purusha. *“Then by the help and strength of the latter we eject the former from within ourselves.”*

Next, it torments us from without; this is the real Dweller. There are some grim mysteries connected with the subject. A clear conscience, purity of magnetism and cleanliness of the body are the very best protection. You are bound to get over difficulties as you persist in attention-devotion,” writes Shri B. P. Wadia.

In the article, *Death* by Éliphas Lévi, we read, *“To be immortal in good, one must identify oneself with God; to be immortal in evil, with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of souls...”* (*The Theosophist*, October 1881).

The good and the pure strive to reach Nirvana or the state of absolute existence and absolute consciousness. The evil and the wicked are caught in the wheel of birth and death preferring evil over good.

Theosophy teaches that at every rebirth, the Higher Manas sends out a Ray to function through the body and this ray may be called

the “incarnated mind.” The incarnated mind, functioning through the body, is in essence, identical with

the Higher, Divine Mind, but when it incarnates it forgets its divine origin and becomes of dual nature. The incarnated mind or manas is the personal ego, from which arises the feeling of personal “I” or personal Identity, of being Mr. X or Miss. Y. This incarnated mind can choose to turn towards the higher, divine aspect or gravitate towards Kama or passions and desires. That aspect of the mind that clings to Kama is dissipated with it in Kama-Loka after death. We lose a portion of the incarnated Manas at the end of every life. However, that aspect of the mind which seeks guidance from the divine nature and listens to the “Voice of Conscience,” becomes part of the divine or the Higher Ego. It is called the “aroma” of the personality, which gets assimilated by the Higher Ego and becomes immortal.

In every incarnation, a fresh ray of the manas is launched. In every birth, a portion of the incarnated mind that was engaged in something noble and spiritual is assimilated in the Divine Ego. The aspect of the mind that gets entangled in worldly, personal affairs, desires and weaknesses, as also downright evil and wickedness, is cast away. At the end of every incarnation, a portion of the incarnated mind or soul is lost. In rare cases,

“To be immortal in good, one must identify oneself with God; to be immortal in evil, with Satan. These are the two poles of the world of souls...”



Above: Éliphas Lévi Zahed, born Alphonse Louis Constant (1810-1875), was a French esotericist, poet, and writer. Initially pursuing an ecclesiastical career in the Catholic Church, he abandoned the priesthood in his mid-twenties and became a ceremonial magician. At the age of 40, he began professing knowledge of the occult. He wrote over 20 books on magic, Kabbalah, alchemical studies, and occultism.

the entire incarnated mind or personality can be lost, when a person persists in choosing the life of evil and wickedness. Such beings are called “lost souls,” who may be said to have become immortal in evil. The loss of soul can occur in extremely depraved and wicked people, or in crass materialists.

H.P.B. speaks of spiritually dead people whose only delight is in material and intellectual pleasures without any care for humanity. It is equally rare that the entire incarnated mind or personality is so pure as to get merged with and assimilated by the Higher, Divine Ego, and these may be said to have become immortal in good. H.P.B. sums up by explaining it in clearer terms: “*The preservation of personal identity beyond death...is accomplished only by adepts and sorcerers—the one class having acquired the*

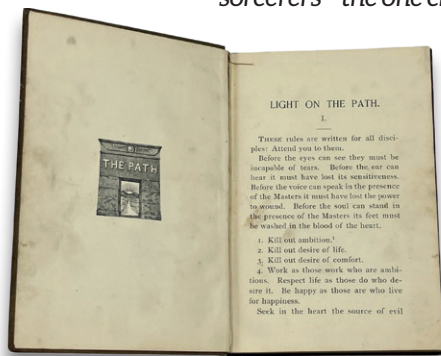
supreme secret of knowledge by holy methods; and with benevolent motives; the other having acquired it by unholy methods and for base motives” (The Theosophist, November 1882).

It is useful to turn to the passage in *Light on the Path* which says that masses of men go through life waveringly, not having definite goals and hence their Karma operates in a confused manner. But those who

wish to walk the path of occultism are brought to the Tree of Knowledge and the Tree of Good and Evil. One has to make a choice. No longer is he capable of the indecision of ignorance. Knowingly we take steps on the right or wrong path, and every step produces great karmic results. Hence, the portion of humanity that has not decided to walk the path of occultism and therefore make a definite choice between good and evil is the lay majority. But those who knowingly choose good, life after life, walk the Right-hand Path to reach Adeptship, while those who knowingly choose evil walk the Lefthand Path and become sorcerers.

“Reflection shows that, rather than being a modern story, the tale of Jekyll versus Hyde is a timeless parable of the higher and lower nature. Like the universal allegories of old it has varied, potent applications for those who have eyes to see them.” ✱

Article originally published in *Theosophy*, November 1952.



Above: Written by Mabel Collins in 1885, *Light on the Path* is a perennial favourite of Theosophical literature. Its subtitle is “*A treatise written for the personal use of those who are ignorant of the Eastern Wisdom and who desire to enter within its influence.*” The text provides rules that serve as rungs of a ladder in the progress of the spiritual life. These rules are accompanied by commentaries provided by the Master Hilarion.

***Patience leads to power
but eagerness in greed
leads to loss.***

H. P. Blavatsky



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Can The Dead Communicate?

By *Robert Crosbie*



Since the forties of last century Spiritualists have affirmed the answer to this question, claiming sufficient evidence for the survival of intelligence after the state known as death. But Spiritualism is not a new thing. Five hundred years or more ago, and, way back through every age of man, people have practiced what is called Bhut worship – that is, worship of the “spirits” of the dead. Present day Spiritualism is but a repetition of a former error, even though its resurrection has been among those whom we would call of higher intelligence, “*deep thinkers*,” and men of science. The “communications” of today, just like those others all down the ages, bear nothing whatever in them of a truly spiritual nature; they are physical to the last degree, as the communications to Sir Oliver Lodge from his son, Raymond (through a medium, remember), bear witness. According to the latter’s statement, his life after death is very much like the one he has left behind: people there still drink, smoke cigars and, in fact (?) have cigars made for them in spirit-factories out of cigar stuff belonging to that state of matter. If this is a “*spiritual*” communication, anybody is welcome to take it as such, but it only goes to show that when we are out of

The Blowup

physical life we are not necessarily in a spiritual state – as is the common supposition.

The question is, what do we learn from such “communications”? Is there anything or has there ever come anything from the plane of spiritualistic communication which has been of any benefit to mankind? Has anything from that source shown us the great purpose for which we are here? Does it tell us the meaning of life; why there appears to be so much injustice in the world? Does it tell us of wars that are to be, and how to prevent various great catastrophes from falling upon us? Does it inform us as to the connection or common cause of all the different beings in the world? Does it show us the nature of the becoming of beings who are greater than we are, as well as of beings lower than we are? Does it show why and how this solar system came into existence, and the laws which rule it? No. These are all matters on which we need knowledge; yet from so-called “spirits” we get all sorts of differing communications as a basis for reasoning about them. Those very differences should show us there is no source of knowledge in that quarter. What we need is not what any “spirit” or anybody else says about anything, but rather, a reasonable, logical, just statement of laws which each and every person can test out for himself.

Let us consider the presentment of Theosophy as to how man has become what

he now is – the real story of evolution, as gained by observation and experience in the vast ages that have passed. The basis underlying that evolution is the same in every human being, in every human heart, in every animal life, in every speck of matter – the same Spirit in all, the same One Life, the One Intelligence. All are rays from that One Life, that One Intelligence, and each expresses the possibilities existing in the Infinite Source.

Differences in beings, in mankind, in various races, all mean degrees of intelligence; for each has the same power as the highest being and the same power as all beings; the use or employment of the power brings about an instrument to represent it more or less fully.

Evolution is Spirit expressing itself, whether in this solar system, or in those which preceded it. Intelligence

was behind the beginning of this planet in its nebulous condition, or fire mist; intelligence was behind the cooling and hardening processes through many, many ages. In all those states and in all those substances connected with this planet we also have existed as spiritual beings, nor are they absent from us now. At the end of every life, we go back through all those stages again to the highest one, and then descend again to the earthly stage, to reap the effects of causes set in motion by us before in other bodies. For there is no transforming power in death; as a tree falls, so must it lie. It is during the life-time



that we must recognize and awaken our true natures. Death opens no door to knowledge.

We have proof of these states of consciousness right within our nightly experience. When we sleep – though we never sleep; only the body sleeps – the consciousness of this physical plane is gone from us. We have no idea of what is going on among our friends or relatives; we have not one slightest sensation of what is occurring anywhere on the earth while we are not using the body. Here is “death” – a smaller,

temporary death – for the body.

Then we pass into another state altogether, which we know as the dreaming state. The human soul

goes on in dream, knowing oneself as the one there, seeing, smelling, hearing,

talking, moving and doing all the other things which he does while in the body, awake. They used to say that if you took hold of a sleeper’s great toe he would talk to you. You would get a communication from a “spirit,” but what kind of a communication would it be! The man would tell you just what his own mind had worked with; he would not know in the dreaming state any more than his own personal thoughts, his own personal ideas and activities.

Applying this analogy to the time of death, we can see that in reality the time of death never comes. We finally give up this body and it goes back to the earth from which it was

taken; but WE are not dead. We are still alive. We are still conscious on other planes and in other degrees, though we are not using the body nor the brain. But what kind of a consciousness, what kind of an intelligence, are we using? Just the same kind that we had when we were in the body. Our thoughts and feelings and desires go on acting for a time just as they did when we were using the body, because of the energy we had put into them. As there is no renewal of it, that energy wears itself out, and the man – as a real spiritual being – enters into quite another state, where no one on earth can disturb the action of his intelligence and the enjoyment of his bliss. How could that be a state of bliss if for one single instant it could be disturbed by the sorrows left behind on earth? Could there be a worse hell to some people than seeing from their “heaven” the appeasing of a husband’s sorrow and the place of mother taken by another? We should understand that when a human being passes out of life, he passes through something like the dream state – a mixed state – and then reaches the best state he is capable of expressing. A spiritual human being, it would be folly to imagine otherwise, could not be disturbed by earthly doings, for his mission on earth was fulfilled when he left it. But he would come back again in another body to take up another day’s work. Then, can we not see that all this idea of communication with so-called “spirits” who have left the body is nonsense?

Let us not imagine that there are no other beings besides men outside the body. Let us not imagine that dead men, or living dead men, are the only ones existent on the other



Ron Lach

side of this physical world. There are myriads of kinds of beings who do not live in bodies like ours but inhabit planes into which men pass from this earth. Contiguous to our plane all sorts of beings – sub-men, as well as human elementals, dwell. Can we imagine these are desirable communicants? And how can we be sure that any external communication is not connected with some devilish spirit who likes to pose, to take the cast-off clothing of man because of its attraction to his nature and desires, and exploit it to us?

A great deal of knowledge is required to understand the real nature of man, nor is it arrived at by any kind of “communication” what ever, but by entering into our own natures. The Father in secret is within, not without, and everything we know or ever will know has to be known in ourselves and by ourselves. Never from other people, never from any other kind of spirit, will it be known. The Spirit of God within everyone – the Knower in everyone – is the last resort, the highest tribunal, the last eminence that we shall reach.

We are now traveling together through earth matter; when we leave the earth, we leave it, alone. So, when we travel through astral matter, we are not confabulating with the denizens of the astral plane but are moving along our own lines. The states after death are merely the effects of the life last lived. We step through from the place of our

endeavor to reap what we have sown – first casting off the evil, and then experiencing the highest and best of all our aspirations. In all of these states each being realizes himself to be the same person; never for an instant does it enter one’s perception, or consciousness, that he is any other than the one who was on earth; nor does he know that any such thing as death has occurred at all, in his highest state he has with him all those whom he loved, and in just that condition which he would desire to

have for them. He has his bliss, because the balance between cause and effect, even for his sufferings on earth, is struck straight and true for the spirit. All those states are within us, not outside; in those states, we meet first, last, and all the time OURSELVES – first as we think we are, and finally as we really are. There is no possibility of any communication from a “dead” person to a living one, except perhaps in the very short period before the real individual has shaken off the ideas held during life.

Sometimes then a very, very strong desire to impart something will effect some sort of communication, but after the great change known as “the second death” all connection with earth is broken off. A pure-minded living person by his aspiration and love may himself ascend to a heavenly place, and there seem to speak and feel and be with those he loved, but that speaking and feeling do not disturb the one there. The very essence of the spiritual



Viktor Forgacs

state would exclude all disturbance, though we can obtain the kinds of feeling which exist in that condition. All that a medium obtains are simply reflections and repetitions of what has occurred, recorded in the nature of the sitter. A medium will describe the after death state of a person very much alive, which should show how subject to mistakes and errors a medium is. In the passive mediumistic state there is no control over anything; there is merely a channel provided through which certain things can come, or "leak."

The majority of the "spiritual" communicants of the mediums are suicides and the victims of "accidental" death.

For not always is there death when the body dies. Unless the death coincides with the end of the life-term, which is fixed at birth, a man is still tied to earth until the end of his term.

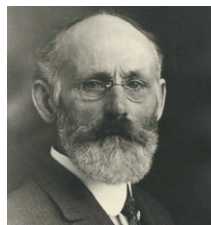
But there are cases of communications with beings in the world - almost within the realm of this world - beings not in physical bodies, who live and move on another plane of substance, far away from connection with some easy going medium. These beings are known as Nirmanakayas. They are men who have become perfected - who could if they chose reach up to and hold the very highest state of bliss, but who refuse that bliss because it would mean forever to forsake all chance of helping their fellow-men. They can, when the

nature of the person is true and aspiring strongly, communicate, if it is necessary to help him. But there is no mistake about these communications. They are personal, meant for that one as direct help. It is the within which induces any outside help that we receive. It is a recognition of the spiritual nature of ourselves and all beings which makes the true condition. It is from the spiritual that all true strength comes. And it is for the perfection of humanity that all the Divine Incarnations have labored. ✱

Excerpt taken from *The Friendly Philosopher*, pgs 253-258.

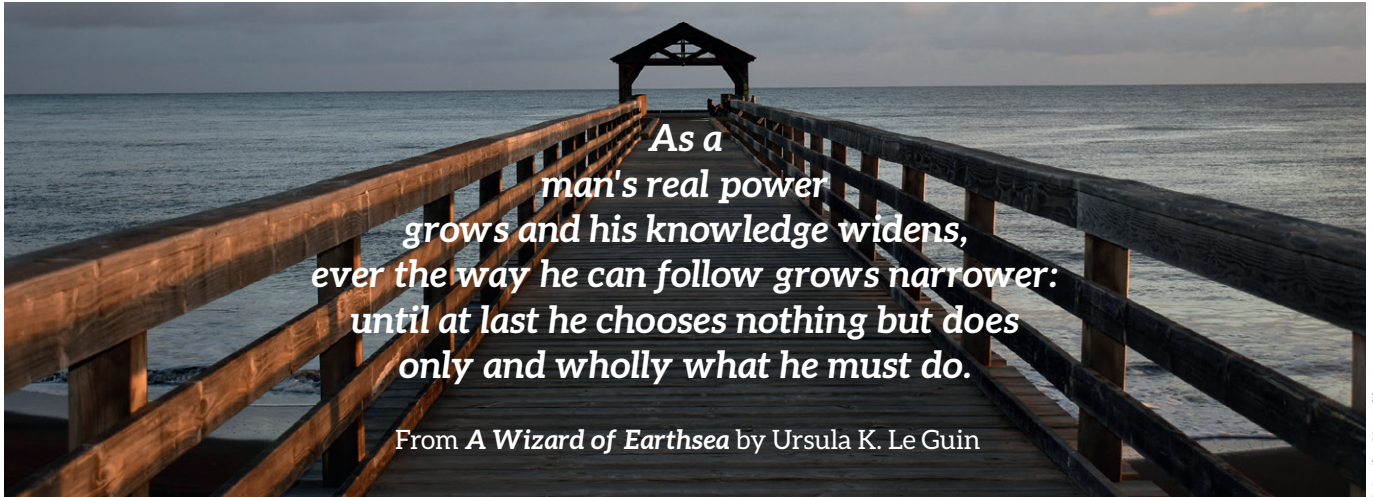


Nathan Dumileo



Robert Crosbie (1849-1919) was a theosophist and founder, in 1909 of the United Lodge of Theosophists (ULT). In 1912, Crosbie first published the theosophical magazine 'Theosophy'. A book, 'The Friendly Philosopher', was

compiled from his letters, talks and articles, and published fifteen years after his death by appreciative students.



As a
man's real power
grows and his knowledge widens,
ever the way he can follow grows narrower:
until at last he chooses nothing but does
only and wholly what he must do.

From *A Wizard of Earthsea* by Ursula K. Le Guin

Monika Kowalik

Theosophical Society in England & Wales

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Theosophy and the Return of the Christ

By Wayne Gatfield

Orthodox Christianity constantly mentions the return of the Christ. They take this to mean Jesus in person. However, H. P. Blavatsky (HPB) states in her article, *The Esoteric Character of the Gospels* (H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings, vol. 8, p. 173):

“(a) the coming of Christ” means *the presence of CHRISTOS* in a regenerated world, and not at all the actual coming in body of “Christ” Jesus; (b) this Christ is to be sought neither in the wilderness, nor “in the inner chambers”, nor in the sanctuary of any temple or church built by man; for Christ – the true esoteric SAVIOUR – is no man, but the DIVINE PRINCIPLE in every human being. He who strives to resurrect the Spirit crucified in him by his own *terrestrial passions*, and buried deep in the “sepulchre” of his sinful flesh; he who has

the strength to roll back *the stone of matter* from the door of his own inner sanctuary, he has *the risen Christ in him*.”

It is the regeneration of this world by a Spiritual impulse that manifests in the heart of all those who foster a love for humanity and wish to bring a Golden Age of Peace, Love, and Harmony back to this planet in the face of all the negativity and cruelty that is so prevalent today.

The Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh has a similar thing to say regarding Buddha:

“The next Buddha will not take the form of a person. The next Buddha will rather take the shape of a community, a community that practices understanding and loving kindness, a community that practices a way of conscious living. This may be the most important thing for earth’s survival.”

Both the words “*Christ*” and “*Buddha*” convey the same idea. Jesus was a man overshadowed by the Christ Spirit as was Prince Siddhartha Gautama by the Buddha. Every one of us has the potential to become Buddha or Christ. “*Look inward: thou art Buddha*” says The Voice of the Silence (Frag. II, v. 116). It suggests that we are already Buddhas, we just need to remove the veils that prevent us seeing it.

In the words of the Mahachohan in his 1881 letter to A. P. Sinnett:

“Once unfettered [and] delivered from their dead weight of dogmatic interpretations, personal names, anthropomorphic conceptions, and salaried priests, the fundamental doctrines of all religions will be proved identical in their esoteric meaning. Osiris, Krishna, Buddha, Christ, will be shown as different means for one and [the] same royal highway to final bliss, *Nirvana*. Mystical Christianity . . . teaches self-redemption through one’s own seventh principle – the liberated *Paramâtma* . . . called by one the Christ, by others the Buddha, and equivalent to regeneration or rebirth in spirit – [therefore expounds] just the same truth as the *Nirvana* of mystical Buddhism. All of us have to get rid of our own Ego, the illusory, apparent *self*, to recognize our true Self, in a transcendental divine life. But if we would not be selfish, we must strive to make other people see that truth, to recognize the reality of that transcendental Self, the Buddha, the Christ, or God of every preacher.”

We should not wait for someone external to

come to save us but look within our very own hearts for the love and compassion that can help to heal the world. This can only be done by cultivating a Universal Kinship of Humanity regardless of race, creed, sex, caste and colour and never by any sectarian religion which professes that it has the only way to reach heaven, *Nirvana* or whatever term is used. The true spiritual teachers did not found religions; their followers did and also created the dogmas and many of the teachings ascribed to the original Master. Turning to the Bhagavadgîtâ:

“Whenever there is a decline in righteousness, O Bhârata, and a rise in righteousness prevails, then do I manifest myself.”

This is said by Krishna but again it is symbolic, as Krishna is the Divinity in every one of us. If we have total faith, gained by study and meditation in our Higher Self, then we will find we have its protection constantly. Also, it refers to the return of a general spiritual impetus in the World in general, when evil prevails. It is due to the rejection of an unconditional spiritual Brotherhood of Humanity that led to the World Wars and the many conflicts we have now. The Theosophical Masters say that two-thirds of the world’s evil is caused by religion and the other one-third by selfishness. This is a very important fact to take on board. If we attach ourselves to a particular religion, no matter how tolerant we are of other religions, we will always regard ours as the best and therefore fall victim to soul-killing separateness.

Theosophy reconciles all these differences by teaching that we can come together as

truly human beings, beyond the dogmas and sophistry of many religions and sects that undermine the powers that we all possess, and can activate ourselves if we have the correct faith, knowledge, and wisdom to do so.

But to rely on intermediaries will take the power out of our hands and make us feel that we need someone else to reach enlightenment or heaven or wherever the religion or philosophy is leading us. Robert Crosbie writes in *The Friendly Philosopher*, p. 128:

“For the Theosophical Society in America impersonality means not to worship itself as an organization; to endeavour to get broader and freer; to merge itself, more and more, into the living spirit of the movement – its higher self; to neither despise itself because it is a form nor exalt itself because it has a soul; to become less doctrinal and more *human*.”

Jesus was not a subscriber to the cruel God of the Old Testament; he told us not to follow the eye-to-eye teaching, but to love our enemies and bless those that curse us.

We need to come together as human beings beyond religions and dogmas, based on the fact that we all share the same Spirit. HPB states in her article *Our Three Objects* (*H. P. Blavatsky Collected Writings*, vol. 11, p. 398):

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

Agnostic, the Socialistic Scientist, such results would have been unattainable, nay, would have been unthinkable. Peace Societies are Utopian, because no amount of argument based upon exoteric considerations of social morals or expediency, can turn the hearts of the rulers of nations away from selfish war and schemes of conquest.”

It is the awakening to this that will bring us all together in a Universal Kinship of Humanity despite all that creates separateness in our lives. There has to be something seriously wrong if religions cause wars and conflict on all levels, taking into account that those teachers that initiated them all taught love and peace. They did not found the religion, this was done by lesser beings who could not grasp the cosmopolitan nature of the teachings and had to institutionalise them. From this a hierarchical system arose and ritual and dogma eventually smothered the original impulse. This is not to say there are no good souls living a spiritual life within their religion but they are in a relative minority in the modern world. Simply attending church, mosque, temple or synagogue does not necessarily make someone spiritual in any way. It is how we manifest the Higher Self in our daily lives that makes the difference and how kind and loving we are to our fellow creatures.

If we want to really understand the return of the Christ, we must come to realise that we are all Christ in potential, and the return is up to each one of us individually and collectively. As said earlier by Thich Nhat Hanh, it is not necessarily an actual person that will appear at a certain time or when the world is in

danger, it can be just this spiritual awakening amongst the people.

Of course, that is not ruling out that it may be an actual person, but rather than waiting for centuries for someone to come and save us, we should be awakening to our Divinity and realising we can develop all the powers attributed to Jesus. He was just further along the Spiritual Path than we are at the moment, but he came to show us the way. *“The golden age has passed away, only the good have the power to bring it back”* (Goethe).

HPB writes in one of the articles from her book, *The Tidal Wave*:

“Verily the Spirit in man, so long hidden out of public sight, so carefully concealed and so far exiled from the arena of modern learning, has at last awakened. It now asserts itself and is loudly redemanding its unrecognized yet ever legitimate rights. It refuses to be any longer trampled under the brutal foot of Materialism, speculated upon by the Churches, and made a fathomless source of income by those who have self-constituted themselves its universal custodians. The former would deny the Divine Presence any right to existence; the latter would accentuate and prove it through their Sidesmen and Church Wardens armed with moneybags and collection boxes. But the Spirit in man – the direct, though now but broken ray and emanation of the Universal Spirit – has at last awakened.”

Can we not, as followers of the Christ Spirit, love one another as Jesus and Buddha told us to? Can we not pave the way for others, become a

nucleus of Universal Brotherhood? In this world this is all that matters in the final analysis. This is what the theosophical Masters of the Wisdom wanted and what all the genuine spiritual teachers throughout the ages taught.

Yet, still the world is weighed down by wars and atrocities and the words of the holy ones are ignored as if they never existed. We can bring about the return of the Christ Spirit as Jesus and the Buddha wanted.

In Buddhist terms all those striving to put theosophical teachings into practice are budding bodhisattvas. We need to try to live the altruistic life that this points to. The vows of a bodhisattva are:

“Suffering beings are numberless; I vow to liberate them all. Attachment is inexhaustible, I vow to release it all. The gates to truth are numberless, I vow to master them all. The way of awakening is supreme, I vow to realize . . .”

We may not be ready to commit ourselves to these vows, but we can at least take them as virtues to work towards. In the meantime, we just may do what little we can to make the world a better place to live in, no matter how small our contribution may be. As motive is everything, even positive thoughts towards the world can help to bring about the changes that are so needed! ✨

Wayne Gatfield is President of Bolton Lodge of the Theosophical Society in England and Wales. He is also National Speaker and author of a book and many theosophical articles in various journals.

The Last Letter from the Mahatmas

By **Damon Scothern**

In 1900, Annie Besant received a letter purported to have been precipitated by Koot Hoomi. This letter which was initially published in Jinarajadasa's 1919 collection *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom* (First Series), significant portions had been heavily redacted. The official justification was that the redacted sections contained "personal counsel" regarding Besant's private occult life, which was deemed too sensitive for the public.

The full, unedited text was not widely available until it was published in 1987 in *The Eclectic Theosophist*. Critics noted that the "redacted" portions were not merely personal advice but that they contained even stronger critiques of the leadership's reliance on authority and "emotionalism". Some scholars and dissidents within the movement argued that Besant and her inner circle – including C.W. Leadbeater – intentionally withheld these parts because they directly undermined the "neo-theosophical" shifts they were introducing, such as the veneration of the Masters and specific ritualistic practices.

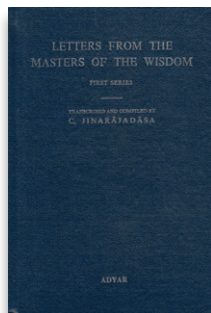
Neo-Theosophy is a term used by critics and traditionalists to describe the ideological shift within the Theosophical Society under the leadership of Annie Besant and C.W.



Leadbeater after the death of Helena Blavatsky in 1891. This shift led to a major schism in the movement. Traditionalists who wanted to "return to Blavatsky" formed groups like the United Lodge of Theosophists, viewing Neo-Theosophy as a "Great Betrayal" of the movement's foundational principles.

This 1900 Letter, often referred to as Koot Hoomi's "Last Letter," is famous for its blunt, almost severe warnings about the future of the Theosophical Society, KH warned that the Society was straying from its original purpose by adopting the very things it was meant to transcend. These warnings are often cited by critics as proof that Besant and C.W. Leadbeater ignored the Master's advice by later establishing the Liberal Catholic Church and the Order of the Star in the East, both of which were heavily ritualistic.

The original letter in full can be read below, the parts which were redacted are highlighted in bold.



Above right: An image of Koot Hoomi; and above: C. Jinarajadasa's book, *Letters From The Masters Of Wisdom*, published in 1919.

The 1900 Letter to Annie Besant

A psychic and a pranayamist who has got confused by the vagaries of the members. The T.S. and its members are slowly manufacturing a creed. Says a Thibetan proverb "*credulity breeds credulity and ends in hypocrisy*". How few they are who know anything about us. Are we to be propitiated and made idols of. **Is the worship of a new Trinity made up of the Blessed M. Upasika and yourself to take the place of exploded creeds. We ask not for the worship of ourselves. The disciple should in no way be fettered. Beware of Esoteric Popery.** The intense desire to see Upasika reincarnate at once has raised a misleading Mayavic ideation. Upasika has useful work to do on higher planes and cannot come again so soon. The T.S. must safely be ushered into the new century. **You have for some time been under deluding influences. Shun pride, vanity and love of power. Be not guided by emotion but learn to stand alone. Be accurate and critical rather than credulous. The mistakes of the past in the old religions must not be glossed over with imaginary explanations. The E.S.T. must be reformed so as to be as unsectarian and creedless as the T.S. The rules must be few and simple and acceptable to all.** No one has a right to claim authority over a pupil or his conscience. Ask him not what he believes. **All who are sincere and pure minded must have admittance.** The crest wave of intellectual advancement must be taken hold of and guided into spirituality. It cannot be forced into beliefs and emotional worship. The essence of the higher thoughts of the members in their collectivity must

guide all action in the T.S. and E.S. We never try to subject to ourselves the will of another. At favourable times we let loose elevating influences which strike various persons in various ways. It is the collective aspect of many such thoughts that can give the correct note of action. We show no favours. The best corrective of error is an honest and open-minded examination of all facts subjective and objective. **Misleading secrecy has given the death blow to numerous organizations.** The cant about "Masters" must be silently but firmly put down. Let the devotion and service be to that Supreme Spirit alone of which one is a part. Namelessly and silently we work and the continual references to ourselves and the repetition of our names raises up a confused aura that hinders our work. **You will have to leave a good deal of your emotions and credulity before you become a safe guide among the influences that will commence to work in the new cycle.** The T.S. was meant to be the cornerstone of the future religions of humanity. To accomplish this object those who lead must leave aside their weak predilections for the forms and ceremonies of any particular creed and show themselves to be true Theosophists both in inner thought and outward obedience. The greatest of your trials is yet to come. We watch over you but you must put forth all your strength. ✨

Article compiled from information contained on the TS in America & Theosophy Wiki websites by Damon Scothern.

The Mystery of All Time

Going Beyond the Trifles of the Hour



The inner light which guides men to greatness, and makes them noble, is a mystery through all time and must remain so while Time lasts for us; but there come moments, even in the midst of ordinary life, when Time has no hold upon us, and then all the circumstance of outward existence falls away, and we find ourselves face to face with the mystery beyond. In great trouble, in great joy, in keen excitement, in serious illness, these moments come. Afterwards they seem very wonderful, looking back upon them.

What is this mystery, and why is it so veiled, are the burning questions for anyone who has begun to realise its existence. Trouble most often rouses men to the consciousness of it, and forces them to ask these questions when those, whom one has loved better than oneself, are taken away into the formless abyss of the unknown by death, or are changed, by the experiences of life, till they are no longer recognisable as the same; then comes the wild hunger for knowledge. Why is it so? What is it, that surrounds us with a great dim cloud into which all loved things plunge in time and are lost to us, obliterated, utterly taken from us?

It is this which makes life so unbearable to the emotional natures, and which develops

Who S. Denilo

selfishness in narrow hearts. If there is no certainty and no permanence in life, then it seems to the Egotist, that there is no reasonable course but to attend to one's own affairs, and be content with the happiness of the first person singular.

There are many persons sufficiently generous in temperament to wish others were happy also, and who, if they saw any way to do it, would gladly redress some of the existing ills - the misery of the poor, the social evil, the sufferings of the diseased, the sorrow of those made desolate by death - these things the sentimental philanthropist shudders to think of. He does not act because he can do so little. Shall he take one miserable child and give it comfort when millions will be enduring the same fate when that one is dead? The inexorable cruelty of life continues on its giant course, and those who are born rich and healthy live in pleasant places, afraid to think of the horrors life holds within it.

Loss, despair, unutterable pain, comes at last, and the one who has hitherto been fortunate is on a level with those to whom misery has been familiarised by a lifetime of experience. For trouble bites hardest when it springs on a new victim. Of course, there are profoundly selfish natures which do not suffer in this sense, which look only for personal comfort and are content with the small horizon visible to one person's sight; for these,



Salah Darwish

there is but little trouble in the world, there is none of the passionate pain which exists in sensitive and poetic natures.

The born artist is aware of pain as soon as he is aware of pleasure; he recognises sadness as a part of human life before it has touched on his own. He has an innate consciousness of the mystery of the ages, that thing stirring within man's soul and which enables him to outlive pain and become great, which leads him on the road to the divine life.

This gives him enthusiasm, a superb heroism indifferent to calamity; if he is a poet he will write his heart out, even for a generation that has no eyes or ears for him; if he desires to help others personally, he is capable of giving his very life to save one wretched child from out a million of miserable ones. For it is not his puny personal effort in the world that he considers - not his little show of labour done; what he is conscious of is the over-mastering desire to work with the beneficent forces of super-nature, to become one with the divine mystery, and when he can forget time and circumstances, he is face to

The inexorable cruelty of life continues on its giant course, and those who are born rich and healthy live in pleasant places, afraid to think of the horrors life holds within it.

face with that mystery. Many have fancied they must reach it by death; but none have come back to tell us that this is so. We have no proof that man is not as blind beyond the grave as he is on this side of it. Has he entered the eternal thought? If not, the mystery is a mystery still.

To one who is entering occultism in earnest, all the trouble of the world seems suddenly apparent. There is a point of experience when father and mother, wife and child, become indistinguishable, and when they seem no more familiar or friendly than a company of strangers. The one dearest of all may be close at hand and unchanged, and yet is as far as if death had come between. Then all distinction between pleasure and pain, love and hate,



Destan Khidir Uyn

The freedom needed is not from those who cling to you, but from those to whom you cling. The familiar phrase of the lover "I cannot live without you" must be words which cannot be uttered, to the occultist.

have vanished. A melancholy, keener than that felt by a man in his first fierce experience of grief, overshadows the soul. It is the pain of the struggle to break the shell in which man has prisoned himself. Once broken then there is no more pain; all ties are severed, all personal demands are silenced forever. The man has

forced himself to face the great mystery, which is now a mystery no longer, for he has become part of it. It is essentially the mystery of the ages, and these have no longer any meaning for him to whom time and space and all other limitations are but passing experiences. It has become to him a reality, profound,

indeed, because it is bottomless, wide, indeed, because it is limitless.

He has touched on the greatness of life, which is sublime in its impartiality and effortless generosity. He is friend and lover to all those living beings that come within his consciousness, not to the one or two chosen ones only - which is indeed only an enlarged selfishness. While a man retains his humanity, it is certain that one or two chosen ones

will give him more pleasure by contact, than all the rest of the beings in the Universe and all the heavenly host; but he has to remember and recognise what this preference is. It is not a selfish thing which has to be crushed out, if the love is the love that gives; freedom from attachments is not a meritorious condition in itself.

The freedom needed is not from those who cling to you, but from those to whom you cling. The familiar phrase of the lover "I cannot live without you" must be words which cannot be uttered, to the occultist. If he has but one anchor, the great tides will sweep him away into nothingness. But the natural preference which must exist in every man for a few

persons is one form of the lessons of Life. By contact with these other souls he has other channels by which to penetrate to the great mystery. For every soul touches it, even the darkest. Solitude is a great teacher, but society is even greater.

It is so hard to find and take the highest part of those we love, that in the very difficulty of the search there is a serious education. We realise when making that effort, far more clearly what it is that creates the mystery in which we live, and makes us so ignorant. It is the swaying, vibrating, never-resting desires of the animal soul in man. The life of this part of man's nature is so vigorous and strongly developed from the ages during which he has dwelt in it, that it is almost impossible to still it so as to obtain contact with the noble spirit. This constant and confusing life, this ceaseless occupation with the trifles of the hour, this readiness in surface emotion, this quickness to be pleased, amused or distressed, is what baffles our sight and dulls our inner senses. Till we can use these the mystery remains in its Sphinx-like silence. ✱

Original author unknown.

The above article is reproduced from *Lucifer* magazine, September 1887 edition, pp. 46-63. The word "*Lucifer*" means "*light-bearer*" and refers to the planet Venus, "*the star that brings the new day*". This ancient term has been distorted by misinformed Christians.

In September 2016, after a careful analysis of the state of the esoteric movement worldwide, a group of students decided to form the Independent Lodge of Theosophists, whose priorities include the building of a better future in the different dimensions of life.

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The World Rebuilt

By **Ronald Lewis**

In a world dominated by politics and economics, people are encouraged to believe that success, social status, power, money, and property are all-important in themselves. Often to the detriment of the weakest and most vulnerable, individuals, groups, and nations are out to assert their superiority, sometimes very aggressively, and prove that they are the best or strongest.

While the competitive system of life enables many to prosper materially, the hopes and dreams of millions are left unfulfilled, often due to the extreme greed and selfishness of others better equipped to meet material demands, spurred on by a blind belief that this present life is their only one. In a world where the greedy and selfish appear to prosper whilst over a quarter of the world's population – our brothers and sisters – cannot get enough to eat each day, across the globe 40,000 children, under the age of 5, die of malnutrition and common diseases. This does not reflect well on present day civilization. And we do not just lack wisdom in the conduct of our affairs – our lives have reached a high pitch of meaninglessness: drug addiction, vandalism, and breakdown of law and order are but outward signs of the emptiness of materialism.



Damilola Saka

Joshua Rawson Harris

One feels that the human race is struggling along in a world crying out for genuine spiritual leadership. But where will this come from? How can a "new world order" be accomplished without a radical change in attitudes and a





The story of evolution is the story of consciousness. A growing awareness gave us the necessary impetus to commence our search for truthful answers to some of the profound mysteries of life: Who am I? Where have I come from? What is my purpose for existence? What is my ultimate destiny? The story of consciousness started with Adam and Eve, representing infant humanity, in the Garden of Eden. From this Biblical story arose the idea of original sin; but far from being a fall from grace, it was a fall into expanded experience. On our descent into matter we became conscious thinking human beings with intelligence - the thinking, reasoning faculty which we are still in process of developing. It has a dual function, being capable of gross bestiality and of high spiritual aspiration. All thoughts, good or bad, are transmitted through the brain, our instrument of expression, and we are able to raise or lower our level of consciousness at will.

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An understanding of consciousness plays an important part in grasping our divine nature. The higher part of the dual mind is associated with intuition, which reveals to us that we are divine beings coming into incarnation periodically for experience on the material plane, struggling through a multitude of vicissitudes designed to help us find our way back to our divine source. This is reminiscent of the story of the prodigal son

moral
and spiritual
approach to the
problems which
must be faced and solved
if civilization is to progress?

If it is to emerge, there has to be a general raising of our level of consciousness away from money and property to people.

who left his father's home to undergo the travail of life, eventually to overcome the pull of matter.

As a result of expanding awareness, we have made contact with our indwelling spiritual consciousness, a consciousness which is at the root of everything. We may not know what this consciousness is. We know there is something, a seeming nothingness from a material point of view, yet it is the most vitally alive part of us, without which there would be no life at all.

There are those who sometimes feel this inner consciousness very strongly and are stirred into action by a desire to do good for goodness' sake, without thought of self or of any kind of reward. In such beings the divine spark is being fanned into flame. They have been stirred into action by their inner spiritual consciousness inspired by deity.

When as human beings we can cast aside earthly passions and desires, devoting our lives to humanity as did the Master and teacher Jesus, we will then have arrived at an evolutionary stage where we are in complete harmony with our inner divinity. Although we still have a long way to go before reaching such a state of perfection, living an unselfish existence is the highest form of spiritual consciousness on this plane of being and the stepping stone to yet higher forms of spiritual awareness.

The ancient teachings of reincarnation

and karma can make sense out of human misery and suffering, disease and poverty, and the many contrasts of human life. Together they are doctrines of hope and justice, giving us chance after chance to evolve in accordance with the divine plan. In the Western world we try to make everything fit

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into one life. In so doing we arrive at the conclusion that there is no sense to be made out of the world in which we live because Western religion, science, and philosophy have nothing to offer us as a key to unlocking our minds. For some, life comes with every comfort and convenience, with every prospect of a bright and happy future; others are so poor that they barely exist, or are born deaf, blind, or crippled.

It all seems so unjust, a sheer mockery of living! For those unable to make any sense out of life, a study of reincarnation and karma could set their minds free and at rest. Although at one time embodied in Christian doctrine, the 6th-century Council of Constantinople struck all reference to



Marco Montero Pisani

reincarnation from future Christian teaching.

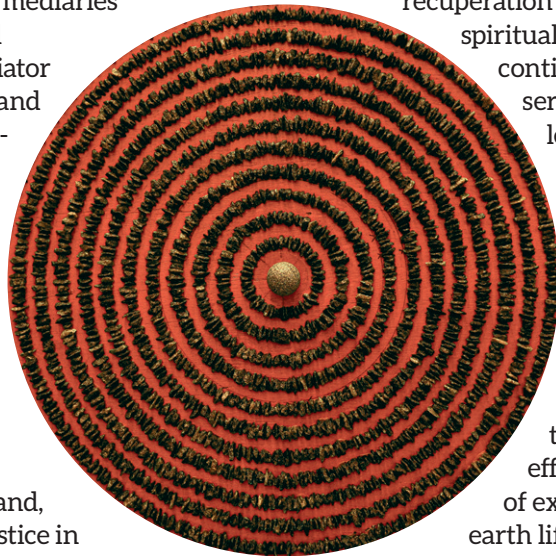
Since then, due to the closing minds of the Church Fathers, the Western world was denied access to the two doctrines which explain human suffering and misfortune. It would seem that the Council wished to retain blind belief in an anthropomorphic God at all cost because it strengthened the influence of the clergy acting as intermediaries between such a God and mankind. The only mediator between the individual and divinity is his own spirit-soul, which is a spark of that same divinity and is the one link which can bring him into direct contact with his divine parent.

In leaving their spiritual well-being in the hands of the clergy, people have tended to become spiritually lazy and, unable to see any real justice in life, have become skeptical and have moved away from the Church to concentrate their attention wholly on fulfillment of their personal ambitions. Although having experienced pleasure and suffering, the majority view these with resigned acceptance as though there were little or nothing to be done about it since everything that happens, in fact, is God's will. Perhaps we cannot change things to any great degree in this life, but we ourselves can here and now begin to shape our future. With a knowledge of reincarnation and karma, we begin to appreciate that our

fortune and misfortune are the result of our own past efforts and that, far from being on earth for the first time in the present life, we have been here many, many times before, sowing seeds of good and evil to be reaped in future lives.

Reincarnation means that we keep on returning to earth after a suitable period of recuperation for the soul in its spiritual home. Our education continues through a long series of lives until the final lesson is learned and we have perfected ourselves as human beings and earned freedom from the wheel of rebirth – if we so choose. Through the operation of karma – the law of cause and effect the amount and type of experience in any one earth life are assessed in accordance with past actions, good

and bad. The degree and type of happiness and suffering depend on the way in which we have conducted ourselves previously on earth. Perhaps one of the most revealing things – and a source of comfort and encouragement – is that with our newly found but ancient knowledge we can understand what is taking place and how we affect one another's lives for better or worse. Karma becomes our guide and teacher. We see divine justice at work, even though it may seem like the greatest injustice because with each new birth we



Nikhil

have a new brain with seemingly no remembrance of the past.

Understanding karma is to appreciate that we are makers and masters of our own destiny, materially and spiritually, and that any suffering which we may have to endure in any one incarnation is entirely due to our own decisions. If we live wrongly, we must be prepared to face the consequences. Nature, having no favorites, reacts with impartiality, whatever our station in life. We cannot turn to any being outside ourselves for salvation: to tell a person that what he has done wrong can be forgiven by a belief in an external savior is to woefully mislead him. Unless we find out the truth of this for ourselves, we are destined to go on suffering until the lesson has been well and truly learned. It is for us all a cycle of necessity in preparation for our graduation to a higher plane of life and consciousness.

With the grasp of reincarnation and karma, we no longer see injustice everywhere, but divine justice at work in and through everything. We also gain a completely new outlook on life and a firm foundation on which to reconstruct our own lives and in so doing to rebuild the world.

In these critical times, our problems go much deeper than politics and economics; what is most needed today is a universal spiritual awakening. If we ignore the signs, then civilization has to face up to the possibility of destruction. What can we do

about it? What can we contribute, individually and collectively, towards a new world order based not on material goals but on the realization that each person is a potential god?

Because we are an integral part of the whole, in transforming our own lives we transform our environment. Do we regard the Sermon on the Mount as a beautiful ideal to be put on the shelf and worshipped from a distance – to dream about as a possibility for us

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in some remote future? If we are going to live up to it, we have to begin by being honest with ourselves and others. It means selflessness and purity in daily living; it means divine love in all circumstances for everyone, whether we like them or not. These four ethical keynotes – honesty, love, unselfishness, and purity – would seem a firm enough foundation on which to build a new world order, yet something more is needed to bring people together in lasting and undying brotherhood, something that will stem the tide of materialistic thought threatening our civilization. A moral approach to our problems today is not enough; it has to be a moral and



Nathan Lemon

spiritual approach. Creeds and dogmas have made it difficult, if not impossible, for many people to recognize their own divine nature, each a spark of the divinity that links us all. We can talk about God all we like and religiously go to church, but it doesn't make us spiritual. Spirituality refers to that inner urge which is constantly impelling us to seek contact and union with the divine.

The desire for such contact and union is there because a part of that universal divinity is present within the nature of each and every human being.

Recognition of the divine in our nature will result, ultimately, in bringing us out of our present mental and spiritual darkness, and chaos will be replaced with order. If we are ever going to handle our individual and national affairs, there must be a spiritual basis for living. As a civilization we have at considerable cost neglected the spiritual part of our nature. Our inability to handle the affairs of nations successfully, principally because of a lack of true inner spirituality and vision, continues to plunge the world repeatedly into economic chaos and disaster.

While there is still every need for social and economic reforms, if we are going to solve the world's mounting problems, spiritual needs must take precedence over material needs. To look for human salvation through material

gains and rewards, as most do today, can but lead to disaster.

Only a return to spiritual values as a starting point for living can save present-day humanity. Although we cannot conquer ourselves overnight, we can, inadequate as we may sometimes feel, make ourselves instruments for the passing on of divine wisdom as old as the hills, thus

inspiring people to change their lives and helping them to a recognition of their divine nature. With an understanding of and acceptance that "man cannot live by bread alone," our task is to play our part in rebuilding the world and transforming it so that spiritual values play a more prominent role. ✨



Olivier Piquier

From *Sunrise* magazine, August/September 1994. Copyright © 1994 by Theosophical University Press.

Condensed from a lecture given March 7, 1992, Liverpool, England, at the William Quan Judge Branch of The Theosophical Society, Pasadena.

Ronald Lewis is a well-known writer and philosophical thinker associated with the modern Theosophical movement. He is best recognized for his insightful commentary and essays focusing on the practical application of theosophical principles, such as karma, reincarnation, and the mystical interdependence of humanity.



The Power to Change

Felipe Bastias

Members of the Theosophical Society (TS) are no different to members of society in general and why should they be? However, on the whole members are drawn from those who are interested in finding a deeper meaning to life, and who have in some way or other started to question the ordinary values that most people follow. From this perspective it is fair to say that there is a consensus in the TS that we should be attempting to live more from a spiritual impetus and applying the teachings, at least as best we can.

How can we live more meaningful lives?

To begin with, we must start to consider what our lives are for. Why are we living in these bodies going from day to day, month to month, and year to year until we reach our life's end? Are we making the most of this life situation? Are our lives of real value to our families, friends, community, country or the world? Some people do something remarkable with their lives - Nelson Mandela, Mother Teresa, Ghandi - for example. People like these make the world sit up and take notice, they change all our lives. We can't all do such great things, but we can bring about changes in our own small environment, and whether we realise it or not, changes that we make to ourselves affect the whole of creation. Apart from any other consideration, it is in our personal lives that we have real choice. This is where we are in a position of power. Our own lives are ours to command, and the first thing that we should do is to take stock of just who or what holds the strings to our thoughts, feeling, and actions.

We can't change the world if we can't change ourselves. One of the first things that the Theosophy shows us is that we can, and must, take control of our own evolution. The first requisite for entry to the Path that will eventually lead us to spiritual awareness and perfection is that we accept full responsibility for our own lives and spiritual progress.

This responsibility is normally born by the law of karma, which follows its steady course over our numerous lives along the cyclic path of reincarnation. This is the indirect or Long

Route; *'The Spiritual Path'* is the short or direct route and demands positive steps to work toward a future balance.

Once we have accepted that our lives are nobody's responsibility but our own, we can start to make progress. To realise this, we need to think or meditate on such things as circumstance, chance, fairness, privilege, responses, ambition and so on. We blame circumstances for many things – lost opportunities, failures, every kind of loss. *"It's not my fault"*, we say, *"I did the best I could in the circumstances"*. Or *"It was just bad luck"*. To blame circumstances or chance as unfair, or to see events from the perspective that circumstances are beyond our control, therefore we are victims, is to miss entirely the opportunity to grow as human beings. We blame all kinds of things for our own inadequacies, even the families into which we are born.

Once we can see clearly over the wall of miserable excuses that make up much of our mistaken view of life, we will soon start to change our lives for the better in every respect. If we do that, others around us will also start to benefit from our newer, more real understanding. The best counsellors, for instance, are those who see life from a higher view, and our help and advice can become that much more appropriate when we take off the blinkers of blame.

The Theosophy shows us very clearly that creation is not the product of blind chance. Rather, it is an orderly, deliberate, and well managed system with a clear purpose. It shows us that this purpose is known to all higher beings and to the highest of humanity also.

The fact that we can come to know and understand this purpose is privilege beyond price. But in the immediate sense it tells us that as we are a part of that purpose and that there can be no such thing as chance, unfairness, bad luck, and more importantly, there are no victims.

To start to see life from this perspective is to start to gain strength, because strength is used up on self-pity, blame, recrimination, self-indulgence, pettiness, jealousy and a host of other negative emotions and attitudes. We do not have an abundance of time to waste on these things. Each of our lives passes so quickly, and such indulgences are a waste of the tremendous effort that so much of life goes to enable us to incarnate.

If we were to reclaim all of the power that we lend out to various indulgences, pseudo authorities, and illusory fears we would be so much more effective in everything that we do.

Theosophy is not just some ideas about life strung together by well-meaning people, it is the only hope for humanity's future. We should embrace it, learn from it, and grow in spiritual awareness by living in accord with its eternal verities: fundamental, universal truths and principles that transcend time, culture, and societal change. ✨



Leo Welling

Last Words

The Summer Solstice

The summer solstice is the astronomical event marking the beginning of summer in the Northern Hemisphere and winter in the Southern Hemisphere, occurring when the Earth's axis is tilted most directly toward the sun. In the Northern Hemisphere, this event typically falls on June 21 (or occasionally June 20 or 22), while in the Southern Hemisphere, it occurs around December 21.

Key facts about the solstice include:

- **Longest Day:** It marks the day with the maximum number of daylight hours and the shortest night of the year for the hemisphere tilted toward the sun.
- **Solar Position:** The sun reaches its highest point in the sky and is directly overhead at the Tropic of Cancer (23.4° N) during the Northern Hemisphere's solstice.
- **Temperature Lag:** Despite being the day with the most sunlight, it is not typically the hottest day of the year; peak temperatures usually occur three to four weeks later due to the time it takes for the atmosphere and oceans to heat up.

- **Historical Significance:** Ancient cultures celebrated the solstice with rituals and built monuments like Stonehenge and structures in Chaco Canyon to align with the sun's position.
- **Modern Celebrations:** Today, the solstice is marked by festivals, bonfires, and gatherings, particularly in Scandinavia (Midsummer), Wiccan traditions, and at historic sites like Stonehenge in the UK.

Ancient Origins and Global Traditions

The solstice has been culturally significant since the Neolithic era, with ancient peoples building monuments to track its arrival.

- **Stonehenge:** In England, the prehistoric Stonehenge is precisely aligned with the solstice sunrise, drawing thousands of modern-day visitors and druids who gather to celebrate the dawn.
- **Ancient Egypt:** The solstice coincided with the annual flooding of the Nile River, a life-giving event that the Egyptians associated with the sun god Ra (or Amun-Ra), praying for fertility and a bountiful harvest.
- **Ancient Greece:** The solstice marked the start of the year in some calendars and was celebrated with the festival of Kronia, a time when social hierarchies were temporarily overturned, and slaves dined as equals with their masters.



Above: The prehistoric megalithic structure, Stonehenge on Salisbury Plain in Wiltshire, England is precisely aligned with the summer solstice sunrise.

About The Theosophical Society

Three Objects of the Theosophical Society

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

The Theosophical Society is a worldwide community whose primary Object is the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction, based on the realisation that life and all its diverse forms, human and non-human, is indivisibly One.

Founded in 1875, the Society draws together those of goodwill whatever their religious affiliation (if any), social status, gender or ethnicity. The Society promotes such understanding through the study and practical application of the Ageless Wisdom of Theosophy.

The International Mission Statement of the Society is: *'To serve humanity by cultivating an ever-deepening understanding and realization of the Ageless Wisdom, spiritual Self-transformation, and the Unity of all Life.'*

Unity lies at the very heart of the theosophical community and inspires the lives of its members towards unselfish service and inner transformation. Divine Wisdom is One – the paths towards it are many.

The word 'Theosophy' is from Greek origin meaning Wisdom of the Gods (*theo* – of Gods; *Sophia* – wisdom). It is a word which has been used for many centuries and is also known as the Ageless Wisdom.

The Society imposes no beliefs on its members, who are united by a common search for Truth and a desire to learn the meaning and purpose of existence through study, reflection, self-responsibility and self-less service.

It jealously guards and promotes freedom of thought and no member may impose their views on any other.

Esoterica is available both in printed form and online. Please let us know if you have friends or family members who would like to receive the printed version, free of charge, by filling out the form below and posting to **50 Gloucester Place, London W1U 8EA**, or by contacting office@theosoc.org.uk
 A downloadable version, also free of charge, is available on our website homepage www.theosoc.org.uk

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ESOTERICA

INSIGHTS INTO THE AGELESS WISDOM

Esoterica, the journal of the Theosophical Society in England and Wales,
is a magazine for the inquiring and the curious.

It is for those seeking spiritual answers to those big questions of life:

Who are we?

Where did we come from?

What's our purpose and destiny in life?

Its mission is to explore those timeless truths, occult knowledge and universal laws
which pre-date but underpin all philosophy, science and religion.

We offer thought-provoking and original interpretations
of these fascinating ideas from the perennial philosophy
to unlock the secrets of ourselves and the cosmos.

Above all, it's our intention to offer not just dry theory but, wherever possible,
practical solutions to the difficult issues which face every one of us.

The next edition will appear on the autumn equinox,
22nd September 2026.

